

# JUDICIAL BRANCH



# DISTRICT COURTS

Agency Name: Judicial District 1A through 9B	Agency Number: 120-142
Approp. Org. Name: Administration	Division Number: 0100
Expense Org. Name: Administration	Unit Number: 0101

**EXPENSE ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW**

The District Court and the position of District Judge are constitutionally created. Both are empowered constitutionally and statutorily.

Objectives and Goals: The court's goals and objectives are to (1) provide a forum in which persons can voice their disputes, (2) give the public their day in court, (3) render the necessary decisions, (4) provide all these functions in a timely manner, (5) keep control of an ever-enlarging docket, (6) keep abreast of changes in case law and statutory law, and (7) the retention of competent personnel.

Caseload and disposition statistics are on file with, and available upon request to, the Wyoming Supreme Court.

The District Court is a court of unlimited general jurisdiction, which hears and determines matters and cases ranging from (1) all felonies, (2) juvenile matters, (3) probate matters, including estates of decedents, guardianships and conservatorships, (4) adoptions, (5) involuntary commitments to the Wyoming State Hospital, (6) all civil actions not commenced in circuit court, (7) appeals of Workers' Compensation matters, (7) appeals from circuit and municipal courts, and (8) appeals from various state, county and local governmental entities.

Appeals from the District Court proceed directly to the Supreme Court.

The District Judge has the following personnel under his direct supervision and control:

1. Court Reporter. The duties and position of the Court Reporter are set by statute. The Court Reporter is to make a stenographic record of court proceedings and prepare transcripts as mandated by statute.
2. Judicial Assistant. The Judicial Assistant is responsible for maintaining an organized office to meet the needs of the District Judge. This includes acting as the Judge's receptionist, taking telephone calls, scheduling trials and court hearings for lawyers and the public, maintaining the calendar of court dates and trial dates, handling all of the correspondence for the Judge, preparation of vouchers, balancing the monthly budget reports, and keeping various records to ensure that the Judge has available to him at all times any information which he may need.
3. Law Clerk. The Law Clerk is a graduate of an accredited law school and has passed the Wyoming State Bar. The Law Clerk saves the Judge countless hours by doing the legal research required by the Judge.

**STANDARD BUDGET REQUEST NARRATIVE**

100 Series – Personal Services: The 100 series funds are used to provide for a judge, judicial assistant, court reporter and a law clerk. These funds also provide payment of transcription fees to the court reporter and benefits for all court employees.

200 Series – Supportive Services: The 200 series funds are used to cover the necessary operating costs for judicial services in the district judge office.

400 Series – Central Services: The 400 series funds are used to provide hardware/software support from the Department of Administration and Information. These funds are determined by the Department of Administration and Information based on the prior Biennium costs.

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900 Series – Contractual Services: Funds in the 900 series are used to pay for a contract court reporter in the event the full-time court reporter is not available or a court commissioner when necessary.

**.BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

The following spreadsheet identifies a four percent (4%) cut to all district court budgets for FY2014 per Section 319(b) of Chapter 26 of the Wyoming Session Laws, 2012. As with all small departments, salaries (or Personal Services) and related costs are a large portion of the budget. For the District Courts, these expenses represent approximately 95% of the total budget. The District Judge position is constitutionally created and the salary is statutorily set. This position represents approximately 40% of the Personal Services budget for each judicial agency. With that in mind, we request that the district courts be allowed to subtract the amount of salary and benefits of the judge prior to the application of the required budget reduction formula. This has already been recommended by the Joint Judiciary Committee, and the following spreadsheet reflects the subtraction. If the salary and benefits of the judge are not excluded from the budget reduction formula, each District Judge risks losing one of their three approved positions, which would result in a 25 percent reduction in their office personnel. Each position is vital to the function of the District Judges’ offices.

In preparation of the 2011-2012 biennium budgets, each District Judge methodically reviewed their budget to meet Legislature’s request to cut six to eight percent. It was not an across the board budget cut, but rather a more appropriate and sustainable reduction to categories that would not severely impact how the court does business. In order to accommodate the required across the board 4% budget cut for FY2014, each Judge has focused on the amount of funds budgeted for transcription fees and interpreter fees. It is risky to cut these categories, as the Judges cannot predict the number, type, or complexity of cases that will be filed in their courts from year to year. Some District Courts may have reverted funds in these categories the previous biennium; however, there is no contingency fund to handle an influx of cases from year to year. There is no other alternative as to where the budget reductions can be made.

To cut additional funds in the 2015-2016 Biennium would be detrimental to the District Judges’ ability to provide judicial services to the citizens of Wyoming. We therefore propose that the last sentence of Section 319(b) of Chapter 26, Session Laws of Wyoming, 2012 be deleted as follows:

**Section 319(b) of Chapter 26, Session Laws of Wyoming, 2012**

*The supreme court and all district courts shall prepare reductions to each court’s standard budgets for fiscal year 2014 which equal or exceed 4% of the general funds appropriated in the 2012 budget session for the court. The supreme court shall report to the joint appropriations committee, as part of the supplemental budget request, by December 1, 2012, the proposed reductions. ~~In preparing the courts’ budget request for the 2015–2016 fiscal biennium, reductions totaling 8% of the 2012 budget session general fund appropriation for courts’ standard budgets shall be included in the request.~~*

**District Courts (120 - 142)**

Proposed Reductions to 2013-2014 Biennium

	Personal Services 0100	Support Services 0200	Central Services Data Serv 0400	Contract Services 0900	<b>Total 2013- 2014 Standard Budget</b>	Subtract Judicial Salaries	<b>Adjusted Standard Budget for 2013- 2014</b>	FY2014 Appro or 1/2 of the 2013-2014 Appro	4% Reduction for FY2014 (Req. by Sect. 319)	4% Reduction for 2015- 2016	8% Reduction for 2015- 2016
120 (JD-1A Campbell)	980,023	29,248	0	13,192	1,022,463	-420,516	601,947	300,974	12,039	24,078	48,156
121 (JD-1B Davis)	979,183	35,364	0	16,358	1,030,905	-404,676	626,229	313,115	12,525	25,049	50,098
122 (JD-2A Waldrip)	962,852	46,215	0	14,800	1,023,867	-425,076	598,791	299,396	11,976	23,952	47,903
123 (JD-2B Donnell)	978,471	39,737	0	15,625	1,033,833	-420,516	613,317	306,659	12,266	24,533	49,065
124 (JD-3B Lavery)	943,511	25,579	871	10,500	980,461	-354,420	626,041	313,020	12,521	25,042	50,083
125 (JD-3A Sanderson)	964,648	41,521	0	19,169	1,025,338	-420,516	604,822	302,411	12,096	24,193	48,386
126 (JD-4A Fenn)	935,334	41,738	2,016	19,353	998,441	-425,076	573,365	286,683	11,467	22,935	45,869
127 (JD-5A Skar)	966,587	46,433	871	16,500	1,030,391	-420,516	609,875	304,938	12,198	24,395	48,790
127 JD-5A Water Lit.	241,463	33,739	4,581	54,880	334,663		334,663	167,332	6,693	13,387	26,773
128 (JD-5B Cranfill)	954,459	37,798	0	18,832	1,011,089	-425,076	586,013	293,007	11,720	23,441	46,881
129 (JD-6A Price)	975,852	39,756	3,262	13,000	1,031,870	-420,516	611,354	305,677	12,227	24,454	48,908
130 (JD-7A Park)	1,009,270	34,926	0	7,500	1,051,696	-425,076	626,620	313,310	12,532	25,065	50,130
131 (JD-7B Sullins)	949,824	31,899	0	13,300	995,023	-370,260	624,763	312,381	12,495	24,991	49,981
132 (JD-9A Young)	967,359	54,497	4,681	40,000	1,066,537	-425,076	641,461	320,731	12,829	25,658	51,317
133 (JD-8A Kautz)	928,537	55,975	0	11,025	995,537	-425,076	570,461	285,231	11,409	22,818	45,637
134 (JD-9B Day)	1,086,541	63,782	2,160	14,441	1,166,924	-425,076	741,848	370,924	14,837	29,674	59,348
135 (JD-6B Perry)	1,000,779	53,735	0	16,540	1,071,054	-413,028	658,026	329,013	13,161	26,321	52,642
136 (JD-8B Brooks)	971,661	37,687	6,913	8,626	1,024,887	-425,076	599,811	299,906	11,996	23,992	47,985
137 (JD-1C Arnold)	1,023,860	27,837	1,138	12,500	1,065,335	-404,675	660,660	330,330	13,213	26,426	52,853
138 (JD-1C James)	961,175	28,706	0	12,500	1,002,381	-413,028	589,353	294,677	11,787	23,574	47,148
139 (JD-7C Wilking)	939,811	33,108	1,782	12,100	986,801	-406,836	579,965	289,983	11,599	23,199	46,397
140 (JD-6C Deegan)	951,899	38,700	0	12,000	1,002,599	-420,516	582,083	291,042	11,642	23,283	46,567
141 (JD-9C Tyler)	958,069	48,700	1,371	12,100	1,020,240	-420,516	599,724	299,862	11,994	23,989	47,978
142 (JD-4B Edelman)	851,290	31,700	2,860	6,000	891,850						