

May 27, 2025

Judiciary Budget Request, FY2026

Overview

The federal judiciary's FY2026 budget request was made public by the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts on April 25, 2025. The request seeks \$9.4 billion in discretionary funding (an increase of 9.3% over the FY2025 enacted level), as well as \$872.4 million in mandatory appropriations for judicial salaries and retirement costs.

The judiciary also uses non-appropriated funds to offset its appropriations requirement. The majority of these non-appropriated funds are derived from the collection of fees, primarily court filing fees. The judiciary's annual appropriations request reflects the net needs of the judiciary after the use of non-appropriated funds.

Appropriations for the judiciary are typically included by Congress in the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill.

Table 1 presents the FY2025 discretionary enacted level and the FY2026 discretionary request for each account that is part of the judiciary's budget request. The enacted levels are based on amounts included in regular FY2025 appropriations and do not include any supplemental appropriations.

Individual Accounts

Supreme Court

The total FY2026 discretionary request for the Supreme Court, \$174.5 million, is contained in two accounts: (1) Salaries and Expenses (\$163.1 million) and (2) Care of the Building and Grounds (\$11.4 million). The total represents a 16.3% increase over the FY2025 enacted level.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

This court, consisting of 12 judges, exercises jurisdiction over certain lower court rulings on patents and trademarks, international trade, and federal claims cases. The FY2026 discretionary budget request is \$38.6 million, an increase of 5.2% over the FY2025 enacted level.

U.S. Court of International Trade

This court has exclusive nationwide jurisdiction over civil actions against the United States, its agencies, and its officers, and certain civil actions brought by the United States arising out of import transactions and the administration and enforcement of federal customs and international trade laws. The FY2026 discretionary request

of \$22.4 million is an increase of 5.2% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Table 1. FY2025 Discretionary Appropriations and FY2026 Discretionary Appropriations Request
(in millions of dollars)

Account	FY2025 Enacted ^a	FY2026 Request
Supreme Court (total)	\$150.0	\$174.5
<i>Salaries and Expenses</i>	<i>\$129.3</i>	<i>\$163.1</i>
<i>Buildings and Grounds</i>	<i>\$20.7</i>	<i>\$11.4</i>
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	\$36.7	\$38.6
Court of International Trade	\$21.3	\$22.4
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services (total)	\$8,264.1	\$9,027.3
<i>Salaries and Expenses</i>	<i>\$5,995.1</i>	<i>\$6,338.1</i>
<i>Defender Services</i>	<i>\$1,450.7</i>	<i>\$1,766.0</i>
<i>Court Security</i>	<i>\$750.2</i>	<i>\$892.0</i>
<i>Fees of Jurors and Commissioners</i>	<i>\$58.2</i>	<i>\$19.1</i>
<i>Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund</i>	<i>\$10.0</i>	<i>\$12.0</i>
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	\$102.7	\$110.5
Federal Judicial Center	\$34.3	\$34.9
Sentencing Commission	\$21.6	\$22.5
TOTAL	\$8,630.7	\$9,430.7

Sources: H.R. 2882, Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-47); H.R. 1968, Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4); FY2026 Congressional Budget Summary (prepared by the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts, April 2025).

Note: Columns may not sum due to rounding.

a. The enacted figures reported for FY2025 do not include supplemental appropriations.

Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services

This account, which is the largest included in the judiciary's budget request, provides funding for 12 of the regional courts of appeals and 94 district courts located in the 50 states, District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories. The account is further divided to represent costs associated with judicial salaries and expenses, defender services, court security, the fees paid to jurors and commissioners, and the Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund. The FY2026 discretionary budget request of approximately \$9.0 billion is an increase of 9.2% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Salaries and Expenses

The FY2026 discretionary request for this account is \$6.3 billion, an increase of 5.7% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Defender Services

This account funds the operations of the federal public defender and community defender organizations, and compensation, reimbursements, and expenses of private practice panel attorneys appointed by federal courts to serve as defense counsel for indigent individuals. The cost for this account is determined by the number and type of prosecutions brought by U.S. attorneys. The FY2026 request is \$1.8 billion, an increase of 21.7% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Court Security

This account provides for protective services, security systems, and equipment needs in courthouses and other federal facilities to ensure the safety of judicial officers, employees, and visitors. Under this account, the majority of funding for court security is transferred to the U.S. Marshals Service to pay for court security officers under the Judicial Facility Security Program. The FY2026 request is \$892.0 million, an increase of 18.9% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Fees of Jurors and Commissioners

This account funds the fees and allowances provided to grand and petit jurors, and compensation for jury and land commissioners. The FY2026 request is \$19.1 million, a decrease of 67.2% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program funds a federal no-fault program that protects the availability of vaccines in the nation by diverting a substantial number of claims from the tort arena. The FY2026 request is \$12.0 million, a 20.0% increase over the FY2025 enacted level.

Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AO)

As the central support entity for the judiciary, the AO provides a wide range of administrative, management, program, and information technology services to the U.S. courts. The AO also provides support to the Judicial Conference of the United States, and implements

conference policies and applicable federal statutes and regulations. The FY2026 request for AO is \$110.5 million, an increase of 7.6% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Federal Judicial Center

As the judiciary's research and education entity, the Federal Judicial Center undertakes research and evaluation of judicial operations for the Judicial Conference committees and the courts. In addition, the center provides judges, court staff, and others with orientation, continuing education, and training. The center's FY2026 request is \$34.9 million, an increase of 1.7% over the FY2025 enacted level.

United States Sentencing Commission

The commission promulgates sentencing policies, practices, and guidelines for the federal criminal justice system. The FY2026 request is \$22.5 million, an increase of 4.2% over the FY2025 enacted level.

Mandatory Funding

Mandatory funding in the judiciary budget includes required funding for the salaries and benefits of Article I and Article III judges. Mandatory appropriations also provide funding for judicial retirement accounts. **Table 2** presents the FY2025 assumed appropriations level for each account and the judiciary's FY2026 request.

Table 2. FY2025 Mandatory Appropriations and FY2026 Mandatory Budget Request
(in millions of dollars)

Account	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Request
Supreme Court	\$3.2	\$3.2
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	\$3.6	\$3.7
Court of International Trade	\$2.5	\$2.6
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services	\$537.1	\$553.5
Judicial Retirement Funds	\$292.9	\$309.4
TOTAL	\$839.4	\$872.4

Source: FY2026 Congressional Budget Summary (prepared by the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts, April 2025).

Note: Columns may not sum due to rounding.

FY2026 Funding Priorities

According to the federal judiciary, its FY2026 discretionary budget request reflects the need to maintain existing services, protect judges and courthouses, and bolster IT security, as well as to address funding shortages for certain entities such as the Defender Services program.

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