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Judiciary Appropriations, FY2026

September 21, 2026

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Judiciary Appropriations, FY2026

SUMMARY

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September 21, 2026

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Funds for the judicial branch are included annually in the Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) appropriations bill. The bill provides funding for the U.S. Supreme Court; the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit; the U.S. Court of International Trade; U.S. courts of appeals and district courts; the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts; the Federal Judicial Center; the U.S. Sentencing Commission; the federal defender organizations that provide legal representation to defendants financially unable to retain counsel in federal criminal proceedings; security and protective services for courthouses, judicial officers, and judicial employees; and fees and allowances paid to jurors.

The federal judiciary's FY2026 budget request was made public by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts on April 25, 2025, one week prior to the release of the President's FY2026 "skinny budget" on May 2, 2025 (the President's budget request was formally submitted to Congress on May 30, 2025). Historically, the judiciary's appropriations request is released without change in a President's annual budget submission to Congress. The judiciary requested $9.43 billion in discretionary funds for FY2026, an increase of 9.3% over the FY2025 enacted level of $8.63 billion in discretionary funds. The judiciary's FY2026 budget request also included $872.4 million in mandatory funds to pay the salaries and benefits of certain types of federal judges, as well as provide for judicial retirement accounts.

The House FSGG appropriations subcommittee held a hearing on the judiciary's request on May 14, 2025, and it held a markup of the FSGG appropriations bill on July 21, 2025. The subcommittee recommended $8.94 billion in discretionary funding for the federal judiciary. The same amount was recommended by the House Appropriations Committee, which held its markup on September 3, 2025, and reported an original bill, H.R. 5166, on September 5, 2025.

None of the 12 regular appropriations bills for FY2026, including the FSGG bill, were enacted prior to the end of FY2025 on September 30, 2025. Consequently, a lapse in government funding occurred on October 1, 2025, which resulted in a 42-day government shutdown. The federal judiciary was able to continue paid operations through October 17, 2025, using court fee balances and other funds not dependent on a new appropriation. On October 17, 2025, the judiciary announced that it would no longer have funding to sustain full, paid operations, and that federal courts would maintain limited operations needed to perform the judiciary's constitutional functions.

On November 12, 2025, a continuing resolution (CR; the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2026; Division A of P.L. 119-37) provided funding for the judiciary through January 30, 2026. Following the CR's enactment, the judiciary returned to full, paid operations on November 13, 2025. While amounts included in the CR were generally based on FY2025 spending levels, the resolution included a supplemental amount of $28 million for protection of Supreme Court Justices.

The FSGG Senate subcommittee released a draft FSGG appropriations bill and report on November 24, 2025. The subcommittee draft recommended the judiciary receive $9.04 billion in discretionary funds for FY2026. The draft bill was introduced as S. 3290 on December 1, 2025, and referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee. The Senate took no further action on the bill.

On January 14, 2026, the House passed H.R. 7006, which consolidated the FSGG appropriations bill with the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs appropriations bill. Additionally, a joint explanatory statement was placed into the record explaining congressional intent for the legislation. On January 30, 2026, the Senate passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026 (H.R. 7148), which included the text of H.R. 7006. After a short lapse in government funding that began on February 1, 2026, the House passed the Senate-amended version of H.R. 7148 on February 3, 2026, and the President signed the legislation on the same date (P.L. 119-75). The enacted legislation provided the judiciary with $9.19 billion in discretionary funds for FY2026.

Including the $28 million in supplemental appropriations provided to the judiciary by P.L. 119-37, the total discretionary amount provided to the judiciary for FY2026 was $9.21 billion.

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of the federal judiciary's FY2026 budget request, as well as information about Congress's consideration of the request. Regular appropriations for the federal judiciary are enacted annually as part of the Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) appropriations bill. The FSGG appropriations bill also funds other government operations and entities unrelated to the judiciary, such as the Department of the Treasury, the Executive Office of the President, the District of Columbia, and more than two dozen independent agencies.[1]

The first section of the report provides information about each major action involving congressional consideration of the judiciary's FY2026 budget request.

The second section of the report provides information about the specific discretionary appropriations requested by the judiciary for FY2026, as well as information about the mandatory appropriations and administrative provisions included in the appropriations process.

The third section provides information about the various courts, judicial entities, and judicial services covered by appropriations for the judiciary. The report also identifies some of the courts and judicial services that are not covered by such appropriations, but which are funded by other appropriations bills.

Congressional Consideration of the Judiciary's FY2026 Budget Request: Overview of Actions

This section provides a chronological overview of the major actions involving the submission of the federal judiciary's FY2026 budget request and congressional consideration of the judiciary's request.

Submission of FY2026 Budget Request

The federal judiciary's FY2026 budget request was made public by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts on April 25, 2025, one week prior to the release of the President's FY2026 "skinny budget" on May 2, 2025 (the President's budget request was formally submitted to Congress on May 30, 2025).[2]

The judiciary's FY2026 request included $9.43 billion in discretionary funds for judicial branch activities and $872.4 million in mandatory funding for judges' salaries and judicial retirement accounts.[3]

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[1] For additional information about the FSGG appropriations bill, see CRS Report R49017, *Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) FY2026 Appropriations: Overview*, by Baird Webel.

[2] Additionally, by law, the judicial branch appropriations request is submitted to the President and included in the budget submission without change. Specifically, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. §1105, "Estimated expenditures and proposed appropriations for the legislative branch and the judicial branch to be included in each budget ... shall be submitted to the President ... and included in the budget by the President without change." Furthermore, Division C of the FY2012 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 112-74) added language to 31 U.S.C. §1107 relating to budget amendments, stating: "The President shall transmit promptly to Congress without change, proposed deficiency and supplemental appropriations submitted to the President by the legislative branch and the judicial branch."

[3] Office of Management and Budget, *Budget of the U.S. Government, Fiscal Year 2026, Appendix*, "Detailed Budget Estimates by Agency," Judicial Branch, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2026-APP/pdf/BUDGET-2026-APP-2-4.pdf. See also Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional* (continued...)

In recent years, appropriations for the judiciary have comprised 0.1% to 0.2% of the federal government's total budget authority.[4]

House Appropriations Subcommittee Hearing and Markup

On May 14, 2025, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government (FSGG), held a hearing on the judiciary's FY2026 budget request. Seventh Circuit Judge Amy J. St. Eve, chair of the Budget Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States, testified that "more than half of the branch's accounts are operating ... on funding levels that have not been adjusted since FY2023."[5] More specifically, according to the judiciary, the branch was "negatively affected by two straight years of flat funding in most accounts" and "a 9.3 percent increase in appropriations" for FY2026 was needed in order for the judiciary to "perform its essential constitutional functions."[6]

On July 21, 2025, the subcommittee held its markup of the FY2026 FSGG bill—recommending, by a vote of 9-6, a total of $8.94 billion in discretionary funds for the judiciary (this amount represented 94.8% of the discretionary amount requested by the judiciary for FY2026 and a 3.5% increase over the enacted amount for FY2025).

House Appropriations Committee Markup

On September 3, 2025, the House Appropriations Committee held a markup of the FY2026 FSGG bill and, by a vote of 35-28, recommended $8.94 billion in discretionary funds for the judiciary (H.R. 5166, H.Rept. 119-236).[7]

The $8.94 billion in discretionary funding recommended for the judiciary represented 38.3% of the total $23.34 billion discretionary FSGG allocation.

The committee's report accompanying the bill addressed several issues related to the judiciary that were of interest to the committee. Specifically, the committee's report, in part

- encouraged the judiciary's Probation and Pretrial Services program and the Federal Bureau of Prisons to strengthen their collaboration in providing individuals coming out of federal prison with a continuum of care for mental health, substance misuse, and other behavioral health issues;[8]

Budget Summary, FY2026 Congressional Budget Summary, April 2025. The distinction between discretionary and mandatory appropriations is discussed further in the text of this report.

[4] Calculations by CRS with data from Office of Management and Budget, *Historical Tables,* Table 5.2—Budget Authority By Agency: 1976–2031, https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/historical-tables.

[5] The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judicial Branch Seeks $9.4 Billion in FY2026 Budget Request," May 14, 2026, https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/judiciary-news/2025/05/14/judicial-branch-seeks-94-billion-fy-2026-budget-request.

[6] The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judicial Branch Seeks $9.4 Billion in FY2026 Budget Request," May 14, 2026, https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/judiciary-news/2025/05/14/judicial-branch-seeks-94-billion-fy-2026-budget-request.

[7] U.S. Congress, House Appropriations Committee, "Committee Approves FY26 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act," press release, September 3, 2025, https://appropriations.house.gov/news/press-releases/committee-approves-fy26-financial-services-and-general-government. The discretionary amount of $8.94 billion does not include mandatory funds for salaries and benefits of certain types of judgeships. See **Table 2** in report and accompanying text for additional information.

[8] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*, report to accompany H.R. 5166, 119th Cong., 1st sess., September 5, 2025, H.Rept. 119-236, p. 37.

- expressed the committee's expectation that the judiciary implement the recommendations by the Government Accountability Office and the judiciary's Workplace Conduct Working Group to improve the processes and procedures in place to prevent workplace misconduct, or report to the committee the barriers to implementation that prevent the judiciary from implementing these recommendations;[9]
- expressed that the committee looked forward to the judiciary's compliance with the Courthouse Ethics and Transparency Act;[10] and
- directed the Federal Judicial Center to report to the committee, no later than 180 days after the enactment of the bill, on its plans to incorporate a discussion of third-party litigation funding into educational activities for all federal judges.[11]

Lapse in Government Funding

None of the 12 regular appropriations bills for FY2026, including the FSGG bill, were enacted prior to the end of FY2025 on September 30, 2025.[12] Consequently, a lapse in government funding occurred on October 1, 2025, resulting in a 42-day government shutdown.[13] The federal judiciary was able to continue paid operations through October 17, 2025, using court fee balances and other funds not dependent on a new appropriation by Congress.[14] On October 17, 2025, the judiciary announced that it would no longer have funding to sustain full, paid operations, and that federal courts would maintain limited operations needed to perform the judiciary's constitutional functions.[15]

Enactment of Continuing Appropriations

On November 12, 2025, the Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026 (P.L. 119-37), was enacted. Division A—the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2026, or continuing resolution (CR)—provided funding for the judiciary and some other portions of the federal government through January 30, 2026.[16]

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[9] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*, report to accompany H.R. 5166, 119th Cong., 1st sess., September 5, 2025, H.Rept. 119-236, p. 39.

[10] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*, report to accompany H.R. 5166, 119th Cong., 1st sess., September 5, 2025, H.Rept. 119-236, p. 39.

[11] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, *Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*, report to accompany H.R. 5166, 119th Cong., 1st sess., September 5, 2025, H.Rept. 119-236, p. 39.

[12] Additionally, there was not a Senate subcommittee or committee markup of the FSGG appropriations bill or the release of a draft bill prior to start of the fiscal year on October 1, 2025.

[13] Kevin Freking et al., "Trump signs government funding bill, ending record 43-day shutdown," Associated Press, November 12, 2025, https://apnews.com/article/government-shutdown-reopen-update-house-returns-5771f2befb15f4ab45e327369f2e98d9.

[14] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judiciary Still Operating as Shutdown Starts," October 1, 2025, https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/judiciary-news/2025/10/01/judiciary-still-operating-shutdown-starts.

[15] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judiciary Funding Runs Out; Only Limited Operations to Continue," October 17, 2025, https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/judiciary-news/2025/10/17/judiciary-funding-runs-out-only-limited-operations-continue.

[16] Divisions B-D of P.L. 119-37 provided full-year appropriations for FY2026 to other parts of the government, and Divisions E-H included authorization and other legislative provisions. For more details, see CRS Report R48765, *Overview of Continuing Appropriations for FY2026 (Division A of P.L. 119-37)*, coordinated by Drew C. Aherne.

Following the CR's enactment, the judiciary returned to full, paid operations on November 13, 2025.[17]

While amounts included in the CR were generally based on FY2025 spending levels, the resolution included a supplemental appropriation of $28 million for protection of the Supreme Court Justices.

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Draft Bill Released

On November 24, 2025, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government released a draft bill and explanatory statement that recommended $9.04 billion in discretionary funds for the judiciary.[18]

The draft explanatory statement accompanying the draft bill addressed several issues of interest to the committee. Specifically, the draft explanatory statement, in part

- requested that the Supreme Court provide the House and Senate Appropriations Committees with semiannual written reports and briefings on the Court's expenditure of security funding provided for by the bill and the Court's implementation of its strategic security plan;[19]
- recommended that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit and Court of International Trade prioritize their physical and cyber security needs with the amounts appropriated for the courts;[20]
- directed the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts to provide to the committee, no later than 180 days after the enactment of the bill, a report detailing any federal statutes or Judicial Conference policies requiring the Administrative Office to notify individuals of their eligibility to seek early termination of their supervised release, and Judicial Conference policies and practices regarding recommendations of early termination;[21] and
- encouraged the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts to consult with the chief judge of the Colorado District Court during its ongoing analysis of the need for a new courthouse in Colorado Springs.[22]

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[17] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judiciary Funding Runs Out; Only Limited Operations to Continue," October 17, 2025, https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/judiciary-news/2025/10/17/judiciary-funding-runs-out-only-limited-operations-continue (updated on November 13, 2025).

[18] U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Appropriations, *Bill Text: Financial Services and General Government Act, 2026*, press release, November 24, 2025, https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/news/majority/bill-text-financial-services-and-general-government-act-2026. The amount recommended for the judiciary does not include mandatory funds for salaries and benefits of certain types of judgeships. See text of report for additional information.

[19] U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Appropriations, *Explanatory Statement For Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*," November 24, 2025, p. 34.

[20] U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Appropriations, *Explanatory Statement For Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*," November 24, 2025, p. 35.

[21] The committee also directed the report to "include data on grants of early termination and the imposition of supervised release, disaggregated by jurisdiction." U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Appropriations, *Explanatory Statement For Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*," November 24, 2025, p. 36.

[22] According to the committee, the "consultation should be inclusive of any recommendations supporting the seating of an Article III judge in that location." U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Appropriations, *Explanatory Statement For Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, 2026*," November 24, 2025, p. 38.

On December 1, 2025, the draft bill was introduced as S. 3290 and referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee. No further committee action occurred on the bill.

Enactment of FY2026 Appropriations for the Judiciary

On January 14, 2026, the House passed H.R. 7006, which included funding for items usually provided for in the FSGG appropriations bill and the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs appropriations bill. Additionally, a joint explanatory statement was placed in the *Congressional Record*.[23] The explanatory statement, in part

- directed the Supreme Court to provide the House and Senate Appropriations Committees with a written report and briefing semiannually on the expenditure of the security funding and implementation of the strategic security plan, including a comparison of planned and actual expenditures, personnel, and requirements;
- directed the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts to provide to the committee, no later than 180 days after the enactment of the bill, a report detailing any federal statutes or Judicial Conference policies requiring the Administrative Office to notify individuals of their eligibility to seek early termination of their supervised release, and Judicial Conference policies and practices regarding recommendations of early termination;
- directed the judiciary to brief the House and Senate Appropriations Committees quarterly on any new breaches to its PACER system and all investments made or needed to address gaps in the judiciary's cybersecurity; and
- encouraged the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts to consult with the chief judge of the Colorado District Court during its ongoing analysis of the need for a new courthouse in Colorado Springs.

On January 30, 2026, the Senate passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026 (H.R. 7148), as amended, which included the text of H.R. 7006. After a short lapse in government funding that began on February 1, 2026, the House passed the Senate-amended version of H.R. 7148 on February 3, 2026, and the President signed the legislation on the same date (P.L. 119-75).

P.L. 119-75 provided the judiciary with $9.19 billion in discretionary funds for FY2026 (this represented a 6.5% increase from the regular discretionary amount enacted for the judiciary for FY2025).[24]

Including the $28 million in supplemental appropriations previously provided to the judiciary in P.L. 119-37 (November 12, 2025), the total discretionary amount provided to the judiciary for FY2026 was $9.21 billion.

[23] Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Cole, Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, Regarding H.R. 7006, *Congressional Record* Vol. 172, No. 10 (January 14, 2026 - House (Vol. 172, No. 10)).

[24] This amount does not include $28.0 million in supplemental funding for the protection of the Supreme Court Justices, including the purchase and hire of passenger motor vehicles as authorized by 31 U.S.C. §§1343 and 1344 (P.L. 119-37, Nov. 12, 2025).

Overview of The Judiciary's FY2026 Budget Request

Discretionary Appropriations

The judiciary's FY2026 discretionary budget request totaled $9.43 billion and represented a 9.3% increase from the $8.63 billion in discretionary regular appropriations enacted for FY2025.

Table 1 lists, for each account included in the judiciary's discretionary budget, (1) the enacted amount for FY2025, (2) the judiciary's FY2026 request, (3) the FY2026 amount reported in H.R. 5166 by the House Appropriations Committee, (4) the FY2026 amount from the draft bill released by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, and (5) the FY2026 enacted amount.

Table 1 does not include supplemental appropriations for the judiciary (see accompanying table notes).

Table 1. Judiciary Discretionary Appropriations, FY2025-FY2026

(in millions of dollars)

	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Requested	FY2026 House Comm. Markup	FY2026 Senate Subcomm. Draft	FY2026 Enacted
Supreme Court (total)	**$150.0**	**$174.5**	**$159.4**	**$174.5**	**$146.5**
Salaries and Expenses	*$129.3*	*$163.1*	*$148.0*	*$163.1*	*$135.1*
Building and Grounds	*$20.7*	*$11.4*	*$11.4*	*$11.4*	*$11.4*
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	**$36.7**	**$38.6**	**$36.7**	**$38.6**	**$36.7**
U.S. Court of International Trade	**$21.3**	**$22.4**	**$21.3**	**$22.4**	**$22.4**
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services (total)	**$8,264.1**	**$9,027.3**	**$8,560.4**	**$8,650.2**	**$8,816.3**
Salaries and Expenses	*$5,995.1*	*$6,338.1*	*$6,069.1*	*$6,127.1*	*$6,127.1*
Defender Services	*$1,450.7*	*$1,766.0*	*$1,570.2*	*$1,600.0*	*$1,766.0*
Court Security	*$750.2*	*$892.0*	*$892.0*	*$892.0*	*$892.0*
Fees of Jurors and Commissioners	*$58.2*	*$19.1*	*$19.1*	*$19.1*	*$19.1*
Vaccine Injury Comp. Trust Fund	*$10.0*	*$12.0*	*$10.0*	*$12.0*	*$12.1*
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	**$102.7**	**$110.5**	**$102.7**	**$102.7**	**$107.0**
Federal Judicial Center	**$34.3**	**$34.9**	**$34.3**	**$34.9**	**$35.1**
U.S. Sentencing Commission	**$21.6**	**$22.5**	**$21.6**	**$21.6**	**$22.7**
TOTAL (Judiciary)	**$8,630.7**	**$9,430.7**	**$8,936.4**	**$9,044.9**	**$9,186.7**

Sources: H.R. 1968, Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (P.L. 119-4); Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Summary*, April 2025; H.R. 5166, Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2026; U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Appropriations, "Bill Text: Financial Services and General Government Act, 2026," press release, November 24, 2025, https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/news/majority/bill-text-financial-services-and-general-government-act-2026; and H.R. 7148, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026 (P.L. 119-75).

Notes: All figures are rounded, and column sums may not equal the total due to rounding.

a. The FY2025 enacted amount reported in **Table 1** for the Supreme Court—Salaries and Expenses account does *not* include $13.6 million in supplemental funding for the protection of the residences of the Supreme Court Justices (P.L. 118-158).

b. The FY2026 enacted amount reported in **Table 1** for the Supreme Court—Salaries and Expenses account does *not* include $28.0 million in supplemental funding for the protection of the Supreme Court Justices, including the purchase and hire of passenger motor vehicles as authorized by 31 U.S.C. 1343 and 1344 (P.L. 119-37).

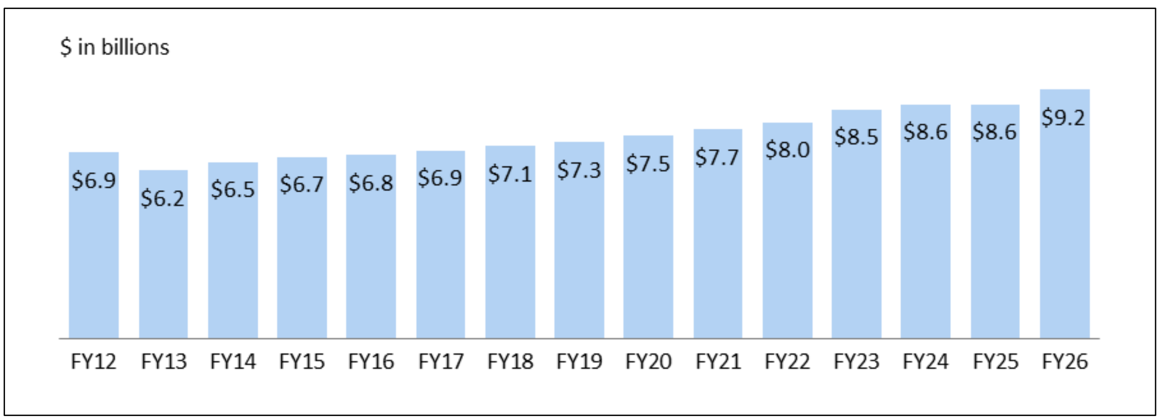
The federal courts, judicial entities, and judicial programs funded by the various accounts listed in **Table 1** are discussed below in greater detail in the section of the report titled "Courts, Programs, and Other Items Funded by the Judiciary Budget."

Percentage of the Judiciary's FY2026 Appropriations Request Enacted

Overall, Congress appropriated $9.19 billion, or approximately 97.4%, of the judiciary's FY2026 discretionary budget request of $9.43 billion. The enacted amount for FY2026 represents approximately a 6.4% increase over the regular appropriations amount enacted for FY2025.[25]

Figure 1. Discretionary Appropriations Enacted for the Judiciary

(FY2012 to FY2026)



Source: Congressional Research Service compilation of data provided by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

Notes: The amounts reported in the figure do not include supplemental appropriations.

[25] The amounts included in **Figure 1** do not include supplemental appropriations. For example, the amount reported for FY2020 does not include supplemental appropriations provided to assist the judiciary in responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). On March 27, 2020, the President signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the "CARES Act") to address the nationwide impact of COVID-19. The act, in part, provided $7.5 million in funding for the federal judiciary to respond to the pandemic. Specifically, the CARES Act made appropriations to the federal judiciary "to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally." By law, Congress designated such appropriations to be for an emergency requirement. Three judiciary accounts received funds under the act: the *Supreme Court of the United States—Salaries and Expenses* account ($500,000); the *Courts of Appeals, District Courts, And Other Judicial Services—Salaries and Expenses* account ($6 million); and the *Defender Services* account ($1 million).

Three Largest Discretionary Accounts for FY2026 Appropriations

Figure 2 shows, for the total enacted appropriation amount for FY2026, the percentage breakdown of the total by the enacted amounts for the judiciary accounts listed in **Table 1**.

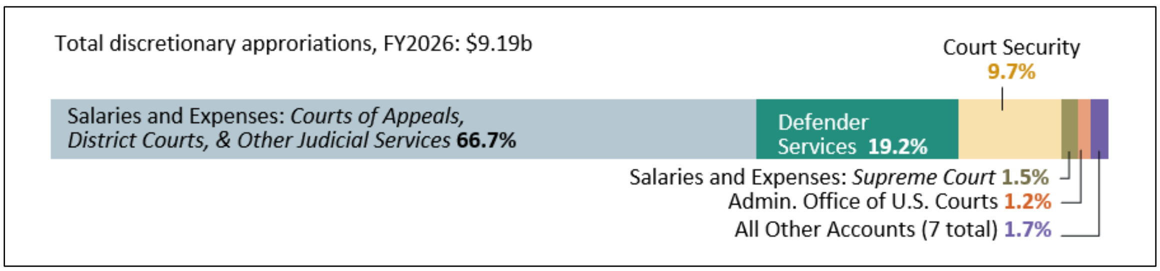
Of the $9.19 billion in appropriations provided to the judiciary for FY2026, the greatest percentage was for the *Salaries and Expenses—Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services* account, representing 66.7% of the enacted amount.

The second-greatest percentage was for the *Defender Services* account, representing 19.2% of the total enacted amount, and the third-greatest percentage was for the *Court Security* account, representing 9.7% of the enacted amount.[26]

The amounts appropriated for the *Salaries and Expenses—Supreme Court* and *Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts* accounts represent 1.5% and 1.2%, respectively, of the total enacted amount of FY2026 discretionary appropriations for the judiciary. The remaining 1.7% of the FY2026 enacted amount was for the other seven accounts listed in **Table 1**.[27]

Figure 2. Enacted Discretionary Appropriations, Percentage by Account

(FY2026)



Source: Congressional Research Service compilation of data provided by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

Notes: The percentages reported in the figure do not include supplemental appropriations.

Three Largest Percentage Changes by Account from FY2025 to FY2026 Enacted Appropriations

The largest percentage change by account from FY2025 to FY2026 was a 67.2% decrease in the amount appropriated for the *Fees of Jurors and Commissioners* account, declining from $58.2 million in FY2025 to $19.1 million in FY2026. According to the judiciary, the FY2026 enacted amount, combined with the judiciary's available unobligated balances (i.e., available funds that have not yet been committed by contract or other legally binding action), "is sufficient to meet the petit and grand juror requirements for the year."[28]

The second-largest percentage change was a 44.9% decrease in the amount appropriated for the *Supreme Court—Building and Grounds* account, declining from $20.7 million in FY2025 to

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[26] Altogether, these three accounts represent 95.6% of the judiciary's enacted FY2026 budget.

[27] The percentages of the judiciary's enacted FY2026 discretionary budget for the other seven accounts are *U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit* (0.4%); *Federal Judicial Center* (0.4%); *U.S. Court of International Trade* (0.2%); *Fees of Jurors and Commissioners* (0.2%); *U.S. Sentencing Commission* (0.2%); *Supreme Court—Building and Grounds* (0.1%); and the *Vaccine Injury Trust Fund* (0.1%). Amounts may not add to 1.7% due to rounding.

[28] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2027 Congressional Budget Summary*, March 2026.

$11.4 million in FY2026 (which is also the amount requested by the judiciary for FY2026). The judiciary stated that the "decrease is the result of non-recurring requirements" related to costs associated with the account.[29]

The third-largest percentage change was a 21.7% increase in the amount appropriated for the *Defender Services* account, increasing from $1.451 billion in FY2025 to $1.766 billion in FY2026. According to the judiciary, the amount enacted "will address increased caseload by funding all projected FY 2026 panel attorney payments, including $70.4 million in deferred FY 2025 payments made in November 2025, as well as much-needed federal defender organization (FDO) staffing increases to reach 98 percent of the staffing formula."[30] Additionally, "the enacted level will support major physical infrastructure projects to address pressing FDO tenant alternation needs, cybersecurity and IT requirements, and training enhancements for FDO staff and panel attorneys."[31]

Use of Nonappropriated Funds

The judiciary also uses nonappropriated funds to help offset its funding requirements. The majority of these nonappropriated funds are from the collection of fees, primarily court filing fees and fees associated with obtaining case and docket information online from various federal courts.[32] These monies are used to offset expenses that would otherwise be covered by the discretionary *Salaries and Expenses* account for the courts of appeals, district courts, and other judicial services. The amounts presented in this report reflect the net resources for the judiciary, and do not include nonappropriated funds used to offset expenses.

Mandatory Appropriations

Mandatory appropriations are used to meet the constitutional and statutory obligations associated with the salaries and expenses of certain types of judgeships (and, consequently, are not considered *discretionary* appropriations).

[29] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2027 Congressional Budget Summary*, March 2026.

[30] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2027 Congressional Budget Summary*, March 2026.

[31] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2027 Congressional Budget Summary*, March 2026.

[32] Each type of federal court, and other federal judicial services, publishes a list of fees that are charged for services provided by the specific court. For a list of these fees, see Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Fees," https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/fees.

The Public Access to Court Electronic Records, or PACER, is a fee-generating service that allows users to obtain case and docket information online from federal appellate, district, and bankruptcy courts, and the PACER Case Locator. Many users are charged a fee to obtain such information (although there are some circumstances for which there is no fee charged for accessing court records—see, for example, PACER, "Options to Access Records if you Cannot Afford PACER Fees," https://pacer.uscourts.gov/my-account-billing/billing/options-access-records-if-you-cannot-afford-pacer-fees). According to the federal judiciary, PACER is provided "in keeping with its commitment to providing public access to court information via a centralized service." See https://www.pacer.gov.

Congressional authorization for the judiciary to collect fees was granted in the Judiciary Appropriations Act of 1991, P.L. 101-515 (November 5, 1990). Specifically, the act states that "the Judicial Conference shall prescribe reasonable fees ... for collection by the courts under those sections for access to information available through automatic data processing equipment.... The Director, under the direction of the Judicial Conference of the United States, shall prescribe a schedule of reasonable fees for electronic access to information which the Director is required to maintain and make available to the public." Title IV, §404(a); 104 Stat. 2132-2133.

Such appropriations fall into two categories: (1) funds used to pay the salaries of Article III judges (Supreme Court Justices, U.S. courts of appeals judges, etc.) and certain other types of federal judges (e.g., bankruptcy judges); and (2) funds used for several judicial retirement accounts—specifically, the Judicial Officers' Retirement Fund (28 U.S.C. §377(o)); the Judicial Survivors' Annuities Fund (28 U.S.C. §376(c)); and the U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judges' Retirement Fund (28 U.S.C. §178(1)).

Table 2 shows, by account, the enacted mandatory appropriations for FY2025 and the estimated mandatory appropriations for FY2026.

Table 2. Judiciary Mandatory Funding, FY2025-FY2026

(in millions of dollars)

Account	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Estimated
Supreme Court	$3.2	$3.3
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	$3.6	$3.7
Court of International Trade	$2.4	$2.5
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services	$537.1	$534.7
Judicial Retirement Funds	$292.9	$309.4
Total (Judiciary)	**$839.2**	**$853.6**

Source: Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Summary*, April 2025.

Note: The column for FY2026 reflects assumed financial plan levels. All figures are rounded, and column sums may not equal the total due to rounding. The amounts reported in **Table 2** for FY2025 and FY2026 do not include supplemental mandatory appropriations provided by P.L. 119-21.

The mandatory appropriations estimated for FY2026 totaled $853.6 million. Of this mandatory amount, $544.2 million, or 63.8%, is for salaries and expenses associated with judgeships that the judiciary is constitutionally (or statutorily) required to pay. The remaining $309.4 million (or 36.2% of FY2026 assumed mandatory appropriations) provides for judicial retirement funds.

There was a similar percentage breakdown in the use of mandatory funds for FY2025. Of the $839.2 million in mandatory appropriations for FY2025, $546.3 million (or 65.1%) was to fund the salaries and expenses associated with Article III judges and certain other types of federal judges. The remaining $292.9 million (or 34.9% of FY2025 mandatory appropriations) provided for judicial retirement funds.

Administrative Provisions

In federal appropriations bills, administrative provisions provide restrictions, conditions, or requirements that apply to individual accounts, agencies, or titles.

The enacted FY2026 appropriations for the judiciary included the following administrative provisions:

1. makes funds appropriated for salaries and expenses available for services authorized by 5 U.S.C. §3109;

2. provides transfer authority of appropriated amounts, with certain limitations, among judiciary accounts;
3. permits not more than $11,000 to be used for official reception and representation expenses of the Judicial Conference and specifies that such funds be administered by the director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts in the capacity as secretary of the Judicial Conference;
4. indicates that 40 U.S.C. §3315(a) shall be applied by substituting "Federal" for "executive" each place it appears; and
5. specifies that the director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts reimburse the U.S. Marshals Service rather than the Department of Homeland Security for building-specific security services provided at courthouses included in an ongoing pilot program.

Supplemental Appropriations

In recent years, Congress has approved supplemental appropriations to provide additional funds for the protection and security of Supreme Court Justices. Specifically, for FY2025, Congress provided $13.6 million in supplemental funding for the protection of the Justices' residences.[33] Additionally, for FY2026, Congress provided $28.0 million in supplemental funding to provide additional security for the Justices, which included the purchase and hire of passenger motor vehicles as authorized by 31 U.S.C. §§1343 and 1344.[34] Most recently, Congress appropriated $30 million to provide "additional funding for Supreme Court Justice security."[35]

Courts, Programs, and Other Items Funded by the Judiciary Budget

U.S. Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court is the final arbiter in the federal court system. Congress has authorized nine judgeships for the Court. Justices, including the Chief Justice of the United States, are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.[36]

U.S. Courts of Appeals

U.S. courts of appeals, or circuit courts, take appeals from U.S. district courts and are also empowered to review the decisions of many administrative agencies. The nation is divided into 12 geographic circuits, each with a U.S. court of appeals. There is also one circuit court, the U.S.

[33] P.L. 118-158 (December 21, 2024).

[34] P.L. 119-37 (November 12, 2025).

[35] P.L. 119-86 (April 30, 2026). See explanatory statement printed in the *Congressional Record* on January 22, 2026), p. H1684.

[36] For additional information about the nomination and confirmation process to the Court, see CRS Report R44235, *Supreme Court Appointment Process: President's Selection of a Nominee*, CRS Report R44236, *Supreme Court Appointment Process: Consideration by the Senate Judiciary Committee*, and CRS Report R44234, *Supreme Court Appointment Process: Senate Debate and Confirmation Vote*; and CRS Report RL33225, *Supreme Court Nominations, 1789 to 2022: Actions by the Senate, the Judiciary Committee, and the President*.

Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, with nationwide jurisdiction (this court is discussed in the section immediately below).

When hearing a challenge to a decision from a district court located within its geographic circuit, the task of a court of appeals is to determine whether or not the law was applied correctly by the district court.[37] Cases presented to U.S. circuit courts are generally considered by judges sitting in three-member panels (circuit courts do not use juries).

Altogether, 167 judgeships for the 12 regional circuit courts are currently authorized by law. The First Circuit (comprised of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico) has the fewest number of authorized judgeships, 6, while the Ninth Circuit (comprised of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington) has the greatest number, 29.[38]

U.S. circuit court judges are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Such appointments are generally considered to be effective for life (under Article III of the U.S. Constitution),[39] meaning judges remain in office until they die, assume senior status, resign, retire, or are removed by Congress through the process of impeachment.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit exercises nationwide jurisdiction over certain types of cases, including international trade, government contracts, patents, trademarks, certain money claims against the United States government, federal personnel, veterans' benefits, and public safety officers' benefits claims. Given the scope of its jurisdiction, the court takes appeals from all district courts, the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, the U.S. Court of International Trade, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.[40]

The court also reviews certain administrative agency decisions, including decisions by the U.S. Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, the U.S. Patent Trial and Appeal Board, the Boards of Contract Appeals, the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, the Government Accountability Office Personnel Appeals Board, and the U.S. International Trade Commission.[41]

There are 12 judgeships authorized for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Judges serving on the Federal Circuit are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Such appointments are also considered to be effective for life (under Article III of the U.S. Constitution), meaning judges remain in office until they die, assume senior status, resign, retire, or are removed by Congress through the process of impeachment.

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[37] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Court Role and Structure," https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure.

[38] The Ninth Circuit also includes two U.S. territories: Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

[39] Throughout the text of the report, the term "effective for life" reflects the constitutional prerogative of a judge appointed to an Article III court to remain in office "during good Behavior."

[40] United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, "Court Jurisdiction," https://cafc.uscourts.gov/home/the-court/about-the-court/court-jurisdiction. Despite its nationwide jurisdiction, the court does not hear appeals from other U.S. courts of appeals (the appeals from those courts are directed to the U.S. Supreme Court).

[41] United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, "Court Jurisdiction."

The court was established by Congress in 1982 under Article III of the U.S. Constitution by the merger of the U.S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals and the appellate division of the U.S. Court of Claims.[42]

U.S. Court of International Trade

The U.S. Court of International Trade exercises nationwide jurisdiction over civil actions related to the customs and international trade laws of the United States. Most of the cases heard by the court "involve antidumping and countervailing duties, the classification and valuation of imported merchandise, actions to recover unpaid customs duties and civil penalties, and various actions arising generally under the tariff laws."[43]

There are nine judgeships authorized for the U.S. Court of International Trade. Judges serving on the Court of International Trade are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Such appointments are also considered to be effective for life (under Article III of the U.S. Constitution), meaning judges remain in office until they die, assume senior status, resign, retire, or are removed by Congress through the process of impeachment.

The court was created in 1980 when Congress reorganized the U.S. Customs Court as the U.S. Court of International Trade,[44] with the new name signifying "its judicial functions and its expanded jurisdiction over cases related to trade."[45]

U.S. District Courts (Including Territorial Courts)

District courts are the federal trial courts of general jurisdiction. These trial courts determine facts and apply legal principles to resolve disputes.[46] Trials are conducted by a district court judge or, in some cases, a magistrate judge.

Each state has at least one U.S. district court (there is also one district court in each of the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). States with more than one U.S. district court are divided into judicial districts, with each district having one district court. For example, California is divided into four judicial districts—each with its own U.S. district court. Altogether there are 94 district courts.[47]

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[42] 96 Stat. 25, P.L. 97-164 (April 2, 1982).

[43] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "U.S. Court of International Trade—Judicial Business 2021," https://www.uscourts.gov/statistics-reports/us-court-international-trade-judicial-business-2021.

[44] Federal Judicial Center, "U.S. Court of International Trade, 1980-present," https://www.fjc.gov/history/courts/u.s.-court-international-trade-1980-present.

[45] 94. Stat. 1727, P.L. 96-417 (October 10, 1980).

[46] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Court Role and Structure," https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure.

[47] These include three district courts located in several U.S. territories. Specifically, there is one district court each in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These courts were established by Congress under its authority to govern the territories granted by Article IV of the Constitution. Judges confirmed to these courts serve 10-year terms (unlike Article III U.S. district court judges, who are appointed for life unless they voluntarily leave office or are removed from office by Congress). As with Article III courts, territorial courts hear cases arising out of federal law, their decisions may be appealed to a U.S. circuit court of appeals, and their judicial nominations are referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

At present, there are 677 district court judgeships authorized by law.[48] Congress has authorized between 1 and 28 judgeships for each U.S. district court, with district courts serving more populous areas generally having more authorized judgeships. Among judicial districts with Article III judgeships, the Eastern District of Oklahoma (Muskogee) has the fewest number (with 1 authorized judgeship), while the district courts located in the Southern District of New York (Manhattan) and the Central District of California (Los Angeles) have the greatest number (each with 28 authorized judgeships).

U.S. district court judges are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Such appointments are considered to be effective for life (under Article III of the U.S. Constitution), meaning judges remain in office until they die, assume senior status, resign, retire, or are removed by Congress through the process of impeachment.

Territorial district court judges, serving the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, are also appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate (under Article IV of the U.S. Constitution).[49] These appointments, however, are not effective for life but are for a fixed 10-year term in office.

U.S. Magistrate Judges

Certain types of trials and proceedings held by district courts can also be conducted by magistrate judges.[50] A district court judge may refer certain matters to a magistrate judge (e.g., a magistrate judge may be assigned to hold a pretrial conference or an evidentiary hearing). A magistrate judge may also conduct any type of civil trial as long as the parties consent (i.e., there is *consent jurisdiction*), and they may also preside over all misdemeanor criminal trials as long as a defendant has waived his right to a trial before a district judge.[51] Magistrate judges cannot preside over felony criminal cases (but can handle pretrial matters and preliminary proceedings in such cases).[52]

The number of magistrate judge positions is determined by the Judicial Conference of the United States. For the 12-month period ending September 30, 2025, the Judicial Conference authorized 567 full-time magistrate judge positions, 24 part-time positions, and 2 combination clerk/magistrate judge positions.[53]

Magistrate judges are non-Article III judges and are appointed by majority vote of the active district court judges serving on the court on which the magistrate would serve. Full-time magistrate judges serve a term of eight years and may be reappointed.[54] During FY2025, there

[48] This total includes 4 permanent territorial district court judgeships. See Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judges and Judgeships," http://www.uscourts.gov/JudgesAndJudgeships/AuthorizedJudgeships.aspx. The total also includes four "roving" district court judgeships shared by two or more two district courts within a state (for example, Congress has authorized one judgeship to serve both the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky).

[49] Judges appointed to U.S. district courts for the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are appointed as Article III judges (and not as territorial district court judges).

[50] The office of magistrate judge was created by the Federal Magistrates Act of 1968, in part, to provide relief to district court judges in handling their caseloads. Federal Judicial Center, "Magistrate Judges," https://www.fjc.gov/history/judges/magistrate-judgeships.

[51] Federal Judicial Center, "Magistrate Judges."

[52] Federal Judicial Center, "Magistrate Judges."

[53] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Status of Magistrate Judge Positions and Appointments—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/status-magistrate-judge-positions-and-appointments-judicial-business-2025.

[54] 28 U.S.C. §631(d).

were 69 appointments of full-time magistrate judges, which included 39 new appointments and 30 reappointments.[55]

U.S. Bankruptcy Courts

Federal courts have exclusive jurisdiction over bankruptcy matters (i.e., a bankruptcy case cannot be filed in state court). Bankruptcy courts are units of the federal district courts and exercise jurisdiction over bankruptcy matters granted by statute and referred to them by their respective district courts.[56]

Congress, by legislative action, determines the number of bankruptcy judgeships. As of September 30, 2025, there were a total of 345 bankruptcy judgeships authorized by Congress.[57]

Bankruptcy judges are non-Article III judges appointed by the court of appeals for the circuit where the bankruptcy court is located. Judges are appointed for a term of 14 years and may be reappointed.

U.S. Court of Federal Claims

The U.S. Court of Federal Claims has nationwide jurisdiction over various

> monetary claims against the federal government, including those involving tax refunds, federal taking of private property for public use, pay and dismissal of federal civilian employees, pay and dismissal of military personnel, land claims brought by Native Americans and/or their tribe(s), contract disputes, bid protests, patents and copyright, congressional reference, and the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Act.[58]

Each January, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §791(c), the clerk of the Court of Federal Claims submits to Congress a statement of all the judgments rendered by the court. The statement "notes the names of the claimants, the amounts, the dates of entry and nature of the claims, and the disposition for all judgments rendered the previous fiscal year."[59]

The court consists of 16 non-Article III judges who are appointed for a term of 15 years by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate (i.e., with Senate confirmation). A judge may

[55] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Status of Magistrate Judge Positions and Appointments—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/status-magistrate-judge-positions-and-appointments-judicial-business-2025.

According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "the average age of new appointees to full-time magistrate judge positions was 49 years.... New full-time appointees had been members of the bar for an average of 21 years at the time of appointment." Of the new full-time magistrate judges in FY2025, the most common types of position or employment at the time of appointment included attorneys in private practice (14), assistant U.S. attorneys (12), federal public defenders or assistant federal public defenders (6), state court judges (3), law clerks (2), general counsel (1), and law school lecturer and judicial liaison (1). Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Status of Magistrate Judge Positions and Appointments—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/status-magistrate-judge-positions-and-appointments-judicial-business-2025.

[56] Federal Judicial Center, "U.S. Bankruptcy Courts," https://www.fjc.gov/history/courts/u.s.-bankruptcy-courts.

[57] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Status of Bankruptcy Judgeships—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/status-bankruptcy-judgeships-judicial-business-2025.

[58] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "U.S. Courts of Federal Claims—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/us-court-federal-claims-judicial-business-2025.

[59] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "U.S. Courts of Federal Claims—Judicial Business 2025."

be reappointed by a President to serve an additional 15-year term if his or her nomination is confirmed by the Senate.[60]

Pretrial Services and Probation

Federal pretrial services and probation officers investigate and supervise defendants and offenders within the federal criminal justice system. Pretrial services officers "prepare reports for judges to use in determining whether to order the release or detention of defendants."[61] For example, for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2025, pretrial services officers prepared 77,841 pretrial services reports for judges (98% of the reports were prebail reports).[62]

Pretrial service officers also supervise those defendants released by judges pending adjudication of their criminal cases.[63] For the 12-month period ending September 30, 2025, officers provided pretrial services supervision for 19,032 defendants. Such supervision included providing various support services (e.g., substance abuse treatment and location monitoring) and informing the courts and U.S. attorneys of any apparent violations of release conditions.[64]

Probation officers provide courts "with reliable information concerning the offender, the victim, and the offense committed, as well as an impartial application of the sentencing guidelines."[65] Probation officers also "supervise offenders sentenced to probation, as well as offenders coming out of federal prison who are required to serve a term of supervised release."[66] On September 30, 2025, a total of 119,532 individuals were under postconviction supervision by probation officers.[67]

Defender Services

The Sixth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to representation by counsel in serious criminal proceedings. The federal judiciary has historically exercised "responsibility for appointing counsel in federal criminal proceedings for those unable to bear the cost of representation."[68] This account in the judiciary budget funds the operations of federal defender

[60] 28 U.S.C. §§171-172.

[61] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Pretrial Services—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/pretrial-services-judicial-business-2025.

[62] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Pretrial Services—Judicial Business 2025."

[63] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Summary*, "Overview of the Judiciary," p. 3, https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/fy-2026-congressional-budget-summary.pdf.

[64] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Pretrial Services—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/pretrial-services-judicial-business-2025.

[65] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Summary*, "Overview of the Judiciary," p. 3, https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/fy-2026-congressional-budget-summary.pdf.

[66] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Summary*, "Overview of the Judiciary," p. 3, https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/fy-2026-congressional-budget-summary.pdf.

[67] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Post-Conviction Supervision—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/post-conviction-supervision-judicial-business-2025.

[68] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Defender Services," https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/defender-services.

organizations responsible for providing representation to defendants financially unable to retain counsel in federal criminal proceedings.

At present, there are 83 authorized federal defender organizations that employ more than 4,200 lawyers, investigators, paralegals, and support personnel.[69]

This account also provides funds to reimburse the services of private appointed counsel (i.e., panel attorneys) in federal criminal proceedings. The rates paid to panel attorneys cover both attorney compensation and office overhead.[70] There are case maximum amounts that limit the compensation paid to a panel attorney based on the type of case to which he or she is appointed.[71] Consequently, the costs associated with this account are driven, in part, by the number and type of prosecutions brought by U.S. attorneys' offices.

For the 12-month period ending September 30, 2025, there were a total of 162,239 representations by counsel affiliated with federal defender organizations or who served as panel attorneys under the Criminal Justice Act (CJA).[72] The number of private attorneys who were paid during this period through the CJA as panel attorneys was 8,504.[73]

Court Security

This account provides for protective guard services and security systems and equipment for federal courthouses and other facilities housing federal court operations.

The majority of funding for court security is transferred to the Judicial Security Division (JSD) of the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS), which is responsible for ensuring "the safe and secure conduct of judicial proceedings" and for "protecting federal judges, jurors, and other members of the federal judiciary."[74]

At present, the Marshals protect 94 federal district courts, over 800 other judicial facilities, and approximately 2,700 federal judges.[75] The Marshals also have protective responsibility for

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[69] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Defender Services." There are two types of federal defender organizations. The first type, federal public defender organizations, are federal entities and their staffs are federal employees. The *chief federal public defender* is appointed to a four-year term by the court of appeals of the circuit where the federal public defender organization is located. The second type, community defender organizations, are nonprofit defense counsel organizations incorporated under state laws. These nonprofit organizations operate under the supervision of a board of directors and can, when included in a judicial district's plan to provide legal representation to indigent defendants, receive initial and sustaining grants from the federal judiciary to fund their operations. At present, there are 66 federal public defender organizations and 17 community defender organizations. Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Criminal Justice Act—Judicial Business 2025," https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/criminal-justice-act-judicial-business-2025.

[70] Panel attorneys are paid an hourly rate of $177 for noncapital cases, and, for capital cases, a maximum hourly rate of $226. Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Defender Services," https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/defender-services.

[71] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Defender Services." Maximum attorney compensation is $13,800 for felony cases, $3,900 for misdemeanors, and $9,800 for appeals.

[72] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Criminal Justice Act—Judicial Business 2025, https://www.uscourts.gov/data-news/reports/statistical-reports/judicial-business-united-states-courts/judicial-business-2025/criminal-justice-act-judicial-business-2025.

[73] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Criminal Justice Act—Judicial Business 2025."

[74] U.S. Marshals Service, *Fact Sheet—Judicial Security 2026*, https://www.usmarshals.gov/resources/fact-sheets/2026-judicial-security-0.

[75] U.S. Marshals Service, *Fact Sheet—Judicial Security 2026*.

approximately 30,300 federal prosecutors and court officials.[76] In FY2025 (the most recent fiscal year for which data is available), the Marshals investigated 807 threats and potential threats to protected persons in the judiciary.[77]

Fees of Jurors and Commissioners

This account funds the fees and allowances provided to petit and grand jurors and compensation for jury and land commissioners.[78] Petit jurors serve on a trial jury, while grand jurors serve on a grand jury.[79] Petit jurors are paid $50 per day but can, after serving 10 days on a jury, receive up to $60 per day.[80] Grand jurors are also paid $50 per day but can, after serving 45 days on a grand jury, receive up to $60 per day.[81]

Petit and grand jurors are also reimbursed for reasonable transportation expenses and, in some courts, parking fees.[82] If sequestered during their service, jurors can receive a subsistence allowance that covers their meals and lodging.[83]

A jury commissioner is appointed in some cases to work with the clerk of court to manage the random selection of petit and grand jurors.[84] The compensation paid to a jury commissioner is $50 per day (plus the reimbursement of reasonable expenses related to his or her service).[85]

According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "costs associated with this account may vary and are driven by the number of jury trials, the length of those trials, and statutory rates for reimbursement paid to jurors."[86]

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[76] U.S. Marshals Service, *Fact Sheet—Judicial Security 2026*.

[77] U.S. Marshals Service, *Fact Sheet—Judicial Security 2026*.

[78] Land commissioners are appointed in certain types of cases to "determine the issue of just compensation arising from the deprivation of private property for public use," including cases where a district court has ordered that "compensation for condemned property be determined by a commission of three persons appointed by the court." U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, hearings before the Subcommittee on the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies, February 23, 1988. Land commissioners are paid based on the daily equivalent of the highest rate payable under 5 U.S.C. §5332. Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Summary*, "Courts Of Appeals, District Courts, And Other Judicial Services—Fees of Jurors and Commissioners," p. 48, https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/fy-2026-congressional-budget-summary.pdf.

[79] A trial jury decides "whether the defendant committed the crime as charged in a criminal case, or whether the defendant injured the plaintiff in a civil case." A grand jury "is presented with evidence from the U.S. attorney, the prosecutor in federal criminal cases. The grand jury determines whether there is 'probable cause' to believe the individual has committed a crime and should be put on trial. If the grand jury determines there is enough evidence, an indictment will be issued against the defendant." Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Types of Juries," https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/jury-service/types-juries.

[80] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Juror Pay," https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/jury-service/juror-pay.

[81] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Juror Pay."

[82] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Juror Pay."

[83] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Juror Pay."

[84] 28 U.S.C. §1863.

[85] 28 U.S.C. §1863(b)(1).

[86] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, *The Judiciary Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Summary*, p. 47, https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/fy-2026-congressional-budget-summary.pdf.

Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund

The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986 created the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP), to provide compensation to people found to be injured by certain vaccines.[87] The VICP "was established after lawsuits against vaccine manufacturers and healthcare providers threatened to cause vaccine shortages and reduce vaccination rates."[88] Additionally, the program "is designed to encourage vaccination by providing a streamlined system for compensation in rare instances where an injury results from vaccination"[89] and provides "an alternative to traditional products liability and medical malpractice litigation for persons injured by their receipt or one or more of the standard childhood vaccines."[90]

The VICP, according to the Department of Justice, "has succeeded in providing a less adversarial, less expensive, and less time-consuming system of recovery than the traditional tort system that governs medical malpractice, personal injury, and product liability cases."[91]

The Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund provides funding for VICP, covering claims related to vaccine-related injuries or deaths for covered vaccines administered on or after October 1, 1988.[92] An individual who believes he or she has been injured by a covered vaccine can seek compensation from the fund by filing a claim against the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.[93]

Total compensation paid over the life of VICP, as of this writing, is approximately $5.6 billion.[94]

Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AO), with a staff of over 1,000 employees, "is the agency within the judicial branch that provides a broad range of legislative, legal, financial, technology, management, administrative, and program support services to federal courts."[95]

A main responsibility of AO is to provide staff support and counsel for the Judicial Conference and the conference's committees. The Judicial Conference committees also advise AO as it develops the annual judiciary budget request for submission by the President and approval by Congress.

Federal Judicial Center

As the federal judiciary's research and education entity, the Federal Judicial Center (FJC) "develops orientation and continuing education programs for judges and other court personnel. It

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[87] 42 U.S.C. §§300aa-1 to 300aa-34.

[88] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, "About the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program," https://www.hrsa.gov/vaccine-compensation/about/index.html.

[89] U.S. Department of Justice, "Vaccine Injury Compensation Program," https://www.justice.gov/civil/vicp.

[90] U.S. Department of Justice, "Vaccine Injury Compensation Program."

[91] U.S. Department of Justice, "Vaccine Injury Compensation Program."

[92] The Department of the Treasury manages the fund's investments. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration, "About the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program."

[93] U.S. Department of Justice, "Vaccine Injury Compensation Program."

[94] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration, *National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program Data Report*, updated August 1, 2026, https://www.hrsa.gov/vaccine-compensation/data.

[95] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judicial Administration," https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/judicial-administration.

also studies judiciary operations and recommends to the Judicial Conference how to improve the management and administration of the federal courts."[96]

The operations of the FJC are "overseen by a board of directors whose members are the Chief Justice, the director of the Administrative Office, and seven judges chosen by the Judicial Conference."[97]

United States Sentencing Commission

The United States Sentencing Commission is a bipartisan, independent agency that is located within the federal judiciary. It was created by Congress in 1984 "to reduce sentencing disparities and promote transparency and proportionality in sentencing."[98] Along these lines, the commission is responsible for establishing and amending the sentencing guidelines used by the federal judiciary.[99]

The commission consists of seven voting members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, with members serving staggered six-year terms.[100] No more than four members of the commission can be members of the same political party, and at least three members must be federal judges.[101] For a sentencing guideline to be amended, the amendment must receive the affirmative votes of four members of the commission.[102]

The commission has a staff of approximately 100 employees.[103] The commission is also advised by "four standing advisory groups representing the views of practitioners, probation officers, victims, and tribal lands."[104]

Federal Courts Not Funded by the Judiciary Budget

Three specialized courts within the federal court system are not funded under the judiciary's budget:

1. U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces (funded in the Department of Defense appropriations bill; since September 5, 2025, the Department of Defense has been "using a secondary Department of War designation," under Executive Order 14347);

[96] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judicial Administration," https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/judicial-administration.

[97] Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, "Judicial Administration."

[98] United States Sentencing Commission, "About the Commission," https://www.ussc.gov.

[99] United States Sentencing Commission, "About the Commission."

[100] United States Sentencing Commission, "Organization," https://www.ussc.gov/about/who-we-are/organization.

[101] United States Sentencing Commission, "Organization." Additionally, the Attorney General, or the Attorney General's designee, and the chair of the U.S. Parole Commission are each *ex officio*, nonvoting members of the commission.

[102] United States Sentencing Commission, "Organization."

[103] United States Sentencing Commission, "Organization."

[104] United States Sentencing Commission, "About," https://www.ussc.gov/about-page. The purpose, in part, of the advisory group representing the views of tribal lands is to provide the commission "its views on federal sentencing issues related to American Indian and Alaska Native defendants and victims, and to offenses committed in Indian Country." See United States Sentencing Commission, "Advisory Groups," https://www.ussc.gov/about/who-we-are/advisory-groups.

2. U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (funded in the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies appropriations bill); and
3. U.S. Tax Court (funded under Independent Agencies, Title V of the FSGG bill).

Additionally, the judiciary's courthouse construction and capital security projects are funded by the budget for the General Services Administration (GSA).

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