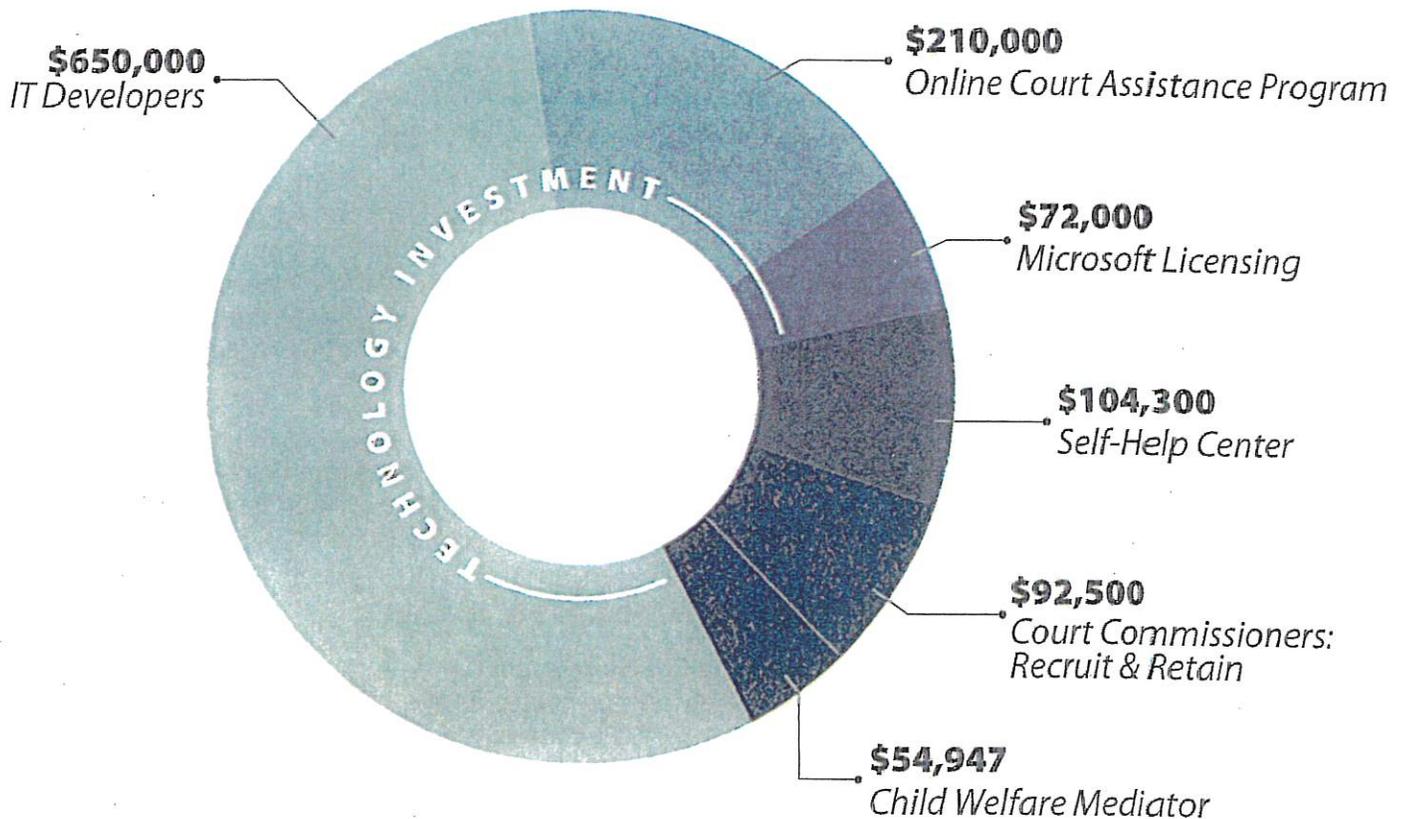


# JUDICIAL BRANCH FY 2021 Budget Priorities and Building Blocks

## ONGOING REQUESTS = \$1,183,747

Please see other side of page for additional details.

.7% increase to  
Total Judicial Budget



## ONE-TIME REQUEST = \$450,000

Please see other side of page for additional details.

**\$450,000**

Technology Investment – West Jordan Courthouse - Replace Failing Recording Equipment

## JUDICIAL BRANCH

### FY 2021 Budget Priorities and Building Block Information

*Established by the Judicial Council and listed in order of priority*

#### **#1: TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT: CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE EFFICIENT, OPEN, AND FAIR ACCESS TO JUSTICE = \$932,000 ongoing / \$450,000 one-time**

##### **\$650,000 (ongoing) – IT Developers**

**PURPOSE:** increase IT staff by six to support continued development of the courts' IT infrastructure.

**PROBLEM:** The number of core technology applications needed to serve the public and support the courts has more than doubled (from 6 to 13) in the last 10 years. Yet resources for developing and staffing these increased electronic services has remained virtually unchanged.

##### **\$210,000 (ongoing) – Online Court Assistance Program (OCAP)**

**PURPOSE:** hire two dedicated OCAP technical support staff.

For many individuals, OCAP is the only method for them to file or respond in a court case. OCAP is a simple to use, but complex to design, computer system that assists self-represented parties and others to generate necessary legal forms. The current system cannot reliably meet existing or future demand. OCAP requires maintenance and technical support to ensure the software reflects current Utah Code and court rules, security best-practices, and to expand OCAP to additional case types.

##### **\$450,000 (one-time) – West Jordan Courthouse – Replace Failing Recording Equipment**

**PURPOSE:** replace the now-failing audio recording system in the West Jordan Courthouse.

Creating a reliable audio recording of all court proceedings is a critical court function. When recording equipment fails, it results in significant unnecessary delay for court patrons, as well as possible evidentiary issues. Replacement parts are often no longer commercially available and must be purchased used on eBay.

##### **\$72,000 (ongoing) – Microsoft Licensing**

**PURPOSE:** upgrade outdated Microsoft software.

The courts rely on Microsoft Office products as the standard for documents in the legal field. Currently, 1540 court computers use MS Office 2010, which will no longer be supported by Microsoft in October 2020, leaving users without security updates and opening the courts to increased risk of cyberattacks.

#### **#2: SELF-HELP CENTER SERVICE EXPANSION = \$104,300 (ongoing)**

**PURPOSE:** increase access to attorney staff at the Self-Help Center (SHC).

Free and available statewide, the SHC assists self-represented people via telephone, email, and text. There is overwhelming demand for these services, with nearly 22,000 contacts made in FY2019 (an average of 109 contacts per day). Yet nearly 70% of calls to the SHC are not able to be answered due to lack of available staff.

#### **#3: COMMISSIONERS – RECRUIT & RETAIN = \$92,500 (ongoing)**

**PURPOSE:** retain experienced commissioners and recruit the highest quality candidates.

Court commissioners are quasi-judicial officers assigned to domestic cases, including divorce, child custody and support, and protective orders. The courts have experienced turnover and difficulty recruiting qualified applicants. Most court commissioners can make a significantly higher salary in the private sector. This would result in a 6.4% pay increase for court commissioners.

#### **#4: CHILD WELFARE MEDIATOR = \$54,947 (ongoing)**

**PURPOSE:** provide ongoing funding to replace previous one-time funding for a half-time mediator.

A child welfare mediator helps the parties resolve their dispute in juvenile court child welfare cases. The high resolution rate of mediated cases (~90%) has resulted in increased demand for services, congesting mediation calendars, and making it difficult to meet the strict case resolution timelines outlined in statute.