

JUDICIAL BRANCH

FY 2025
Joint Finance
Budget Hearing





Thank you for your continued support of the Judicial
Branch

A large teal circle is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

CASCADE

Centralized, Accessible, Secure,
Configurable, Agile, Digital,
Evolutionary

Branch-wide eFiling, Case
Management and Document
Management System

ARPA-funded implementation

ARPA Successes

- Completed 30+ High-Tech Courtrooms
- Modifying forms for increased accessibility
- Researching and updating collections records following the moratorium



A large teal circle is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the 'OTHER WORK' text.

OTHER WORK

Criminal Legal System Imposed Debt
Study Group

Judicial Branch Security Audit

Judicial Branch Strategic Campaign

Section 49 Report on Non-Judicial
Agencies

Judicial Privacy Protection

Criminal Justice Technology
Improvement Project

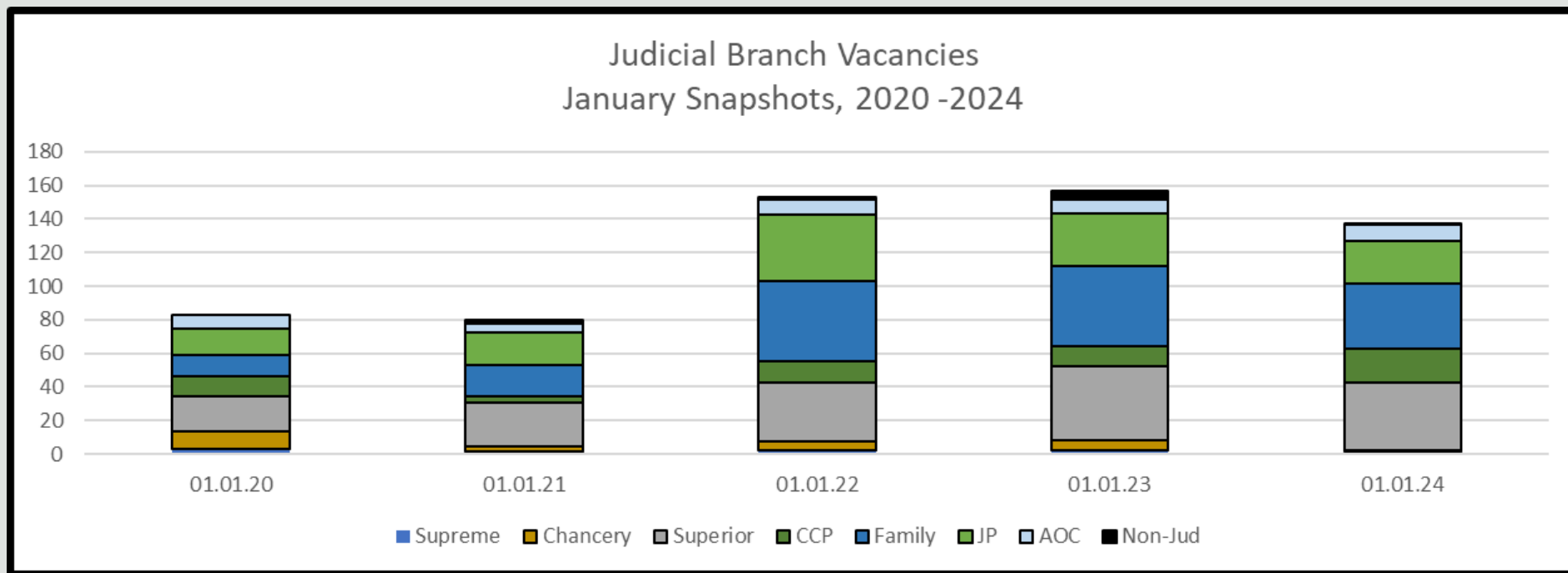


House Bill 86

To improve parent
representation in DSCYF
TPR proceedings



Judicial Branch Vacancies



FY 2025 Recommended Items





Court of Chancery

Recommended: 2 Magistrates

2 Magistrates plus support staff:

- 1.0 Judicial Secretary
- 2.0 Judicial Case Managers
- 2.0 Law Clerks
- 1.0 Court Reporter
- Recommended @ 9 mos. Funding, \$707,200

Why Magistrates?

- Magistrates have proven effective at reducing the caseloads for Vice-Chancellors.
- The plan is to expand the types of cases that are assigned to Magistrates.
- Several of our Judicial Officers are former Court of Chancery Magistrates.



Work-Life Balance

Judicial Officers, including Magistrates, work:

- An average of 63 hours per week
- 6 or 7 days each week (60% report 7-day work-weeks)
- Routinely on vacation days and holidays

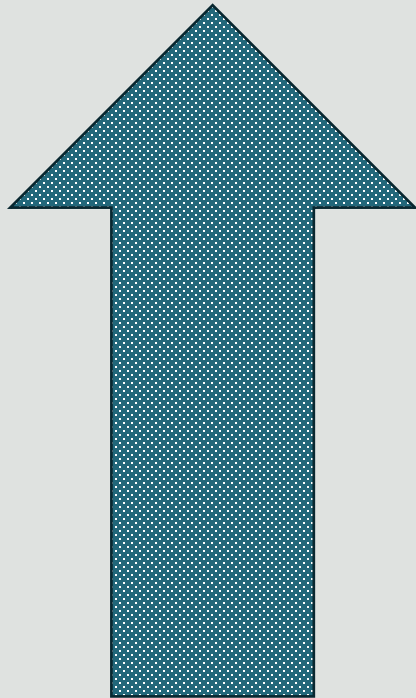
❖ *As reported from an internal survey conducted in July 2023.*



Other States Looking for Opportunity

- **Nevada** recently changed its corporate code to mirror Delaware's standards of review.
- The new business court in **Texas** has imitated some aspects of the Court of Chancery, though Texas' court lacks the political balance and has a markedly different political and litigation landscape.

Trend Likely to Continue



The number of business entities in Delaware continues to grow, undoubtedly contributing to increased caseloads.

- In 2022, there were 1,966,110 total businesses
- Just 5 years earlier, in 2017, there were around 1.3 million
- In 2012, there were 998,554

Motion To Expedite

- Motions to Expedite have increased from 340 in 2017 to approximately 500 in 2023.
- Over one-third of all new actions are accompanied by a Motion to Expedite.
- A Motion to Expedite displaces other cases in the queue, meaning that other cases pile up until the expedited cases are completed.



Resources and Needs

History of Judicial Resources

- 2.0 Vice-Chancellors were added in FY 2019, for a total of 7 judges.
- 1.0 new Magistrate was added in FY 2023, for a total of 3 Magistrates.

Needs

- Since CY 2018, new cases have increased over 40% and hearings have gone up over 65%.
- “Mega cases” are unusually demanding cases that impose additional burdens on the court.

Looking Ahead: Fiscal Year 2026

This is Part One of a two-part plan to help the Court of Chancery maintain its reputation while nurturing a healthy workplace.

For FY 2026, we plan to request an additional 2 Magistrates with support staff.





Family Court

Recommended: Judge for Sussex County

One Family Court judge for Sussex County plus 4 support staff, totaling \$460,500 in General Funds and \$34,100 in One-Time Costs for 9 months.

- Support staff include a Judicial Secretary, Law Clerk, Court Security Officer and a Judicial Case Manager II.
- There have been no new Family Court judicial resources in over 20 years for Kent or Sussex Counties.
- Sussex County's population in 2000 was 156,638. In 2020, the population had exploded to 239,762, a 53.1% increase.

Looking Ahead: Kent County Caseloads

This is also Part One of a two-part plan.

For FY 2026, we plan to request an additional Family Court judge with support staff for Kent County.

- Kent County's population in 2000 was 126,697. In 2020, the population had exploded to 181,858, a 43.5% increase.



Recommended: JIC Technician

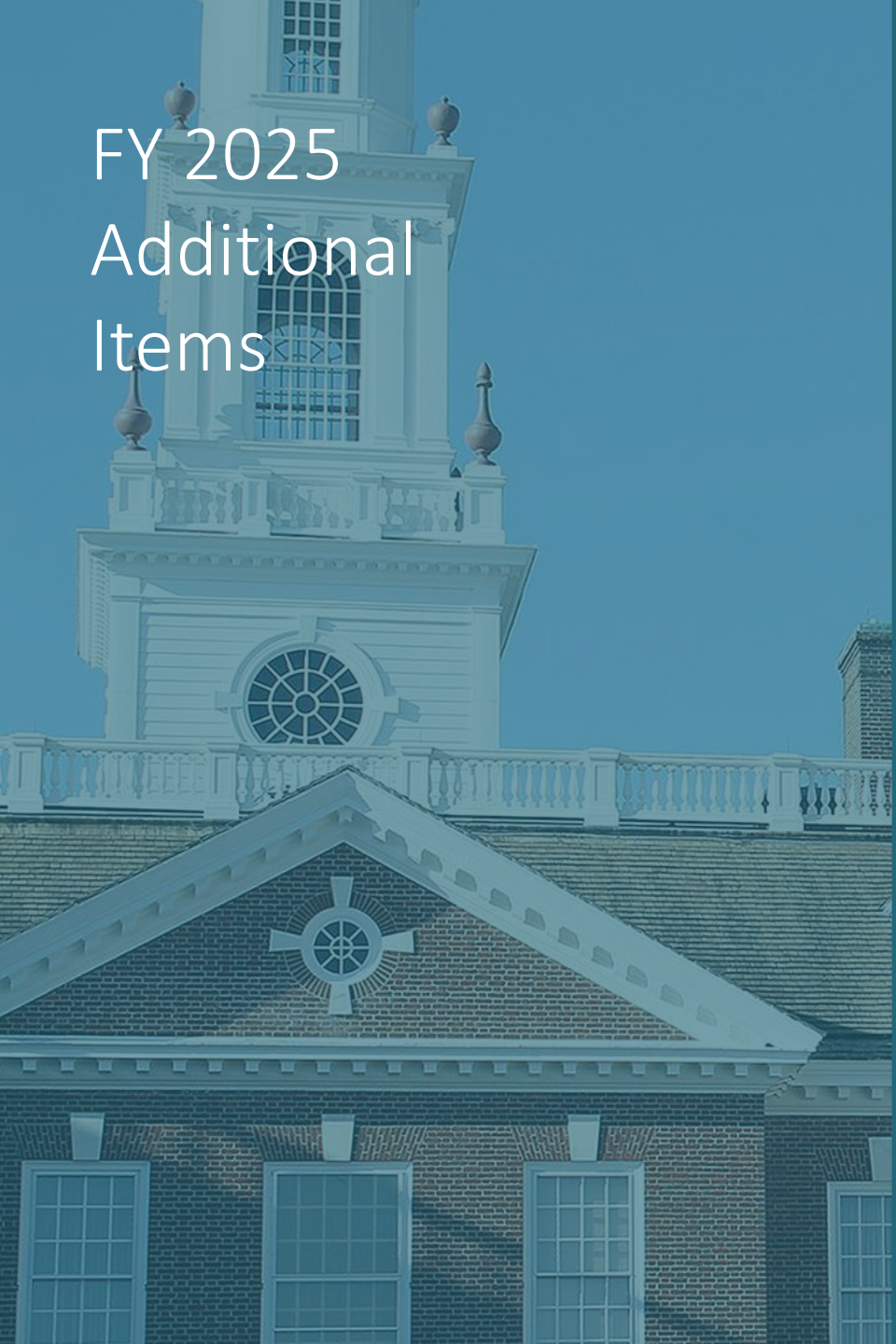
Conversion of a Contractual Position to 1.0 FTE Telecommunication/Network Technician III

- Transferred \$125.3 from Contractual to Personnel Costs (*1.0 FTE should be added as a technical correction in mark-up*)
- This is currently a vacant contractual position. The training of this position is a 6-month process, and the position had a high level of turnover. A full-time state position is anticipated to have less turnover.

Other Recommended Items

- \$556,700 for Position Annualizations
- \$717,900 for Hazardous Duty Pay
- \$299,500 and 5 FTEs for 2nd year implementation of SS 1 for SB 1
- \$21,700 for JP Court lease increases
- \$80,000 One-Time for the Board of Canvass

FY 2025
Additional
Items



Door Opener – Reverse Switch-Fund

2017 Family Court “Temporary” Switch-fund from GF to ASF

- Switch back to General Funds: 4 FTEs and \$245,200 in Personnel Costs, \$183,000 in Contractual Services and \$58,100 in Supplies and Materials
- Current ASF Revenue: \$4,350,000
- Current ASF Expenditure: \$5,789,000

The money will run out by end of FY 2025.

The Title IV-D ASF funds support 78 FTEs.

Court of Chancery HR Manager

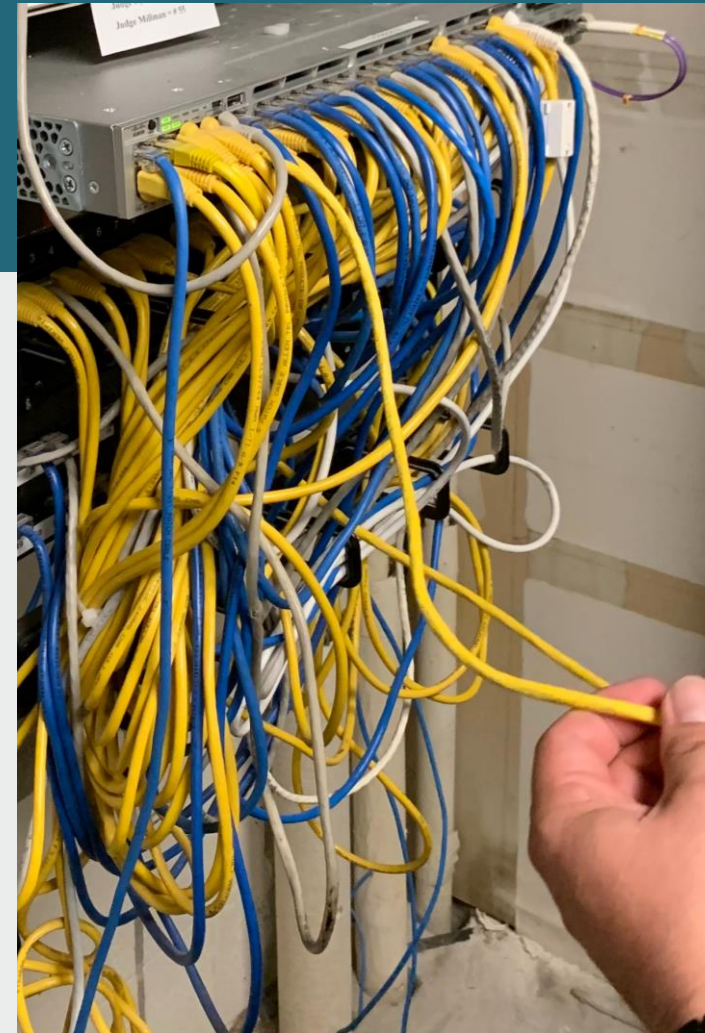
1.0 Human Resource Manager I, \$81,900 @ 9 months funding

- The Court of Chancery has experienced significant growth in recent years, almost 40% growth since 2017.
- Shorter term positions (such as law clerks and volunteer positions) add to the typical application review and onboarding work that most agencies experience.
- The Chancellor and the Court Administrator do the functions of an HR Manager for the Court of Chancery, along with AOC Human Resource staff.
- The Court of Chancery is the only trial court that does not have any HR staff.

Judicial Information Center

1.0 Telecommunication/Network Technician III for Sussex County, \$76,200 for 9-months funding

- The Strategic Campaign, conducted by the AOC, found that one Technician assigned to Sussex County was insufficient.
- The Technician is responsible for desktop support, ticket resolution, hardware repair, software installation, and hardware replacement.



Other Requested Items

- Convert 2 casual-seasonal positions to full-time positions in the Office of State Court Collections Enforcement for stability and equity, \$82,400
- 1.0 Operations Manager for Kent County, Justice of the Peace Court, \$89,100
- 1.0 FTE Law Clerk for the Complex Commercial Litigation Division in Superior Court, \$74,900



Other Requested Items

- 2.0 Court Security Officers for the Court of Common Pleas for Sussex and New Castle, \$131,000
- Justice of the Peace switch-fund for sustainability of the Court Security Fund, transferring 4 ASF FTEs and the associated Personnel Costs of \$303.2 to General Funds.

THANK YOU



Questions?