

Redbook

LBO Analysis of Executive Budget Proposal

Judicial Conference of Ohio

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LBO Redbook

Judicial Conference of Ohio

Quick look...

- The Judicial Conference of Ohio (JCO) is charged with studying and recommending changes in the procedures and practices of Ohio’s court system.
- Total executive budget recommendations: \$1.44 million in FY 2020 and \$1.39 million in FY 2021.
 - Sources of the budget: GRF (66.1%), and state non-GRF (33.9%).
 - Staff payroll (personal services) is the largest spending area (70.8%).
- The executive budget appropriates additional GRF for the hiring of two full-time employees.

FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Estimate	FY 2020 Introduced	FY 2021 Introduced
GRF ALI 018321, Operating Expenses					
\$749,250	\$646,722	\$716,365	\$715,163	\$963,500	\$911,305
% change	-13.7%	10.8%	-0.2%	34.7%	-5.4%
DPF Fund 4030 ALI 018601, Ohio Jury Instructions					
\$359,287	\$255,591	\$326,839	\$431,346	\$480,850	\$480,000
% change	-28.9%	27.9%	32.0%	11.5%	-0.2%
Total funding:					
\$1,108,537	\$902,313	\$1,043,204	\$1,146,509	\$1,444,350	\$1,391,305
% change	-18.6%	15.6%	9.9%	26.0%	-3.7%

Agency overview

The Judicial Conference of Ohio’s primary charge is to continually study and recommend changes in the procedures and practices of Ohio’s court system in an effort to promote a fair and effective administration of justice.¹ The Conference fulfills this statutory responsibility primarily through research projects, program activities, and published materials that allow information, experiences, and ideas to be shared with and among judges.

¹ It was created by the General Assembly in 1963 as a statutory entity within the judicial branch of state government. The Conference’s primary duties and responsibilities are codified in R.C. 105.91.

Organization

Membership

The Conference consists of all 722 active judges in Ohio, including the following courts and six related associations:

- Justices of the Supreme Court of Ohio and judges of the courts of appeals, courts of common pleas, municipal courts, and county courts;
- The Ohio Courts of Appeals Judges Association, the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association, the Ohio Association of Domestic Relations Judges, the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges, the Ohio Association of Probate Judges, and the Association of Municipal/County Judges of Ohio.

Executive Committee

The general charge and supervision of the administration of the Conference's affairs rests with judges who serve on the Executive Committee, which meets quarterly. The Executive Committee is comprised of approximately 50 members, including the officers of the Judicial Conference, the chairs of the Judicial Conference committees, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice and Chief Justice-elect of the Court of Appeals of Ohio, the presiding officer and the presiding officer-elect of each member judicial association, the Administrative Director of the Supreme Court of Ohio, and the Executive Director of the Judicial Conference.

Staff

The Conference has a staff of six full-time employees, divided into two units: Legislative Services, and Administration. The executive budget provides additional GRF funding for the purpose of hiring two additional full-time employees.

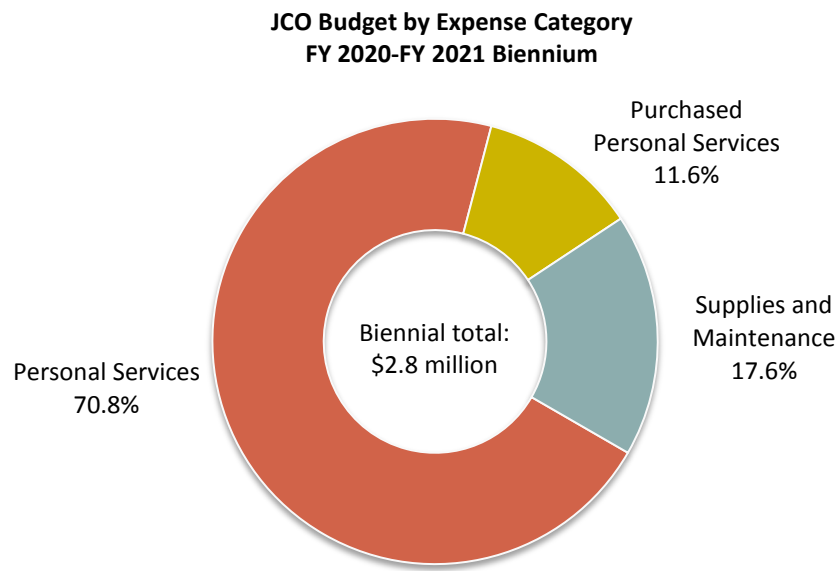
Conference staff provide administrative and research support for 20 standing committees that involve hundreds of judges who volunteer their time. While judges serving on committees receive no compensation for services rendered to the Conference, judges may receive reimbursement for reasonable and necessary expenses.

Analysis of FY 2020-FY 2021 budget proposal

R.C. 107.03(B) states that "no alterations shall be made in the [budget] requests for the legislative and judicial branches of the state filed with the director of budget and management. . . ." Therefore, the Governor has made no alterations to the budget request submitted by the Judicial Conference of Ohio.

Proposed budget by expense category

The chart below shows the Conference's total recommended biennial appropriation (FY 2020 and FY 2021) by expense category. Almost 71% of the appropriation is allocated for personal services (wages and salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges), followed by supplies and maintenance (17.6%), and purchased personal services (11.6%).



Operating Expenses (ALI 018321)

This GRF line item is the Conference's primary source of funding for its day-to-day operations. Relative to the line item's estimated expenditures for FY 2019, the executive budget increases both its FY 2020 and FY 2021 appropriation by roughly \$200,000. The Conference's intent is to use this additional funding to hire two full-time employees, which would increase its total number of full-time employees from six to eight.

Each fiscal year's appropriation is primarily allocated for personal services (wages, salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges) at 85%, or around \$800,000. The remainder is allocated as follows: 10%, or approximately \$95,000, for purchased personal services, and 4%, or \$40,000, for supplies and maintenance.

State Council of Uniform State Laws²

A temporary law provision requires up to \$93,500 in FY 2020 and up to \$96,305 in FY 2021 of the line item's appropriation be used to pay the expenses of the State Council of Uniform State Laws, including membership dues to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL).³

² The duty of the State Council, a four-person Ohio council of commissioners appointed by the Governor, is to study the prevailing law in the U.S. and other countries on subjects where uniformity is important.

³ The Conference, a Chicago-based nonprofit unincorporated association largely comprised of state commissions of uniform laws, studies and reviews the law of the states to determine which areas of law should be uniform.

Ohio Jury Instructions (ALI 018601)

This line item draws its appropriation from the Ohio Jury Instructions Fund (Fund 4030), which largely consists of: (1) annual membership dues and meeting, seminar, and conference fees and (2) royalties from the Conference's publication known as Ohio Jury Instructions. Historically, the Conference used the line item to support activities and services not directly related to its ongoing day-to-day business. This includes costs associated with meetings, conferences, seminars, printing, publishing, website maintenance and development, information technology, and other nonpersonnel activities. More recently, the Conference has shifted more of its expenses to this line item in order to reduce its reliance on GRF funding.

Of each fiscal year's appropriation, 44%, or \$210,000, is allocated for supplies and maintenance. The remainder is allocated as follows: 42%, or around \$200,000, for personal services (wages, salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges), and 15%, or \$70,000, for purchased personal services.

Fund 4030

From FY 2016-FY 2018, annual revenues credited to Fund 4030 averaged \$479,088. The fund's revenues largely can be characterized as follows:

- Royalties from the publication and sale of Ohio Jury Instructions (expected to generate approximately \$120,000 per year over the next biennium).
- Annual dues of approximately \$180,500 annually from all active members (increased to \$250 from \$150 in 2017).
- Annual meeting registration fee typically around \$350 (attended by approximately 350 judges, generates around \$122,500).