



Judiciary Budget Request, FY2021

Overview

The FY2021 judiciary budget request totals \$8.56 billion. This total includes \$7.82 billion in discretionary funds (an increase of 4.4% over the FY2020 enacted level), and \$739.7 million in mandatory funding, which is used to pay the salaries and benefits of judges.

The judiciary also uses nonappropriated funds to offset its appropriations requirement. The majority of these nonappropriated funds are from the collection of fees, primarily court filing fees. The appropriation request reflects the net needs of the judiciary after use of these funds.

As a coequal branch of government, the judiciary presents its budget to the President, who transmits it to Congress unaltered, as part of his annual budget request.

Appropriations for the judiciary are typically included in the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act. Appropriations for the judiciary typically comprise approximately 0.2% of total federal budget authority.

Table 1 presents the FY2021 discretionary request and FY2020 discretionary enacted level for each account. The enacted levels are based on amounts included in regular FY2020 appropriations, and do not include any supplemental appropriations subsequently provided.

Individual Accounts

Supreme Court

The total FY2021 discretionary request for the Supreme Court, \$105.3 million, is contained in two accounts: (1) Salaries and Expenses (\$93.6 million) and (2) Care of the Building and Grounds (\$11.7 million). The total represents a 1.9% increase over the FY2020 enacted level.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

This court, consisting of 12 judges, has jurisdiction over and review of certain lower court rulings on patents and trademarks, international trade, and federal claims cases. The FY2021 discretionary budget request is \$34.0 million, a 4.0% increase over the FY2020 enacted level.

U.S. Court of International Trade

This court has exclusive nationwide jurisdiction over civil actions against the United States, its agencies and officers, and certain civil actions brought by the United States arising out of import transactions and the administration as well as enforcement of federal customs and international trade laws. The FY2021 discretionary request of \$20.1

million is an increase of 2.6% over the FY2020 enacted level.

Table 1. FY2021 Discretionary Request and FY2020 Discretionary Appropriations
(in millions of dollars)

Account	FY2021 Request	FY2020 Enacted
Supreme Court		
<i>Buildings and Grounds</i>	\$11.7	\$15.6
<i>Salaries and Expenses</i>	\$93.6	\$87.7
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	\$34.0	\$32.7
Court of International Trade	\$20.1	\$19.6
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services		
<i>Salaries and Expenses</i>	\$5,459.5	\$5,250.2
<i>Vaccine Injury Trust Fund</i>	\$9.7	\$9.1
<i>Defender Services</i>	\$1,316.2	\$1,234.6
<i>Fees of Jurors and Commissioners</i>	\$55.5	\$53.5
<i>Court Security</i>	\$664.0	\$639.2
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	\$99.8	\$94.3
Federal Judicial Center	\$31.3	\$30.4
Sentencing Commission	\$20.3	\$19.7
TOTAL	\$7,815.7	\$7,486.5

Source: FY2021 Judicial Branch Budget Justification.

Note: Columns may not sum due to rounding.

Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services

The total FY2021 discretionary funding request of \$7,504.9 million covers 12 of the 13 courts of appeals and 94 district courts located in the 50 states, District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the territories of Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The account is divided among salaries and expenses, the Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund, court security, defender services, and fees of jurors and commissioners.

Salaries and Expenses

The FY2021 discretionary request for this account is \$5,459.5 million, an increase of 4.0% over the FY2020 enacted level.

Vaccine Injury Compensation Trust Fund

The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program funds a federal no-fault program that protects the availability of vaccines in the nation by diverting a substantial number of claims from the tort arena. The FY2021 request is \$9.7 million, a 6.6% increase over the FY2020 enacted level.

Court Security

This account provides for protective services, security systems, and equipment needs in courthouses and other federal facilities to ensure the safety of judicial officers, employees, and visitors. Under this account, the majority of funding for court security is transferred to the U.S. Marshals Service to pay for court security officers under the Judicial Facility Security Program. The FY2021 request is \$664.0 million, an increase of 3.9% over the FY2020 enacted level.

Defender Services

This account funds the operations of the federal public defender and community defender organizations, and compensation, reimbursements, and expenses of private practice panel attorneys appointed by federal courts to serve as defense counsel to indigent individuals. The cost for this account is determined by the number and type of prosecutions brought by U.S. attorneys. The FY2021 request is \$1,316.2 million, an increase of 6.6% over the FY2020 enacted level.

Fees of Jurors and Commissioners

This account funds the fees and allowances provided to grand and petit jurors, and compensation for jury and land commissioners. The FY2021 request is \$55.5 million, an increase of 3.7% over the FY2020 enacted level.

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

As the central support entity for the judiciary, the AO provides a wide range of administrative, management, program, and information technology services to the U.S. courts. The AO also provides support to the Judicial Conference of the United States, and implements conference policies and applicable federal statutes and regulations. The FY2021 request for the AO is \$99.8 million, an increase of 5.8% over the FY2020 enacted level.

Federal Judicial Center

As the judiciary's research and education entity, the Federal Judicial Center undertakes research and evaluation of judicial operations for the Judicial Conference committees

and the courts. In addition, the center provides judges, court staff, and others with orientation, continuing education, and training. The center's FY2021 request is \$31.3 million, an increase of 3.0% over the FY2020 enacted level.

United States Sentencing Commission

The commission promulgates sentencing policies, practices, and guidelines for the federal criminal justice system. The FY2021 request is \$20.3 million, an increase of 3.0% over the FY2020 enacted level.

Mandatory Funding

Mandatory funding in the judiciary budget includes constitutionally required funding for the salaries and benefits of Article III judges, as well as statutory direct spending for the salaries and benefits of certain Article I judges. **Table 2** presents the FY2021 mandatory request and FY2020 enactment for each account.

Table 2. FY2021 Mandatory Budget Request
(in millions of dollars)

Account	FY2021 Request	FY2020 Enacted
Supreme Court	\$2.7	\$2.7
Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit	\$3.2	\$3.1
Court of International Trade	\$2.1	\$2.1
Courts of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services	\$469.4	\$457.5
Judicial Retirement Funds	\$262.3	\$240.1
TOTAL	\$739.7	\$705.5

Source: FY2021 Judicial Branch Budget Justification. Enacted column reflects FY2020 assumed financial plan levels.

Note: Columns may not sum due to rounding.

CRS Report on FY2020 Judiciary Appropriations

CRS has an in-depth report that provides an overview of the judiciary's FY2020 budget request, as well as information about congressional consideration of the request. For additional information, see CRS Report R45965, *Judiciary Appropriations, FY2020*, by Barry J. McMillion.

The President submitted the judiciary's FY2021 budget request on February 10, 2020. A CRS report on FY2021 judiciary appropriations will be released later in the calendar year as Congress begins to consider the request.

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