

**REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
OF THE UNITED STATES**

March 10, 2026

The Judicial Conference of the United States convened on March 10, 2026, pursuant to the call of the Chief Justice of the United States issued under 28 U.S.C. § 331. The Chief Justice presided, and the following members of the Conference were present:

First Circuit:

Chief Judge David Jeremiah Barron

Second Circuit:

Chief Judge Debra Ann Livingston
Chief Judge Brenda Kay Sannes,
Northern District of New York

Third Circuit:

Chief Judge Michael A. Chagares
Chief Judge Wendy Beetlestone,
Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Fourth Circuit:

Chief Judge Albert Diaz
Judge Joseph F. Anderson, Jr.,
District of South Carolina

Fifth Circuit:

Chief Judge Jennifer Walker Elrod
Chief Judge Randy Crane,
Southern District of Texas

Sixth Circuit:

Chief Judge Jeffrey S. Sutton
Chief Judge Hala Y. Jarbou,
Western District of Michigan

Seventh Circuit:

Chief Judge Michael B. Brennan
Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall,
Northern District of Illinois

Eighth Circuit:

Chief Judge Steven M. Colloton
Chief Judge Roberto A. Lange,
District of South Dakota

Ninth Circuit:

Chief Judge Mary H. Murguia
Judge Leslie E. Kobayashi,
District of Hawaii

Tenth Circuit:

Chief Judge Jerome A. Holmes
Judge William Paul Johnson,
District of New Mexico

Eleventh Circuit:

Chief Judge William H. Pryor, Jr.
Judge Lisa Wood,
Southern District of Georgia

District of Columbia Circuit:

Chief Judge Srikanth Srinivasan
Chief Judge James Emanuel Boasberg,
District of Columbia

Federal Circuit:

Chief Judge Kimberly A. Moore

Court of International Trade:

Chief Judge Mark Barnett

Also participating in this session of the Conference were the following Judicial Conference committee chairs: Circuit Judges Amy J. St. Eve, Michael Y. Scudder, Richard J. Sullivan, and Timothy M. Tymkovich; District Judges Nancy Ellen Brasel, David G. Campbell, Edmond E-Min Chang, James C. Dever III, Jesse M. Furman, Darrin P. Gayles, Robert James Jonker, Michael W. Mosman, Stephen Joseph Murphy III, William L. Osteen, Jr., Mary Elizabeth Phillips, Cathy Seibel, Rodney W. Sippel, Glenn T. Suddaby, and Gregory F. Van Tatenhove; and Bankruptcy Judges Rebecca Buehler Connelly and Julie Ann Manning. Attending as the bankruptcy judge and magistrate judge observers, respectively, were Bankruptcy Judge Sarah A. Hall and Magistrate Judge Carleton Metcalf. Leslee Fathallah of the Tenth Circuit represented the circuit executives.

Participating from the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO) were Judge Robert J. Conrad, Jr., Director; Lee Ann Bennett, Deputy Director; William S. Meyers, General Counsel; Erin A. Brandenburg, Judicial Conference Secretariat Officer, and Zachary A. Porianda, Attorney Advisor, Judicial Conference Secretariat; Melanie F. Gilbert, Legislative Affairs Officer; and Peter P. Kaplan, Public Affairs Officer. Judge Robin L. Rosenberg, Director, and Clara J. Altman, Deputy Director, Federal Judicial Center (FJC), as well as Judge Carlton W. Reeves, Chair, and Kenneth P. Cohen, Staff Director, United States Sentencing Commission, also participated, as did Judge Robert M. Dow, Jr., Counselor to the Chief Justice, Ethan V. Torrey, Supreme Court Legal Counsel, and George Everly III, Supreme Court Legislative Affairs Officer.

Attorney General Pamela Bondi addressed the Conference on matters of mutual interest to the judiciary and the Department of Justice. Senators Ted Cruz, Richard Durbin, and Sheldon Whitehouse and Representatives Steny Hoyer and Jamie Raskin spoke on matters pending in Congress of interest to the Conference.

REPORTS

Judge Conrad reported to the Judicial Conference on the judicial business of the courts and on matters relating to the AO. Judge Rosenberg spoke to the Conference about FJC programs, and Judge Reeves reported on United States Sentencing Commission activities. Judges Scudder and Van Tatenhove presented a special report on the judiciary's Case Management Modernization (CMM) effort, and Judge Suddaby presented a special report on real property authority.

ELECTION

The Judicial Conference elected to the Board of the FJC for a term of four years Judge Kevin Christopher Newsom, United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, to succeed Judge Ransey Guy Cole, Jr., United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REAL PROPERTY AUTHORITY

Since 1989, the Judicial Conference has supported seeking independent real property authority for the judiciary separate from the General Services Administration (GSA), with the form and timing of seeking and implementing such authority to be subject to approval by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Committee on Space and Facilities and the Committee on the Budget (JCUS-SEP 1989, p. 81; JCUS-MAR 2006, pp. 25-26).

Noting ongoing issues with GSA's ability to perform real property services on behalf of the judiciary, as well as significant organizational and staffing changes at GSA that affect the judiciary's space and facilities program, the Space and Facilities Committee recommended that the Executive Committee approve the judiciary beginning the process of seeking real property authority. The Space and Facilities Committee reasoned that such authority would allow the judiciary to prioritize space needs, prevent service disruptions, manage the budget request and funding priorities directly with Congress, and align facilities management with its constitutional mission. After considering input on the original recommendation from the Budget Committee—which supported pursuing this authority if long-term advantages could be demonstrated and offered various considerations to strengthen the proposal—the

Executive Committee approved a modified version of the recommendation involving a phased approach toward seeking real property authority, which was supported in concept by the chairs of both the Space and Facilities Committee and the Budget Committee.

The first phase of this process would focus on the transfer of assets located in no more than 10 judicial districts (in addition to the Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building in Washington, D.C., managed by the Architect of the Capitol (AOC)). Transfers would take place only after the Space and Facilities Committee had prepared a cost analysis for the asset and after consultation with the Budget Committee and approval of the Executive Committee. The judiciary would retain the option to return authority over these assets to GSA and the AOC after an approximate two-year period should the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Space and Facilities Committee and the Budget Committee, determine that execution of this authority is not in the best interest of the judiciary. Following this initial two-year phase, the judiciary would assess the effectiveness of this initiative and the resources necessary for successful execution of real property authority in other judicial districts to determine whether to identify additional assets for future transfer.

On recommendation of the Budget Committee, the Executive Committee also approved amending the judiciary's fiscal year (FY) 2027 budget request to include approximately \$0.8 million in additional funding for three new AO positions to lead efforts to further explore seeking real property authority for the judiciary.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY

The *Strategic Plan for the Federal Judiciary (Plan)*, updated by the Judicial Conference in September 2025 (JCUS-SEP 2025, p. 5), identifies strategies and goals to enable the federal judiciary to continue as a model in providing fair and impartial justice. The approach to strategic planning, approved by the Conference when the *Plan* was first adopted, provides for the Executive Committee's identification, every two years, of strategies and goals from the *Plan* that should receive priority attention, with suggestions from Conference committees (JCUS-SEP 2010, pp. 5-6).

At its February 2026 meeting, the Executive Committee considered suggestions from Conference committees regarding which strategies and goals should receive priority attention in the next two years. After reviewing the suggestions, the Executive Committee decided to prioritize the following strategies and goals from the *Plan* that focus on conduct and integrity; public outreach and civics education; the effective use of resources; cyber and physical security; and IT modernization:

- Strategy 2.1** Assure high standards of conduct and integrity for judges and employees.
- Goal 2.6(b)** Facilitate participation by judges and court employees in public outreach and civics education efforts, including programs held in courtrooms, in classrooms, and via remote technology, and development of in-courthouse or online educational resources and exhibits. Support collaboration and the sharing of best practices and ideas across courts and circuits to continue to be responsive to the need for public education and to benefit from locally developed ideas.
- Strategy 3.1** Allocate and manage resources more efficiently and effectively.
- Strategy 3.2** Allocate and manage resources to strengthen cybersecurity and the protection of judges, court employees, and the public at court facilities, and of judges and their families at other locations.
- Goal 5.1(b)** Continue to build, maintain, and enhance robust and flexible technology systems and applications that anticipate and respond to the judiciary’s requirements for efficient communications, record-keeping, electronic case filing, public access, case management, and administrative support. Modernize the judiciary IT infrastructure and systems.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

The Executive Committee—

- Agreed with the determination of the Committee on the Judicial Branch that inflationary adjustments to judges’ maximum daily travel subsistence allowance and maximum reimbursement for the actual cost of meals were not warranted at this time (see *Guide to Judiciary Policy (Guide)*, Vol. 19, Ch. 2, § 250.20.20(b)(1) and § 250.20.30).
- Approved costs related to the 2026 Eleventh Circuit judicial conference, pursuant to § 230(a)(2) of the Judicial Conference regulations on meeting planning and administration, *Guide*, Vol. 24, Ch. 2.

- Approved final FY 2026 financial plans for the Salaries and Expenses, Defender Services, Court Security, and Fees of Jurors and Commissioners accounts.

COMMITTEE ON AUDITS AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE ACCOUNTABILITY

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Audits and AO Accountability reported that it was updated on the status and results of various audits and engagements, including audits of chapter 7 and chapter 13 debtors in bankruptcy administrator districts, audits of Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) and the Central Violations Bureau (CVB), the judiciary’s retirement funds, and the judiciary’s appropriations and cyclical financial audits of court units and federal public defender organizations. The Committee was briefed on the AO’s corrective actions in response to recommendations from completed audits. The Committee also was updated on the successful upgrade to the Judiciary Integrated Financial Management System (JIFMS), the judiciary’s accounting system of record, and potential delays in implementing changes to the judiciary’s financial reporting model. The Committee was briefed on proposed changes to the *Guide*, Vol. 1, Ch. 14, updating the judiciary’s policies for reporting and investigating allegations of fraud, waste, or abuse.

COMMITTEE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE BANKRUPTCY SYSTEM

EVALUATING BANKRUPTCY JUDGESHIP NEEDS

The Judicial Conference’s *Policy Statement for Evaluating Bankruptcy Judicial Resources*, most recently revised in March 2021 (JCUS-MAR 2021, p. 10), sets out the standards to be used for assessing bankruptcy judgeship needs (including the need for additional bankruptcy judgeships, the conversion to permanent status or extension of temporary bankruptcy judgeships, and the continuing need for existing bankruptcy judgeships). Under this policy, the evaluation of bankruptcy judgeship needs rests primarily on a district’s weighted caseload per authorized judgeship, although other pertinent factors are also to be considered.

Case Weights. The first case weights used to calculate bankruptcy judgeship weighted caseloads were adopted by the Conference in 1991 based on a 1988-1989 FJC study (JCUS-MAR 1991, pp. 12-13). The Conference in 2010 adopted new case weights based on a study conducted by the FJC in 2008-2009 (JCUS-SEP 2010, pp. 8-9) and in 2014 adjusted the weights for chapter 11 mega cases to take into account the higher level of activity in those cases as well as the number of jointly administered cases comprising a mega case (JCUS-SEP 2014, p. 6). At the request of the Committee on the Administration of the Bankruptcy System, the FJC developed updated case weights based on a study undertaken of bankruptcy judge time usage between 2023-2024. On recommendation of the Bankruptcy Committee, the Judicial Conference approved the proposed new case weights for determining bankruptcy judgeship weighted caseloads, including continued application of the adjustment approved by the Conference in 2014 for chapter 11 mega cases. The Committee requested that the FJC conduct a future targeted follow-up study to examine whether a further adjustment for chapter 11 mega cases may be needed.

Revisions to Policy Statement. Under 28 U.S.C. § 158(b), each circuit’s judicial council may establish a bankruptcy appellate panel (BAP) and appoint bankruptcy judges from within that circuit who convene in three-member panels to hear and determine appeals from rulings made by bankruptcy judges within the circuit. On recommendation of the Bankruptcy Committee, the Judicial Conference revised the *Judicial Conference Policy Statement for Evaluating Bankruptcy Judicial Resources* to include BAP service as an “other factor” to be considered as part of the continuing need assessment and associated determination of whether bankruptcy judgeship vacancies should be filled.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on the Administration of the Bankruptcy System reported that it continued to defer consideration of whether to identify additional courts to participate in the bankruptcy judgeship vacancy pilot, approved by the Judicial Conference in September 2014 (JCUS-SEP 2014, p. 7), until bankruptcy filings increase further. The Committee also discussed feedback received from the bankruptcy court community in response to the “Guidance for Case Assignment in Bankruptcy Courts” that it issued to all bankruptcy judges in August 2025. The Committee opted not to revise the guidance at this time. The Committee further discussed planning for the next “Roadways to the Bench” recruitment and outreach event, which is occurring in coordination with the Committee on the Administration of the Magistrate Judges System. Finally, the Committee reported that it continues to

study long-range issues that it has prioritized because of their potential to impact the bankruptcy system in the coming years through changing needs, filings, and budgets, including improving videoconferencing and issues related to pro se filings in bankruptcy courts.

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on the Budget reported that it discussed the judiciary’s overall budget outlook, including the status of FY 2026 and FY 2027 appropriations and guidance for preparing the FY 2028 budget request. The Committee emphasized the continued importance of congressional outreach given the constrained budget environment and discussed whether pursuing a change in congressional appropriations subcommittee jurisdiction over judiciary funding would best support the judiciary’s long-term funding stability but declined to recommend pursuing such a change. The Committee also supported the AO’s exploration of initiatives to better align budget planning with execution and strengthen internal controls, including measures designed to safeguard judiciary solvency, support Anti-Deficiency Act compliance, and improve resilience during potential lapses in appropriations. In addition, the Committee discussed several ongoing high-priority strategic initiatives, including long-term cost considerations associated with enabling artificial intelligence tools in computer assisted legal research contracts judiciary-wide and the multi-year redesign of the Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system. Lastly, given recent information regarding higher-than-anticipated FY 2026 appropriations, the Committee asked the Budget Advisory Council (BAC) to reassess its recommendation to move the salary snapshot date, typically taken in mid-July, to March 8, 2026. The BAC recommended, and the Budget Committee approved, preserving the March 8 snapshot date while extending the appeals window for certain new hires.

COMMITTEE ON CODES OF CONDUCT

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Codes of Conduct reported that since its last report to the Conference in September 2025, the Committee received 23 requests for a private Committee opinion and issued 23 such opinions. During this period, the average response time was 12 days. In addition, the Committee chair responded to 81 requests

for informal advice, individual Committee members responded to 219 requests, and Committee staff counsel responded to 483 requests, for a total of 783 responses to requests for informal advice during the past 6 months.

COMMITTEE ON COURT ADMINISTRATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT

MISCELLANEOUS FEE SCHEDULES

The Judicial Conference prescribes miscellaneous fees for the courts of appeals, district courts, bankruptcy courts, United States Court of Federal Claims, and Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1913, 1914, 1926, 1930, and 1932. On recommendation of the Committee on Court Administration and Case Management, the Conference amended the miscellaneous fee schedules for these courts to increase certain fees for inflation, as set forth below, effective December 1, 2026. The last time miscellaneous fees were adjusted for inflation was in March 2023 (JCUS-MAR 2023, pp. 10-14).

Court of Appeals Miscellaneous Fee Schedule

<u>Item</u>	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>New Fee</u>
1. Docketing Fee	\$600	\$665
2. Record Search Fee	\$34	\$38
3-A. Certification of document	\$12	\$13
3-B. Issuance of apostille	\$50	\$55
4b. Record reproduction (electronic)	\$33	\$37
5. Audio recording	\$34	\$38
6. Record reproduction (no appendix)	\$94	\$104
7-A. Retrieval of one records box	\$70	\$78
7-B. Retrieval of multiple records boxes	\$43	\$48

7-C.	Electronic retrieval	\$11	\$12
13-A.	Original attorney admission	\$199	\$221
13-B.	Duplicate certificate of admission	\$21	\$23

District Court Miscellaneous Fee Schedule

<u>Item</u>		<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>New Fee</u>
1.	Filing document unrelated to pending case	\$52	\$58
2.	Record search	\$34	\$38
3-A.	Certification	\$12	\$13
3-B.	Exemplification	\$24	\$27
3-C.	Issuance of apostille	\$50	\$55
4b.	Record reproduction (electronic)	\$33	\$37
5.	Audio recording	\$34	\$38
6.	Microfilm/microfiche	\$7	\$8
7-A.	Retrieval of one records box	\$70	\$78
7-B.	Retrieval of multiple records boxes	\$43	\$48
7-C.	Electronic retrieval	\$11	\$12
9.	Misdemeanor appeal	\$41	\$45
10-A.	Original attorney admission	\$199	\$221
10-B.	Duplicate certificate of admission	\$21	\$23
13.	Cuban LIBERTAD Act filing	\$7,202	\$7,983
14.	Administrative civil filing fee	\$55	\$61

Bankruptcy Court Miscellaneous Fee Schedule

<u>Item</u>	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>New Fee</u>
1b. Record reproduction (electronic)	\$33	\$37
2-A. Certification	\$12	\$13
2-B. Exemplification	\$24	\$27
3. Audio recording	\$34	\$38
4. Amended schedules	\$34	\$38
5. Record search	\$34	\$38
7. Filing document unrelated to pending case	\$52	\$58
12-A. Retrieval of one records box	\$70	\$78
12-B. Retrieval of multiple records boxes	\$43	\$48
12-C. Electronic retrieval	\$11	\$12
14. Notice of appeal fee	\$307	\$372
19. Filing specific motions ¹	\$199	\$221
20. Claims transfer	\$28	\$31
21. Motion to redact	\$28	\$31

¹ This includes motions to: terminate, annul, modify, or condition the automatic stay; compel estate property abandonment pursuant to Rule 6007(b) of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure; withdraw the reference of a case or proceeding under 28 U.S.C. § 157(d); or sell estate property free and clear of liens under 11 U.S.C. § 363(f).

Court of Federal Claims Miscellaneous Fee Schedule

<u>Item</u>		<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>New Fee</u>
2b.	Record reproduction (electronic)	\$33	\$37
3-A.	Certification	\$12	\$13
3-B.	Exemplification	\$24	\$27
3-C.	Issuance of apostille	\$50	\$55
4-A.	Original attorney admission	\$199	\$221
4-B.	Duplicate certificate of admission	\$21	\$23
5.	Monthly listing of court orders and opinions	\$25	\$28
8.	Record search	\$34	\$38
9.	Audio recording	\$34	\$38
10.	Filing document not in case with paid filing fee	\$52	\$58
11-A.	Retrieval of one records box	\$70	\$78
11-B.	Retrieval of multiple records boxes	\$43	\$48
11-C.	Electronic retrieval	\$11	\$12
12.	Administrative civil filing fee	\$55	\$61

Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation Miscellaneous Fee Schedule

<u>Item</u>		<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>New Fee</u>
1.	Record search	\$34	\$38
2.	Certification	\$12	\$13
3b.	Record reproduction (electronic)	\$33	\$37

4-A.	Retrieval of one records box	\$70	\$78
4-B.	Retrieval of multiple records boxes	\$43	\$48
4-C.	Electronic retrieval	\$11	\$12

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Court Administration and Case Management reported that it received an update on acceleration of the development of a modernized case management system and continued to explore options for funding development of the system. As part of its efforts to monitor implementation of revisions to the Judicial Conference’s long-standing remote access policy, the Committee asked the FJC to refresh its study of public court websites and conduct further research into courts’ practices. The Committee also began coordinating with the Committee on the Budget, the Committee on Codes of Conduct, the Committee on Defender Services, the Committee on Information Technology, and the Committee on the Judicial Branch, in response to the AO Director’s request to consider whether to enable generative artificial intelligence (AI) functionalities in the judiciary’s computer assisted legal research products, and will make a determination on the issue after receiving further feedback from other committees. As part of the Committee’s efforts to protect cooperation information contained in court filings, the Committee received an update on the FJC’s plan to replicate its 2016 study on the severity and scope of harm to cooperators and on approaches taken by local districts to protect cooperation information. The Committee was also updated on the FJC’s development of additional studies on the protection of private information in court filings and opinions, which will inform the judiciary’s understanding of how best to protect sensitive information and will be used to prepare statutorily required reports on the adequacy of privacy rules.

COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL LAW

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Criminal Law reported that it continued to consider potential means of increasing judicial discretion in detention decisions, pending

sentencing, in certain drug cases that would result in mandatory detention under current law. The Committee also approved revisions to several law enforcement-sensitive probation and pretrial services procedures manuals, including those that provide officers with guidance on pretrial services supervision, pretrial diversion, and internet and computer management. The Committee agreed to request that the Committee on Court Administration and Case Management recommend that the Judicial Conference adopt certain amendments to the records disposition schedule and related policies governing probation and pretrial services records. The Committee also reported that it concurred with the Committee on Court Administration and Case Management's request that the FJC update its 2016 study on harm to cooperators.

COMMITTEE ON DEFENDER SERVICES

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Defender Services reported that it discussed the impact of recent funding shortfalls on the Defender Services program. Of particular concern were staff reductions in federal defender organizations (FDOs) during a time of increasing caseloads and the four-month deferral of payments to Criminal Justice Act (CJA) panel attorneys and service providers for work already performed on behalf of CJA clients. These deferrals placed significant strain on individual practitioners, causing many to resign from the panel or stop accepting new appointments while they transitioned their practices to primarily state and retained cases. The Committee expressed grave concerns about the long-term impact of underfunding on the ability of districts to recruit and retain qualified counsel in both FDOs and the CJA panel and reiterated the need for continued congressional advocacy to secure funding that will prevent future payment deferrals. The Committee also continued to discuss potential policy and legislative changes that would mitigate the conflicts (identified in the reports of two ad hoc Judicial Conference committees and a recent FJC study) inherent in the current CJA administrative structure, which relies on judges and courts to oversee and determine the resources available for appointed counsel. The Committee agreed that making significant improvements to the independence of the defense function remains a programmatic goal. In addition, the Committee was updated on CJA practitioners' use of AI legal research tools to support effective and efficient representation consistent with their professional obligations to their clients. The Committee also concurred with the Committee on Court Administration and Case Management's request that the FJC update its 2016 study on harm to cooperators. Finally, the Committee was briefed on efforts to develop a model circuit CJA plan to help ensure the appointment of qualified counsel and promote the effective

administration of the CJA in circuit courts.

COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL-STATE JURISDICTION

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Federal-State Jurisdiction reported that it continued its analysis of the citizenship of unincorporated entities for the purpose of venue. The Committee received a report from its state chief justice members, discussing, among other items, state court caseloads and data, courts and artificial intelligence, reforms to legal education and admission to legal practice, judicial security, and state and federal legislation of potential interest to state courts. The Committee was briefed on the status of the Judicial Conference’s legislative proposal to increase the statutory amount-in-controversy threshold from \$75,000 to \$150,000 and to index the threshold decennially for inflation (JCUS-SEP 2021, pp. 15-16). The Committee continued discussing legislation relating to nationwide injunctions, including whether (as suggested by some members of Congress) nationwide injunctions should be restricted to three-judge district court panels.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Financial Disclosure reported that it received an update on the Judiciary Electronic Filing System (JEFS), the new electronic financial disclosure filing and release system. JEFS was implemented nationwide in early January 2026, and filer trainings on and improvements to JEFS will be ongoing. The Committee approved revisions to the financial disclosure regulations and Judiciary Financial Disclosure Filing Instructions (Filing Instructions), including the addition to the Filing Instructions of guidance on reporting contributions for receptions associated with special events such as an investiture, retirement, or portrait ceremony; revisions to the Filing Instructions and financial disclosure regulations enhancing the guidance on how to describe bonds on reports and clarifying that filers are not required to report the call or redemption of a bond as a transaction; and minor policy changes, clarifications, and edits to the Filing Instructions and financial disclosure regulations.

As of December 15, 2025, the Committee had received 3,839 financial disclosure reports and certifications filed in the legacy financial disclosure system for

calendar year 2024 (out of a total of 3,873 required to file), including 1,257 annual reports and certifications from Supreme Court justices and Article III judges; 287 annual reports from bankruptcy judges; 557 annual reports from magistrate judges; 1,532 annual reports from judicial employees; and 206 reports from nominee, initial, and final filers. As of December 16, 2025, the Committee had received 704 financial disclosure reports and certifications filed in JEFS for calendar year 2024 (out of a total of 753 required to file), including 63 annual reports and certifications from Article III judges; 15 annual reports from bankruptcy judges; 28 annual reports from magistrate judges; 337 annual reports from judicial employees; and 261 reports from nominee, initial, and final filers.

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Information Technology reported that it received an update on the CMM project that will modernize the judiciary's CM/ECF system, including costs, procurement, change management, and planned future actions. The Committee endorsed acceleration of the project, with the objective of accelerating as much work as possible into calendar years 2026 and 2027. The Committee asked that the AO strive to roll out some CMM functionality to all courts in 2026 and requested regular progress updates. Additionally, the Committee discussed preliminary policy options regarding possible expansion of the Judiciary Authorized Personally Owned Device program. The Committee received an update on the *IT Workforce Strategic Plan*, which was delivered to the Chief Information Officer in July 2025. The Committee also approved policy language for inclusion in the *Guide* requiring court and federal public defender office adherence to the IT Security Logging standard. Finally, the Committee was updated on AI issues, the courtroom technology survey, and modernization efforts of key judiciary information technology systems.

COMMITTEE ON INTERCIRCUIT ASSIGNMENTS

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Intercircuit Assignments reported that 42 Article III judges undertook 60 intercircuit assignments from July 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025. During this time, the Committee continued to disseminate information about intercircuit assignments and aided courts requesting assistance by identifying and

obtaining judges willing to take assignments. The Committee also reviewed and concurred with six proposed intercircuit assignments of bankruptcy judges and five of magistrate judges.

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL JUDICIAL RELATIONS

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on International Judicial Relations reported on international rule of law work to which federal judges contributed since the Committee's last report to the Judicial Conference. The Committee considered reports addressing work by federal judges in rule of law programs from the Supreme Court of the United States; AO; Committee on Defender Services; FJC; Federal Court Clerks Association; Congressional Office for International Leadership; U.S. Patent and Trademark Office; and U.S. Departments of Justice and State. The Committee received a briefing from Margaret Satterthwaite, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, about her office's findings regarding challenges to judicial independence around the world. The Committee voted unanimously to establish a public web presence on www.uscourts.gov to facilitate work related to the Committee's jurisdiction.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on the Judicial Branch reported that it discussed recent legislative items of interest to the judiciary including those related to judgeships, the budget, judicial security, courtroom sharing, judicial impeachments, and court improvements. The Committee discussed the importance of congressional outreach in coordination with the AO's Office of Legislative Affairs. The Committee received reports on local and national civics engagement activities and programs to increase public trust and confidence in the courts. The Committee discussed methods of improving the public's understanding of and respect for the courts through greater media outreach and more diverse social communication methods and platforms.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT AND DISABILITY

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Judicial Conduct and Disability reported that it discussed and considered complaint-related matters under the Judicial Conduct and Disability Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 351–364 (Act), and the Rules for Judicial-Conduct and Judicial Disability Proceedings (Rules). The Committee approved updates to the publicly available, online Digest of Authorities on the Act. The Committee agreed to amend the *Guide*, Vol. 2, Part E, Ch. 5, § 510, to add complaints identified by the chief circuit judge under Rule 5 to the list of complaints that must be sent to the Committee. The Committee and its staff have also continued to address inquiries regarding the Act and the Rules and to give other assistance as needed to circuit judicial councils and chief judges.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL RESOURCES

UNIT EXECUTIVE/DEPUTY DESIGNEE POSITION

In March 2009, in order to provide for overlap between incoming and outgoing unit executives and Type II deputies and thereby support the orderly transition of responsibilities, the Judicial Conference adopted a recommendation of the Committee on Judicial Resources to establish designee positions in the Judiciary Salary Plan (JSP) subject to several conditions, including that “[a] designee position is not applicable to, or available for, candidates who are being promoted within their current court units.” JCUS-MAR 2009, pp. 24-25. Noting that the same goals and benefits associated with allowing an external candidate to serve in a designee position—including permitting an incumbent to receive training and structured knowledge transfer from their predecessor, as well as to exercise delegated authority to perform duties of the position—would also be served by allowing internal candidates to serve in such a position, the Judicial Resources Committee recommended that the Judicial Conference amend its 2009 policy governing designee positions for JSP unit executives or Type II deputies to permit internal candidates to be eligible for designee positions. The Conference approved the Committee’s recommendation.

BANKRUPTCY ADMINISTRATORS' OFFICES STAFFING FORMULA

On recommendation of the Judicial Resources Committee, the Judicial Conference approved a new staffing formula for bankruptcy administrators' offices for implementation beginning in FY 2027, which yields 42.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions based on workload data from statistical years 2024 and 2025. The new formula modifies the trustee administration module to use a workload driver that changes with activity levels rather than a fixed district-specific constant and adjusts case groupings for chapter 9 and chapter 15 cases.

PRO SE AND DEATH PENALTY LAW CLERK STAFFING ALLOCATIONS

The current pro se law clerk and death penalty law clerk staffing formulas were adopted by the Judicial Conference in September 2017 (JCUS-SEP 2017, p. 17). In 2024, noting concerns raised by some courts about delays in the development of new staffing formulas and the adequacy of staffing credits provided under the current formulas, the Judicial Resources Committee recommended, and the Judicial Conference approved, holding in abeyance any terminations of pro se and death penalty law clerks due to reductions in case filings until new pro se and death penalty law clerk staffing formulas are implemented in FY 2028 (JCUS-SEP 2024, p. 19). In light of current budget constraints, the Committee also recommended, and the Conference approved, placing a moratorium on filling vacated pro se or death penalty law clerk positions in districts whose current staffing exceeds their allowance under the current pro se and death penalty law clerk staffing formulas until new formulas are implemented in FY 2028 (*id.*). Because new staffing formulas are now expected to be implemented in FY 2029 at the earliest, a timeline that could be subject to further change, the Committee recommended that the Conference amend its prior actions to tie the end of their effective periods to the effective date of the new staffing formulas rather than to a specific year. The Conference approved the recommendations, agreeing to:

- a. Hold in abeyance any terminations of pro se and death penalty law clerks due to reductions in case filings until the effective date of new pro se and death penalty law clerk staffing formulas; and
- b. Place a moratorium on filling vacated pro se or death penalty law clerk positions in districts whose current staffing exceeds their allowance under the current pro se and death penalty law clerk staffing formulas

until the effective date of new pro se and death penalty law clerk formulas.

DEFENDER SERVICES SUPREME COURT ADVOCACY PROJECT

The Judicial Resources Committee, at the request of the Committee on Defender Services, recommended that the Judicial Conference approve four FTE positions (three attorneys and one non-attorney support position) to support a national Supreme Court Advocacy Project for the Defender Services program to improve the quality of representation for CJA clients before the Supreme Court, to be considered for inclusion in the judiciary's FY 2028 budget request. The additional positions are intended to meet the need for full-time staff dedicated to the highly specialized area of Supreme Court practice and to ameliorate the current disparity in resources available to the prosecution and the defense in this area. They will provide assistance and training to CJA practitioners around the country and, under appropriate circumstances, will represent CJA clients in the Supreme Court. The Judicial Conference approved the Committee's recommendation.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Current judiciary policy permits the granting of non-monetary awards to employees to recognize either specific accomplishments or service milestones (including length of service milestones and retirement), with costs for such awards not to exceed \$100 per employee per year. JCUS-MAR 2007, p. 25; JCUS-MAR 2020, p. 21. Based on concerns expressed by courts (particularly probation and pretrial services offices) about cost escalations in presenting certain service recognition awards, the Judicial Resources Committee recommended that the Judicial Conference amend the judiciary's employee recognition awards policy to increase the annual cost limit for non-monetary service recognition awards from \$100 to \$400 per employee. While this amount is higher than what probation and pretrial services officers have reported recently spending on such awards, the Committee reasoned that it would accommodate reasonable price variation across courts and reduce the need for future adjustments as costs continue to rise. The Judicial Conference approved the Committee's recommendation.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Judicial Resources reported that it approved a revised work measurement schedule for future studies that reflects the court community’s communicated priorities and adjusts for delays resulting from the fall 2025 government shutdown and suspension of work measurement activities during that time. Additionally, the Committee approved the allocation of court law clerk positions for FYs 2026 through 2027 under Track III of the court law clerk program established by the Judicial Conference in September 2021 (JCUS-SEP 2021, pp. 20-21). The Committee also declined to approve a request to reclassify a staff assistant to the chief circuit judge position from JSP-14 to JSP-15.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL SECURITY

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Judicial Security reported that it met with U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) Director Gadyaces S. Serralta and discussed the USMS’s management of the Judicial Facility Security Program, stressing the importance of transparency and communication in connection with contract management and ensuring that security systems and equipment projects are properly executed. The Committee also met with Federal Protective Service (FPS) Director Faron K. Parramore and requested that FPS provide detailed information on judiciary-funded temporary fencing deployments as part of the Courthouse Hardening Program and a detailed explanation for the increase in labor rates for protective service officers who secure the perimeter of many federal facilities that house the judiciary. The Committee continued its discussion regarding whether and how the judiciary could manage certain security programs currently managed by the USMS. The Committee directed AO staff to continue to study the issue for future discussions.

COMMITTEE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MAGISTRATE JUDGES SYSTEM

CHANGES IN MAGISTRATE JUDGE POSITIONS

After considering the recommendations of the Committee on the Administration of the Magistrate Judges System and the views of the AO and the affected district courts and circuit judicial councils, the Judicial Conference agreed to redesignate (a) in the District of Minnesota, the location of the full-time magistrate judge position in Duluth as “Duluth or Saint Paul”; and (b) in the Middle District of Florida, the location of one full-time magistrate judge position in Jacksonville as “Jacksonville or Orlando.”

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on the Administration of the Magistrate Judges System reported that it considered 11 district-wide surveys of magistrate judge positions and, where appropriate, endorsed suggestions regarding magistrate judge utilization in those districts. Between its June 2025 and December 2025 meetings, the Committee, through its chair, approved filling 20 magistrate judge position vacancies in 15 district courts (JCUS-MAR 2024, pp. 19-20), and the Committee approved requests from 2 courts for the approval or extension of staff for 4 retired magistrate judges. At its December 2025 meeting, the Committee approved a request from 1 court to fill a magistrate judge position vacancy and requests from 8 courts for the recall, the extension of recall, or the approval or extension of staff or clerk’s office support for 11 retired magistrate judges. The Committee determined that the FJC Report on the magistrate judge selection and appointment process should not be disseminated, revisiting the decision made at its June 2025 meeting. The Committee also agreed to delegate to its Subcommittee on Recruitment and Outreach authority to plan the next iteration of the “Roadways to the Bench” event, in coordination with the Committee on the Administration of the Bankruptcy System.

COMMITTEE ON RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure reported on coordinated efforts among its advisory committees to address electronic filing and service by self-represented litigants, attorney admissions, and privacy issues related to the full redaction of Social Security numbers and other taxpayer identifying information and the use of pseudonyms for minors' names in public filings. The Committee approved a technical amendment to Official Form 410C13-NR (Response to Trustee's Notice of Disbursements Made) and approved publication of a proposed amendment to Civil Rule 55. The proposed amendment would remove the command that the clerk "must" enter a default or default judgment in certain circumstances and instead provide that the clerk "may either" do so "or refer the matter to the court for directions." The public comment period for the proposed amendment will be open from August 2026 to February 2027. The Committee also received reports on proposals to create new rules of evidence regarding the admissibility of machine-generated evidence introduced without the presence of a testifying expert and the use of special masters in bankruptcy proceedings.

COMMITTEE ON SPACE AND FACILITIES

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Committee on Space and Facilities reported that it approved, subject to funding availability, two requests for Component B funding pursuant to the Judicial Conference-approved rent allotment methodology (JCUS-SEP 2007, pp. 36–37), and three requests for funding for No Net New projects in support of the Judicial Conference's No Net New policy adopted in September 2013 (JCUS-SEP 2013, p. 32). The Committee also received an update on a new Government Accountability Office study on the utilization of judiciary administrative space. Finally, the Committee met with the GSA Public Buildings Service Acting Commissioner, who briefed the Committee on significant matters affecting the judiciary, including organizational restructuring, cost estimation for courthouse construction projects, and GSA's pricing policy changes.

FUNDING

All of the foregoing recommendations that require the expenditure of funds for implementation were approved by the Judicial Conference subject to the availability of funds and to whatever priorities the Conference might establish for the use of available resources.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robt L.", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Chief Justice of the United States
Presiding