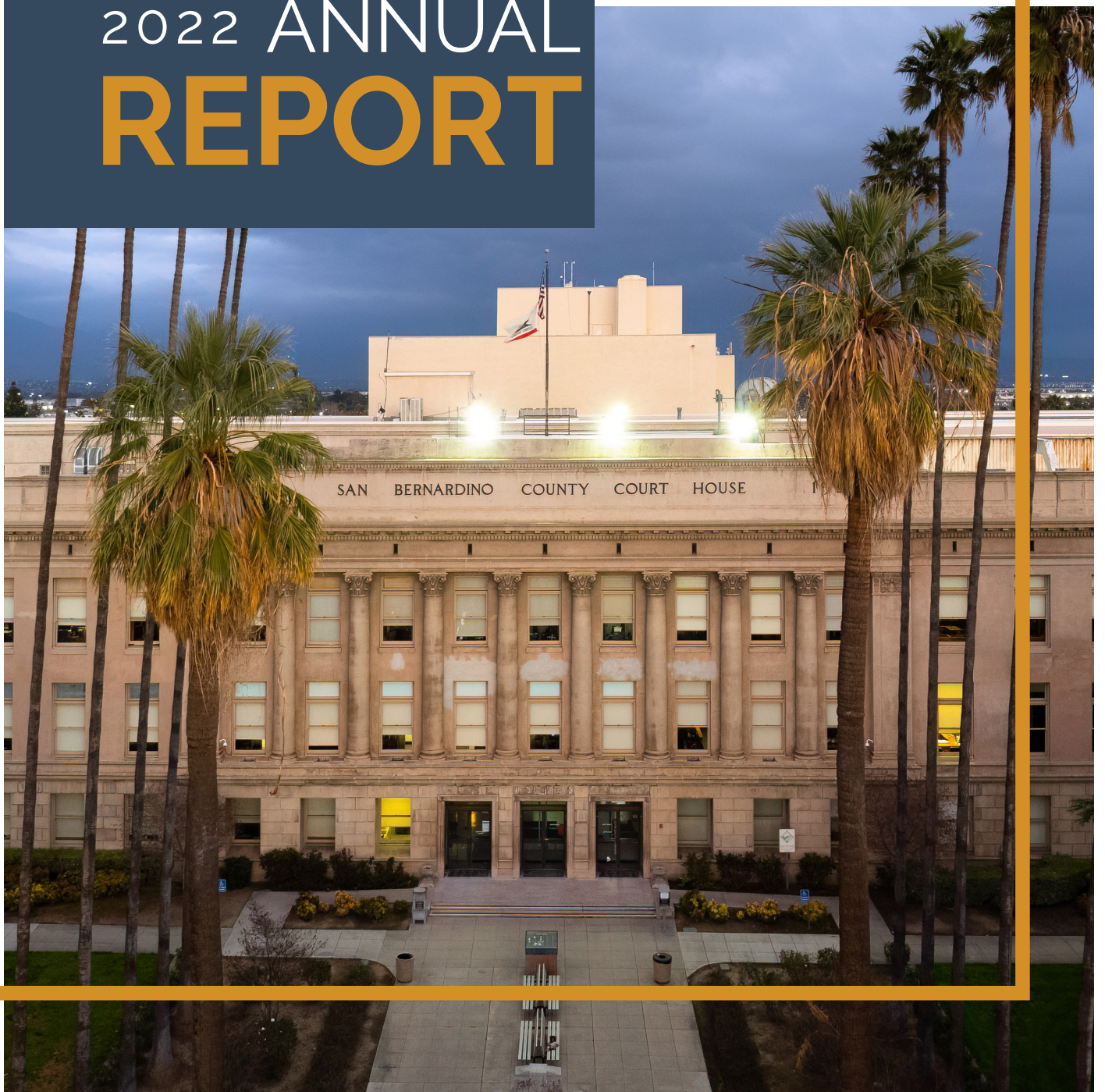


# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



**Investing & Transforming  
court services for the largest County  
in the lower 48 states**

# ABOUT US



## Largest County in the lower 48 states

As one of 58 trial courts in California, San Bernardino Superior Court (SBSC) serves the largest geographic county in the contiguous United States — reaching south of the San Bernardino Mountains to the Nevada border and the Colorado River. Larger than the state of Massachusetts and Vermont combined,

Encompassing 24 cities and 104 unincorporated communities, the court serves a population of 2,194,710 which is expected to grow 2X as fast as California in the next 25 years.

The court provides access to justice in 12 court facilities throughout the county's 20,105 square miles. According to the U.S. Census, the county's demographics represent some unique characteristics,

including 13.2% below the federal poverty line, 26% percent of school-aged children, and 56% of Hispanic ethnicity. The U.S. Census Bureau published that 42% of families spoke a language other than English at home from 2017 to 2021.

## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### SBSC achieved great milestones in 2022

In 2022, the court outfitted most courtrooms with remote video conferencing technology and audio players to record court proceedings, refined the Court Access Portal (CAP) for public access to electronic case records, implemented SCRIPTA (judges' tool), and began preliminary work to launch eFiling in 2023. Child Support also consolidated buildings with the San Bernardino Family Law Division at the Historic Courthouse.

In December 2022, SBSC and the City of Needles leadership met to discuss the 2023 expansion of the Needles Courthouse using remote technology and in-person services five days a week.



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# WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

## A joint message from Presiding Judge R. Glenn Yabuno and Court Executive Officer Anabel Z. Romero

In 2022, San Bernardino Superior Court (SBSC) crossed the post-pandemic turning point. It ended with a historic budget allocation to preface us for transformation and investment in our court and the community we serve.

This Annual Report reflects the progress in 2022 to continuously restore services balanced with innovation, investment, and change. In this period of transformation, we invested in modernizing our business processes with eFile, expanded in remote areas such as Needles, and grew in resources to support our workload and ongoing expansion, to name a few.

We thank our judicial officers and employees for their resiliency and hard work this past year. Daily, they contribute to the path forward of continued improvement and expanded access to justice for all we serve.

In 2022, the Governor of California appointed a record number of judges to SBSC, though we continue to have the highest judicial need in the state.

- Judicial appointment needs continue to be a pressing issue with at least six judges eligible to retire in 2023
- The unmet judicial need continues to remain around 30 additional judges, with potential impacts to access to justice
- Mentorship opportunities for attorneys interested in becoming a judge are available

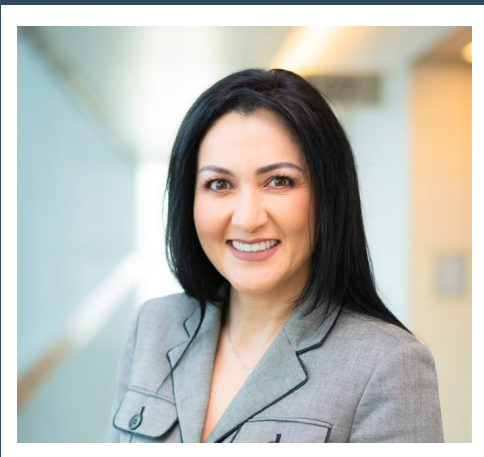


### R. Glenn Yabuno

Presiding Judge

2022 was the post-pandemic turning point for our court. We saw a considerable investment in the state budget which has allowed for an expansion in access to justice.

We hope to standardize and streamline court processes to provide the best customer service and resource availability.



### Anabel Z. Romero

Court Executive Officer

Our culture is defined by our mission, values, and vision. The community we serve is and will continue to be at the core of our investment as we continuously improve.



On November 14, 2022, Anabel Z. Romero was sworn in as SBSC's first Latina & Naturalized Citizen Court Executive Officer.

The following judges were appointed in 2022: Joni Sinclair, Damian Garcia, Kory Mathewson, Christian Towns, Michael Dauber, Rasheed Alexander, Jeffrey Erickson, Marie Moreno Myers, and Stephanie Tañada. Also, in 2022, Judge Melissa Rodriguez and Judge David Tulcan were elected, and Commissioner Natalie Keller was selected to join our bench. We continue to thank our stakeholders and community partners for advocating for our judicial needs at the state level.



**Judge Joni Sinclair**



**Judge Damian Garcia**



**Judge Kory Mathewson**



**Judge Christian Towns**



**Judge Michael Dauber**



**Judge Rasheed Alexander**



**Judge Stephanie Tañada**



**Judge Jeffrey Erickson**



**Judge Marie Moreno Myers**



**Judge Melissa Rodriguez**



**Judge David Tulcan**



**Commissioner Natalie Keller**

# INNOVATION & EXPANDED ACCESS

Modernizing our court practices with the use of technology and increased in-person services

The Judicial Council awarded \$1.3 million in modernization funding over the last three years. Key deliverables include the Court Access Portal, SCRIPTA, and other disaster recovery and security technology resources.

## eFiling

Electronically file documents

The initial planning for electronic filing began in 2022. Using a phased-in approach, attorneys and the public can save time by filing court documents online.

### Timeline

- Probate March 2023
- Small Claims Spring 2023
- Civil & Landlord Tenant Winter 2023
- Family Law & Appeals Spring 2024



## Court Access Portal

Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino

## COURT ACCESS PORTAL

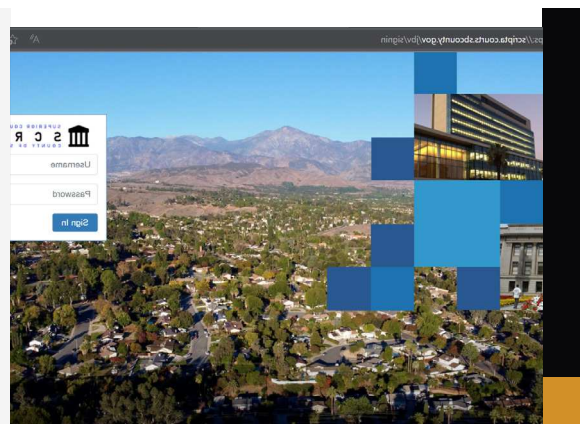
Primary vehicle for public access to court case information

In 2022, the Court Access Portal (CAP) launched providing stability and improving access to electronic court case information online. Through continued partnership and stakeholder feedback, unlimited name searches for a flat monthly fee and advance calendar search options became available in October 2022.

## SCRIPTA

Digital Judicial Tool

With modernization funding, SBSC began developing a replacement tool for judges to access electronic case files, note-taking, annotation, records search, and more. Using LA Superior Court's tool as a starting point, SCRIPTA was developed and launched in 2022 for civil, small claims, landlord-tenant, family law, and probate cases.



**In January 2023, the Needles Courthouse expanded to five days a week with the clerk's office and self-help services.**

In Needles, court users can now file documents and obtain services locally. Services include filing non-criminal cases, filing documents for most case types, making fine/fee payments, obtaining forms, and accessing virtual or in-person self-help services.

On the first Friday of each month, the court will remain set for traffic hearings and misdemeanor probation modifications until Phase II modifications are implemented in April 2023. Currently, litigants with any case type can appear virtually in Needles. According to SBSC's Limited English Proficiency Policy and Video Remote Interpreting program, language access services will be provided remotely.



Supervising Judge Guy A. Bovée presenting to the City of Needles about expanded access



**56,087**

**Interpreter Requests**

To increase access to justice and assist limited-English proficient court users, SBSC expanded remote video interpreting in the Barstow District. Interpreter services also became available for all court users with family law cases, with full expansion expected in 2023 for small claims and civil litigation.

In 2022, SBSC received 54,060 requests for Spanish translation and 2,027 requests for languages other than Spanish.



**67,396**



**Self-represented Litigants**

Self-help services assist litigants who need assistance with information on legal processes, procedures, form completion, and answering questions. In 2022, Self-help services expanded to the Needles Courthouse once per month and virtually five days per week, providing free assistance with family law, child support, guardianship, landlord/tenant, and small claims. In 2022, nearly 8,000 remote and 60,000 in-person litigants received services.

# HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

SBSC has historically been an underfunded and under-judged court



## CONTINUED INVESTMENT IN ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH STATE FUNDING

Over the last decade, strategic reinvestment to expand countywide access to justice was challenging. Reinvestment points remain the same: staffing, technology, and meeting the needs of our growing population.



**2019**

**2020**

**Funded at 79%**

In FY 2019-2020, SBSC was funded at only 79%, with a funding gap of 21%

**2020**

*Pandemic Cuts*

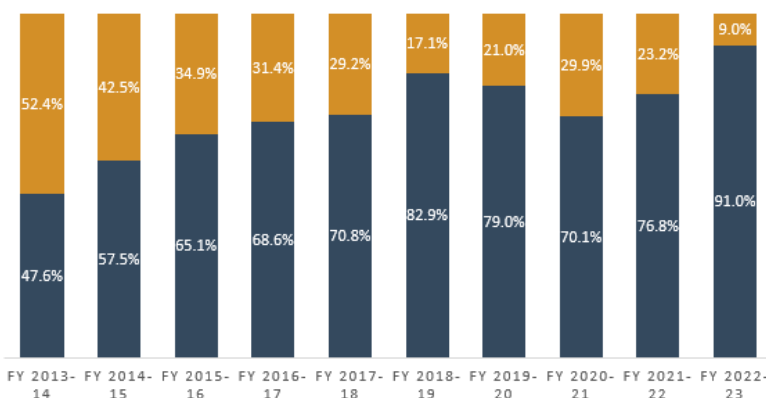
**2021**

**Funded at 70%**

In FY 2020-2021, SBSC was funded at 70% due to the COVID-19 pandemic which led to severe funding cuts resulting in hiring freezes & furloughs

### SBSC WORKLOAD FUNDING TREND

■ Work Load Funding ■ Funding Gap



### Funding Trend Report

SBSC practiced remarkable resilience after a severe budget reduction due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of the Great Reshuffle.

After several years of budget uncertainty, the FY 2022-23 budget brought a positive fiscal outlook for the entire judicial branch.



Locally, SBSC is now funded at a historical 91% versus 47% only a decade prior. With continued support for critical services and programs provided by the Judicial Branch, SBSC will expand access by adding more courtrooms, staffing to process filings quickly, addressing the filing backlog related to COVID, and creating foundational critical infrastructure to meet the growing needs of the community we serve.

Funding	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Base Allocation	\$109,523,523	\$118,237,618	\$163,820,468
Pre-trial Release	N/A	\$3,332,797*	\$1,180,160
Self-help services	\$1,582,334	\$1,585,898	\$1,585,898
Interpreter program	\$5,445,069	\$5,445,069	\$7,059,912
Grants	\$4,707,755	\$5,025,531	\$5,276,654
Court Appointed Counsel for Dependency	\$12,446,717	\$13,045,926	\$14,821,566
Other revenues & reimbursements	\$7,766,774	\$7,671,377	\$7,588,856
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$141,472,172</b>	<b>\$154,344,216</b>	<b>\$201,333,514</b>

\*Includes one-time funding

**2021**

**2022**

**Funded at 77%**

In FY 2021-22, SBSC saw an increase in funding at nearly 77% funded, with a 23% funding gap

**2022**

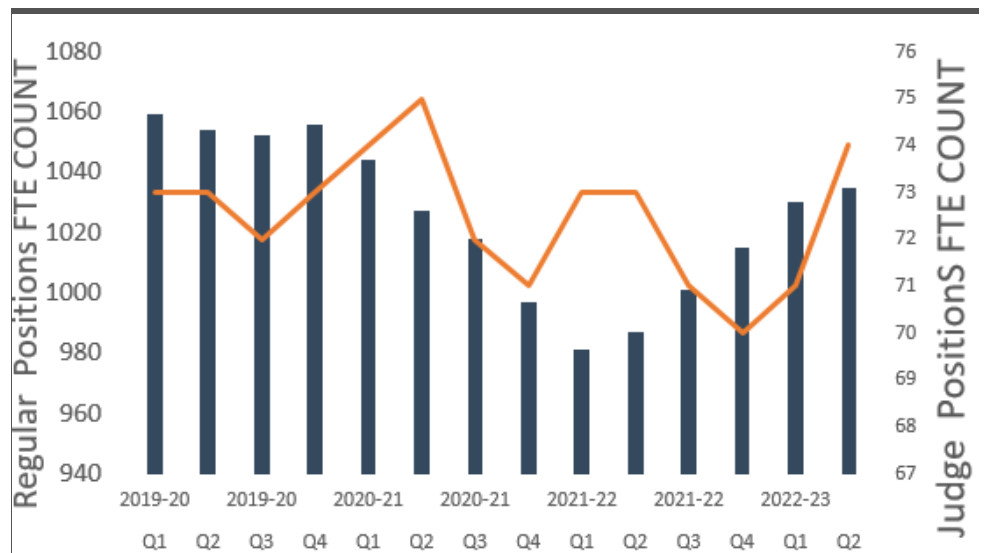
**2023**

**Funded at 91%**

In FY 2022-23, SBSC saw the largest funding investment with a 42% budget increase equating to \$59.9 million increase since FY 2020-21

## 10-year Trend Report Staffing and Judges

Aligned with improved funding, staffing levels and judicial appointments are trending up, and services are expanding.



# Cultivating Culture

Period of Investment and Change in Access to Justice

This is a time and period of transformation for our court. As we enter the planning phases of the SBSC's next five-year Strategic Plan, we want to bridge the gap between our current state and where we want to go. Uniquely defined by our mission, vision, and values, we want a culture that enhances performance and accountability.

## People

Right-sizing our workforce to build a culture committed to expanding access to justice.

## Automate

A critical element for our court's performance is automation. Automation will bring greater access to justice.

## Data Driven

Data is the driver of our decisions. Building a better foundation and metrics will increase understanding and improve court services.

## Technology

Technology is the critical component driving access to justice. We will pursue new innovations to transform court operations.

## Re-engineer

Simplifying standards, processes and forms will allow the court to run more efficiently and effectively for all users.

## Training

Investing in our workforce with the training and development needed to increase engagement, morale and job performance.



# Strengthening Our Workforce

Our values, expectations and practices guide our workforce daily to make it what the organization is

SBSC has been understaffed and under-judged over the last decade, primarily due to funding and budget constraints. Right-sizing our most significant resources will build a cohesive culture committed to access to justice for the community we serve in San Bernardino County.



## New Hires

Increased awareness, availability of talent and industry flexibility

Hiring the right amount of employees is critical to addressing the workload, decreasing hiring costs, and maximizing employee happiness.

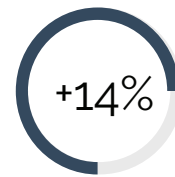
**+14%** Increase

In 2022, SBSC increased its hiring rate by 14 percent compared to 2021. SBSC took a step back and analyzed our hiring process to determine what had been working and what needed to change.

**171** Internal Mobility

**Career development leads to employee satisfaction, increased work effort and longevity**

In 2022, over 130 legal processing assistants and judicial assistants were promoted in our court. SBSC promoted 22 individuals to supervisor or manager-level positions.



## New Hires

Primarily due to staff lost through attrition, SBSC only gained a 5% increase in total staff despite adding 122 new (full-time equivalent) positions and hiring 157 new employees.



## Hiring Strategies

Video interviews, social media, & maximizing job boards

In 2022, SBSC expanded its strategies to recruit and fill positions using video interviews to shorten the hiring process, social media such as LinkedIn to boost our engagement rate, and maximizing job boards through the National Center of State Courts, the Department of Rehabilitation, and community organizations.

**71**

**Job fairs yield a high return on potential talent**

In 2022, SBSC held two job fairs to drive awareness of current opportunities to work for the court. Both job fairs yielded a large pool of possible talent and equated to 71 new hires.



## RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

**Revamping our recruitment process to identify, hire, and retain top talent**

SBSC identified its pain points in the recruitment process and ways to improve its efforts as we advance. Holding a vacancy rate of 15 %, SBSC utilized job fairs, mass hiring events, and social media to attract top talent.

- Reviewing processes, procedures and local rules to streamline services
- Adding courtrooms where feasible such as in Barstow, Fontana and in San Bernardino
- Using technology to innovate and bring court services closer to increase access to justice
  - Video and audio equipment in each courtroom to conduct remote proceedings
  - Software to capture the audio recording of court proceedings



## ■ Eliminating Backlog

**Tackling the pandemic backlog continues to be a high priority - with new out of the box concepts**

We continue our efforts to improve the court's backlog through working overtime, hiring extra help, prioritizing, & processing daily with a focus on our most critical areas, including:

- Judgments
- Defaults
- Orders after hearings
- Mail

Despite these promising efforts, SBSC will deploy new strategies in 2023, such as eFile, diverting new hires, expanding resources, and other approaches, such as working in sprints to help us hit our goals.

# Employee Investment

Investing in a positive workforce



## DEVELOPMENT

Setting employees up for success

Employees need quality resources to do quality work.

Investing in training and development is a necessary resource that increases engagement, morale, and performance.



## Course Completions

In 2022, 4,289 staff completed courses on demand, virtual and in-person training classes



## Development Courses

In 2022, 246 development courses were taken related to customer service, ethics, and accountability



## Our most valuable asset

**The future of workplace wellbeing is grounded in fostering social connections and support**

Investing in a positive workplace culture that's transparent and aligned with its core mission is critical to producing workplace positivity. Growth opportunities are another avenue SBSC provides to ensure sustainability in the long term. In 2022, we had 171 internal promotions, including leadership roles.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Committee is an example of creating collaborative environments and fostering happy and eager employees. To bring awareness and promote inclusivity, we featured stories on celebrations, cultural events, and awareness campaigns in our internal weekly newsletter.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach is an opportunity for judicial officers to connect with the community they serve

## Community Connection

**Community outreach allows community members to hear about what courts do from a judge. Courts preserve fairness and impartiality when people come to the courthouse.**

Community outreach helps secure public confidence in the rule of law and differentiates itself from the other branches of government. The opportunity to work with the community strengthens public trust in the administration of justice.



## Judges in the Classroom

Judges in the Classroom is a partnership program with the Judicial Council of California and the California Department of Education. The program allows teachers to request prepared lessons and have a judge visit their classroom. During the classroom visit, judges present age-appropriate lessons featuring state law and practice to K-12 students. The interactive classes provide students with the unique opportunity to learn first-hand about the judicial system and concepts of fairness. To request a San Bernardino judge to visit your classroom, visit [https://www.courts.ca.gov/judges\\_in\\_the\\_classroom.htm](https://www.courts.ca.gov/judges_in_the_classroom.htm)



## Homeless Outreach Initiatives & The Stand Down Event

On July 8, 26, and August 12, SBSC led a multi-agency effort to remotely assist the homeless and transient populations with pending court cases. As a result, 540 cases were resolved for the homeless, transient, and veterans population.

On October 12, SBSC set up a mobile courtroom at Perris Hill Park as members of the homeless community and veterans could get assistance in resolving misdemeanor and infraction cases.



## Lopez v. Secombe

On September 15, over 200 students watched the reenactment of Lopez v. Secombe at the historic Milta Cafe. The reenactment was in partnership with the local American Board of Trial Advocates and presented by Court of Appeal Presiding Justice Manuel A. Ramirez, Attorney Michael Bidart, and Attorney Michael Scafiddi. The case was decided in 1944 in San Bernardino, desegregating city parks and recreational facilities, specifically in the Perris Hill plunge, influencing the landmark Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education in 1954.



## Townhall Series

In 2022, we continued the award-winning Townhall Series and hosted Eliminating Bias within the Juvenile Dependency Court. On May 5, leaders within the San Bernardino Justice System provided an overview of the Juvenile Dependency system, its purpose, goals, and answered questions directly from the public. The public shared their challenges in the dependency system, their ideas to address them, and their concerns.

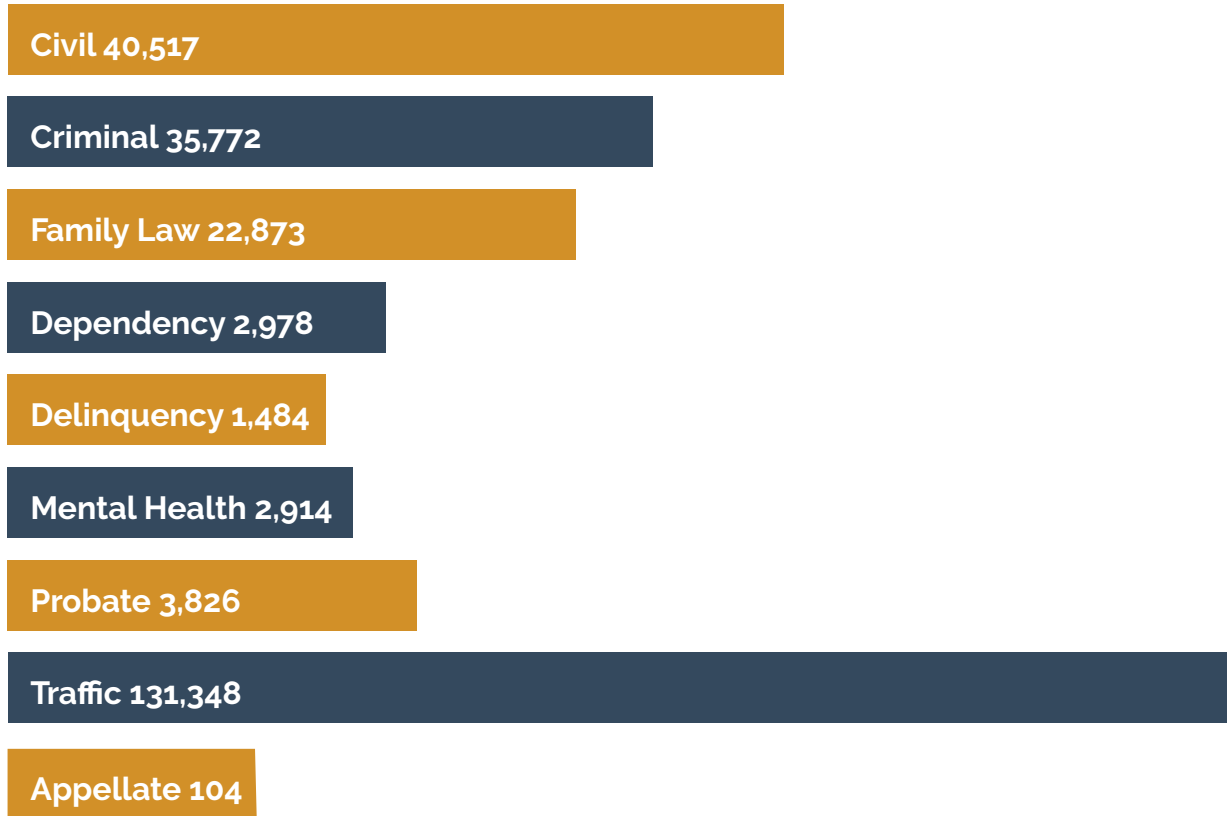


## Elimination of Bias Committee

In 2022, the Elimination of Bias Committee (EOB) continued highlighting and looking for ways to improve access to justice. The EOB formed mission statements and held several meetings to address training, development, outreach, and access.

The local bar association, judges, and EOB members offered three trainings on diversity, bias, inclusion, and social justice.

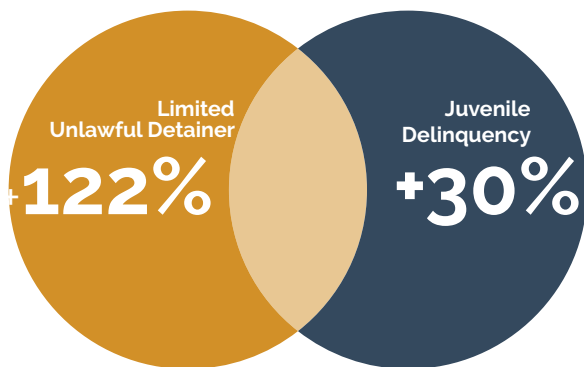
## FILING STATISTICS SUMMARY FY 2021-22



Graphic not to scale\*

## Statistical Trends

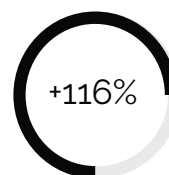
Over the last year:



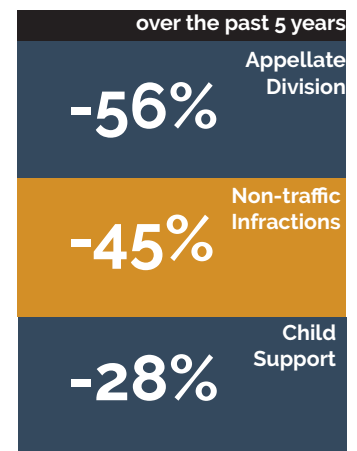
Over the last 5 years:



Probate



Unlimited Complex Civil





# LOOKING ONWARD

New projects, initiatives, and more to expand access to justice

SBSC is a strong court that values diversity, inclusion and strives to become high-performing and functioning. Through diligent planning efforts, we are excited to expand access to justice to the community we serve. Planning and partnership will continue to be the overarching theme for the next several years, with great endeavors and initiatives underway, as highlighted below.

## HIGH DESERT JUSTICE CENTER

Our courthouses have limited space available to meet the growing needs of the High Desert. A High Desert Justice Center would consolidate 19 departments from Barstow to Victorville—removing obstacles related to geography and demographics for the public.

## COURTHOUSE REMODELS

The Juvenile Dependency Courthouse renovation will include two additional courtrooms, support space, and an expansion of the clerk's office and lobby. By spring 2025, the Historic Courthouse will have more courtrooms and an administrative area due to one-time state funding.

## REMOTE ACCESS

SBSC will continue to look for ways to expand access using technology to deliver court services such as eFiling, online form preparation, self-help services, remote hearings, etc.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

We are beginning to revise and revamp our five-year Strategic Plan. The plan will encompass new initiatives and smart strategies for 2023-2028.

## STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP

We will continue building relationships with our stakeholders through partnership events with the County of San Bernardino and elected officials.

## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

Over the next few years, our courthouses will reduce air pollution and improve energy efficiency due to AB 32. Courthouses will include electric vehicle charging stations, solar panels, and green efficiencies.

# COURT SERVICES & LOCATIONS



## SAN BERNARDINO JUSTICE CENTER

The San Bernardino Justice Center (SBJC) opened in 2014. The courthouse occupies 383,000 square feet on a seven-acre site, consisting of an 11-story courtroom tower and a three-story podium. SBJC serves as the center of operations for civil, criminal, probate, jury, administration, sheriff's operation and holding, a children's waiting room, and has 35 courtrooms. SBJC is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



## RANCHO CUCAMONGA

The Rancho Cucamonga Courthouse is dedicated to hearing criminal cases. The 233,721 square foot building houses 20 courtrooms occupied by the District Attorney's Office, Office of the Public Defender, Sheriff's Department, and Probation. The Rancho Cucamonga Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



## JUVENILE DEPENDENCY

The Juvenile Dependency Courthouse opened in 2003, housing four courtrooms and permitting all juvenile dependency court services and related support agencies to reside in one building, including the Department of Children and Family Services and the County Counsel's Office. The Juvenile Dependency Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



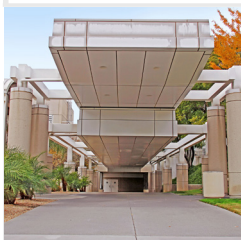
## VICTORVILLE COURTHOUSE

The Victorville Courthouse is jointly occupied by the District Attorney's Office, Public Defender, Sheriff's Department, and Juvenile Detention. The building houses 15 courtrooms hearing criminal, traffic, and juvenile delinquency matters. The Victorville Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



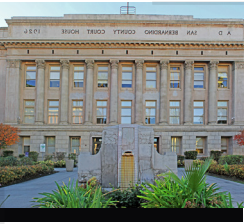
## NEEDLES COURTHOUSE

Lying on the western banks of the Colorado River, near the borders of Arizona and Nevada, the Needles Courthouse expanded to five days a week beginning in January 2023. Housing a single courtroom, the residents of Needles can file and have their cases heard without commuting long travel times to other courthouses. The Needles Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



## ARROWHEAD REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Since 1999, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC) has housed California's only in-hospital courtroom serving mental health patients. Cases are heard every Tuesday and Friday at ARMC. Cases at ARMC are generally related to Lanterman-Petris Short (LPS) Act, which gives doctors the right to treat patients who cannot make their healthcare decisions due to a severe mental illness.



## **HISTORIC COURTHOUSE**

The Historic Courthouse was built in 1927 and served as a county administrative building in 1937, a county library, and a heating plant in 1940. The four-story 86,225 square feet classically-inspired building contains ten courtrooms. It serves as SBSC's primary Family Law and Child Support center, including self-help, a children's waiting room, and family court services. The Historic Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



## **FONTANA COURTHOUSE**

The Fontana Courthouse spans 21,366 square feet and features a self-help center, children's waiting room, and eight courtrooms hearing small claims, landlord-tenant, traffic, and probate matters. The Fontana Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



## **JUVENILE DELINQUENCY**

The Juvenile Delinquency Courthouse is dedicated to hearing cases in which anyone under 18 is accused of breaking the law. This courthouse is a shared space with Juvenile Probation, the Public Defender's Office, and the District Attorney's Office, housing three courthouses. The Juvenile Delinquency Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



## **BARSTOW COURTHOUSE**

The Barstow Courthouse spans 28,960 square feet and was remodeled in 2021, adding two more courtrooms, a self-help center, and a children's waiting room. The Barstow Courthouse is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



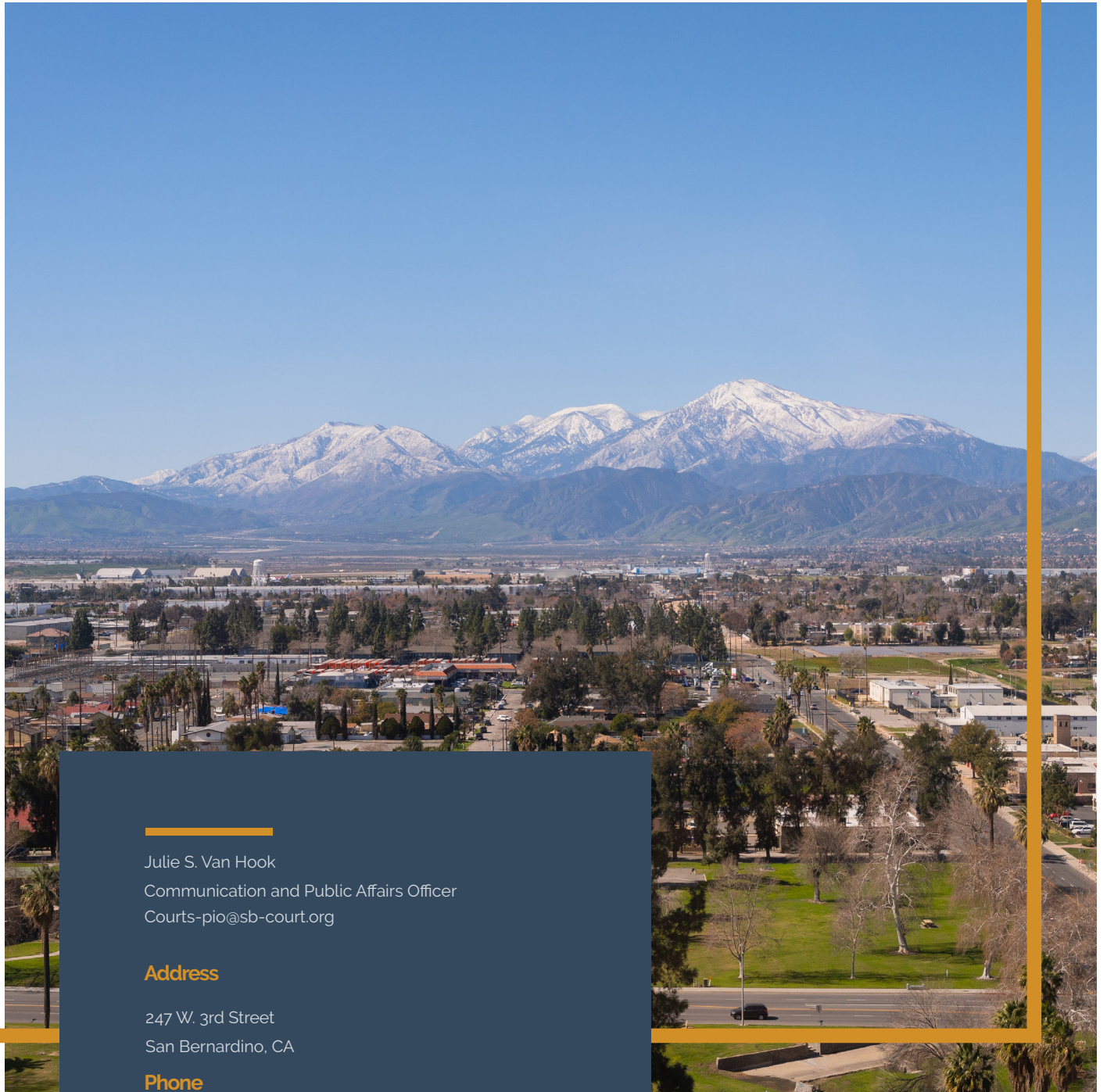
## **BIG BEAR COURTHOUSE**

The Big Bear Courthouse reopened in July 2018 after being closed since 2013. Through a statewide innovations grant, SBSC began offering remote video proceedings (RVP) for traffic and non-traffic infraction matters on the first Wednesday of each month. RVP expanded to include misdemeanor modifications. The building houses one courtroom and is jointly occupied by the Sheriff's Department. The Big Bear Courthouse is open the first Wednesday of each month from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



## **JOSHUA TREE COURTHOUSE**

Nestled where the Mojave and Colorado deserts meet, the Joshua Tree Courthouse is located 75 miles east of downtown San Bernardino. The building is co-occupied by the District Attorney, Sheriff's Department, and Public Defender. The courthouse has four courtrooms hearing civil, criminal, traffic, family law, small claims, and landlord-tenant matters. The Joshua Tree Courthouse is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



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