

CIRCUIT COURTS

Budget Summary							
Fund	2022-23 Base Year Doubled	2023-25 Governor	2023-25 Jt. Finance	2023-25 Legislature	2023-25 Act 19	Act 19 Change Over Base Year Doubled	
						Amount	Percent
GPR	\$231,477,200	\$234,823,000	\$232,243,000	\$232,243,000	\$232,243,000	\$765,800	0.3%
PR	<u>465,400</u>	<u>465,400</u>	<u>465,400</u>	<u>465,400</u>	<u>465,400</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
TOTAL	\$231,942,600	\$235,288,400	\$232,708,400	\$232,708,400	\$232,708,400	\$765,800	0.3%

FTE Position Summary						
Fund	2022-23 Base	2024-25 Governor	2024-25 Jt. Finance	2024-25 Legislature	2024-25 Act 19	Act 19 Change Over 2022-23 Base
GPR	543.00	551.00	551.00	551.00	551.00	8.00

Budget Change Items

1. **STANDARD BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS** [LFB Paper 105] GPR - \$2,378,600

Governor/Legislature: Provide an adjustment to the base of -\$1,189,300 annually associated with full funding of continuing position salaries and fringe benefits.

2. **CIRCUIT COURT BRANCHES FUNDING AND POSITIONS** [LFB Paper 106]

	Funding	Positions
GPR	\$2,303,600	8.00

Governor/Legislature: Provide \$1,107,000 in 2023-24, \$1,196,600 in 2024-25, and 8.0 positions annually for the last four new circuit court branches created under 2019 Act 184. In total, Act 184 created 12 circuit court branches over a three-year period (four judges each in 2021, 2022, and 2023), at the discretion of the Director of State Courts. Position authority includes 4.0 judges and 4.0 circuit court reporters annually (a judge and court reporter each in Clark, Manitowoc, Sawyer, and Wood counties).

Since judgeships are specifically identified in the statutes, modify statutory language to update the number of judicial circuit court branches, by county, to reflect 2019 Act 184. Specifically, increase the statutory number of judicial circuit court branches in Adams, Eau Claire,

Vilas, and Waushara counties (added and allocated by the Director of State Courts to begin operation on August 1, 2022), as well as Clark, Manitowoc, Sawyer, and Wood counties (added and allocated by the Director of State Courts to begin operation on August 1, 2023).

[Act 19 Sections: 462 thru 469, 9107(1)&(2), and 9407(1)]

3. CIRCUIT COURT COST PAYMENTS

GPR	\$840,800
-----	-----------

Governor/Legislature: Provide \$402,100 in 2023-24 and \$438,700 in 2024-25 in the circuit court cost appropriation for additional support to counties. Under 2019 Act 184, the number of circuit court branches increased from 257 to 261 on August 1, 2023. Since the circuit court cost appropriation distributes funding based on the number of branches, increased funding is intended to maintain current per branch funding levels (approximately \$109,700 per branch) in the 2023-25 biennium.

4. DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDING DEVICES [LFB Paper 285]

	Governor (Chg. to Base)	Jt. Finance/Leg. (Chg. to Gov)	Net Change
GPR	\$1,580,000	-\$1,580,000	\$0

Governor: Provide an increase of \$790,000 annually in sum sufficient expenditure authority in the circuit courts appropriation to support the installation of 100 additional digital audio recording devices and to provide for on-going maintenance and replacement of associated hardware and accessories. According to the Director of State Courts, increased digital audio recording equipment would allow the courts to: (a) continue to transition to digital, rather than stenographic, court reporters (the latter of which is becoming increasingly difficult to find and hire); and (b) improve courtroom function and increase flexibility by allowing court reporters to work remotely and to cover cases in different counties or on an emergency basis, as needed.

Joint Finance/Legislature: Provision not included.

5. PRETRIAL RISK ASSESSMENT REIMBURSEMENT

	Governor (Chg. to Base)	Jt. Finance/Leg. (Chg. to Gov)	Net Change
GPR	\$1,000,000	-\$1,000,000	\$0

Governor: Provide one-time funding of \$1,000,000 in 2023-24 to reimburse counties for circuit court costs associated with implementing the use of pretrial risk assessments.

Specify that the Director of State Courts must make reimbursement payments to counties for circuit court costs related to implementing the use of pretrial risk assessments. Create a biennial

circuit court costs pretrial risk assessments appropriation for this purpose. Rename the circuit court costs appropriation to the circuit court costs; generally appropriation.

Joint Finance/Legislature: Provision not included. (Removed from budget consideration pursuant to Joint Finance Motion #10.)

6. MODIFICATION OF CERTIFICATES OF QUALIFICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Governor: Modify statutory language to eliminate the circuit courts certificates of qualification for employment (CQE) appropriation [s. 20.625(1)(h)] and \$20 application fee, and transfer the unencumbered balance to the circuit courts sale of materials and services appropriation.

Under 2019 Act 123, enacted on March 3, 2020, an individual who has been convicted of a non-violent crime and has served at least 24 months of confinement in prison or 12 months of confinement followed by 12 months of extended supervision may apply for a CQE, which provides the individual with relief for collateral sanctions and provides the employer with certain civil immunities. The Act provides that a \$20 application fee be deposited into the circuit courts' certifications of qualification for employment appropriation. The Act additionally created a Council on Offender Employment, consisting of the Attorney General, the state public defender, and the chairperson of the Parole Commission (or their designees). The procedure for granting a CQE requires the Director of State Courts (the Courts) to provide an application form and convene the Council; the Council then requests information from Corrections on the applicant's background, before making a determination on the application. Corrections is also required to prepare an annual report for the Legislature, and the Courts is required to ensure that the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access (WCCA) website provides Corrections with information necessary to complete the report. Under Act 123, the Court must permanently revoke a CQE if an offender is convicted of a felony or a Class A or B misdemeanor.

Joint Finance/Legislature: Provision not included. (Removed from budget consideration pursuant to Joint Finance Motion #10.)