

# Greenbook

## LBO Analysis of Enacted Budget

### Court of Claims of Ohio

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August 2019

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# LBO Greenbook

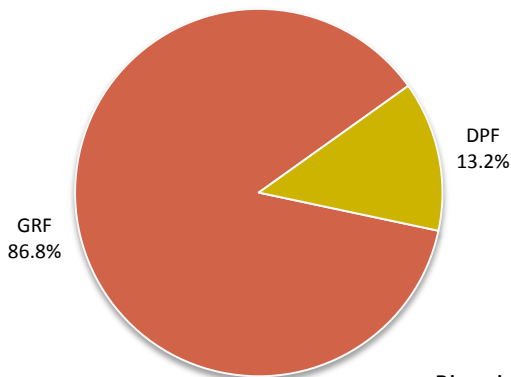
## Court of Claims of Ohio

### Quick look...

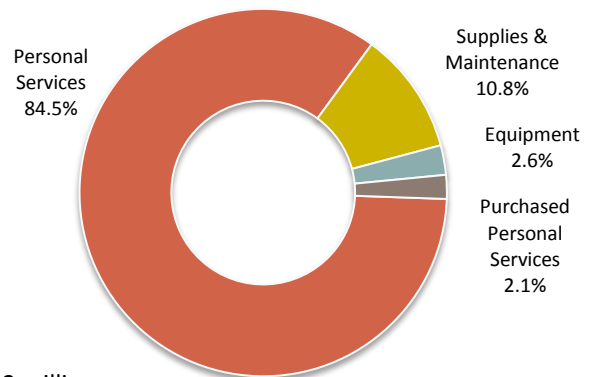
- The Court of Claims hears claims against the state, handles public records claims, and hears appeals of Attorney General crime victims compensation decisions.
- Total budget appropriations: \$4.1 million in both FY 2020 and FY 2021.
  - Revenue sources: GRF (87%) and state non-GRF (13%).
  - Nearly 85% of the Court’s budget is for personal services (wages, salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges).
- The budget appropriates additional GRF funding for the hiring of 2.5 full-time equivalent staff positions for the Public Records Adjudication Program.

Fund Group	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Appropriation	FY 2021 Appropriation
General Revenue (GRF)	\$2,946,147	\$5,091,544	\$3,549,611	\$3,579,473
Dedicated Purpose (DPF)	\$443,825	\$461,593	\$537,928	\$541,532
Total	\$3,389,973	\$5,553,137	\$4,087,539	\$4,121,005
% change	--	63.8%	-26.4%	0.8%
<i>GRF % change</i>	--	<i>72.8%</i>	<i>-30.3%</i>	<i>0.8%</i>

**Chart 1: Claims Budget by Fund Group  
FY 2020-FY 2021 Biennium**



**Chart 2: Claims Budget by Expense Category  
FY 2020-FY 2021 Biennium**



Biennial total: \$8.2 million

## Agency overview

The Court of Claims, established in 1975, is the only statutory court with statewide jurisdiction. Prior to its creation, there was no forum for civil actions filed against the state of Ohio. The Court of Claims' duties include:

- Adjudicating civil actions filed against the state;
- Hearing appeals from decisions made by the Attorney General on claims allowed under the Victims of Crime Law;
- Hearing complaints alleging a denial of access to public records; and
- Acting as the state's fiduciary agent for processing claims of wrongful imprisonment.

The Court can be viewed as having two major programmatic areas as follows: (1) Civil, which includes civil actions against the state, public records adjudication, and wrongful imprisonment claims, and (2) Victims of Crime, which hears appeals regarding claims filed under the Victims of Crime Compensation Program.

The Court resides in Franklin County and consists of judges who sit by temporary assignment of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Its day-to-day operations are handled by the equivalent of about 24 full-time staff, approximately 90% of whom are allocated to work on civil program matters. The budget appropriates additional GRF funding for the hiring of 2.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff positions to be responsible for public records adjudication matters.

## Analysis of FY 2020-FY 2021 budget

The Court's budget consists of five appropriation line items (ALI), three of which are supported by the General Revenue Fund (GRF), and two by a Dedicated Purpose Fund (DPF). The table and Chart 1 shown in the preceding "Quick look" section present the appropriations by fund group. As shown on Chart 1, the budget provides \$4.1 million in each fiscal year, of which 86.8% is supported by the GRF, and 13.2% by state non-GRF.

As shown in Chart 2 in the "Quick look" section, the largest expense category for the Court, at 84.5%, is expected to be personal services (wages, salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges), followed by supplies and maintenance at 10.8%. The remaining two categories, equipment and purchased personal services, combined account for 4.7%.

## Operating Expenses (ALI 015321)

FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Appropriation	FY 2021 Appropriation
<b>GRF ALI 015321, Operating Expenses</b>					
\$2,696,291	\$2,793,183	\$2,443,684	\$2,509,599	\$2,669,835	\$2,692,946
% change	3.6%	-12.5%	2.7%	6.4%	0.9%

The expenses of operating the Court, primarily matters related to claims against the state for money damages, are paid with money appropriated to this GRF line item. In each of FY 2020 and FY 2021, approximately 82%, or \$2.2 million, of the line item's appropriation is expected to be allocated for personal services (wages, salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges). The remainder of each fiscal year's appropriation is expected to be allocated more or less as follows: 12%, or roughly \$315,000 to \$340,000, for supplies and maintenance, 3%, or about \$80,000, for equipment, and 2%, or around \$63,000 to \$65,000, for purchased personal services.

## Wrongful Imprisonment Compensation (ALI 015402)

FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Appropriation	FY 2021 Appropriation
<b>GRF ALI 015402, Wrongful Imprisonment Compensation</b>					
\$8,357,100	\$4,129,947	\$0	\$2,049,267	\$0	\$0
% change	-50.6%	-100.0%	--	-100.0%	0.0%

The Court of Claims acts as the state's fiduciary agent for processing claims of wrongful imprisonment. When a wrongful imprisonment judgment has been rendered in a court of common pleas, the Controlling Board, upon certification by the Court of Claims, transfers the sum necessary to pay that judgment to the Court's GRF line item 015402, Wrongful Imprisonment Compensation. Since the Controlling Board provides the money for such judgments on an as-needed basis, the line item does not receive a direct appropriation through the main operating appropriations act enacted by each General Assembly. However, once the expenditure is made, the amounts are tracked as spending by the Court.

## Public Records Adjudication (ALIs 015403 and 015604)

FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Appropriation	FY 2021 Appropriation
<b>GRF ALI 015403, Public Records Adjudication</b>					
\$0	\$497,132	\$502,464	\$532,678	\$879,776	\$886,527
<b>DPF Fund 5TE0 ALI 015604, Public Records</b>					
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000
Total	\$497,132	\$502,464	\$532,678	\$887,776	\$894,527
% change	--	1.1%	6.0%	66.7%	0.8%

The expenses of the Court's Public Records Adjudication Program, which hears complaints alleging a denial of access to public records, is funded by the two line items displayed in the table immediately above. The budget increases the program's total appropriation in each of FY 2020 and FY 2021 by over \$350,000 relative to FY 2019 expenditures totaling \$532,678. These annual increases are to pay for an additional 2.5 FTEs, (two program staff and a portion of a judge's salary).

In each of FY 2020 and FY 2021, approximately 89%, or around \$790,000, of the two line items combined appropriation is expected to be allocated for personal services (wages, salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges), close to 8%, or \$63,000 to \$67,000, in each fiscal year for supplies and maintenance, and about 3%, or close to \$30,000, for purchased personal services and equipment.

DPF line item 015604, Public Records, draws its appropriation from the Public Records Fund (Fund 5TE0), which consists of all filing fees for public records cases. Since the fund was established by the Controlling Board in FY 2017, it has accrued \$6,600. The Court expects revenues to average approximately \$5,000 per year in the FY 2020-FY 2021 biennium.

### **CLA Victims of Crime (ALI 015603)**

<b>FY 2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2017 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2018 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2019 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2020 Appropriation</b>	<b>FY 2021 Appropriation</b>
<b>DPF Fund 5K20 ALI 015603, CLA Victims of Crime</b>					
\$450,873	\$437,678	\$443,825	\$461,593	\$529,928	\$533,532
% change	-2.9%	1.4%	4.0%	14.8%	0.7%

This line item pays for: (1) the compensation of judges of the Court of Claims necessary to hear and determine appeals from the Office of the Attorney General, and (2) the compensation of any personnel of the Court of Claims needed to administer their appellate duties and responsibilities. Its appropriation is supported by cash transferred by the Office of Budget and Management from the Victims of Crime/Reparations Fund (Fund 4020), which is used by the Office of the Attorney General.

In each of FY 2020 and FY 2021, 88%, or about \$469,000, of the line item's appropriation is expected to be allocated for personal services (wages, salaries, fringe benefits, and payroll checkoff charges), around 8%, or \$42,000 to \$45,000, in each fiscal year for supplies and maintenance, and about 4%, or roughly \$18,000, for purchased personal services and equipment.