

**House File 2769 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 2769

BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO HSB 776)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to and making appropriations to the judicial  
2 branch.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. JUDICIAL BRANCH.

2 1. There is appropriated from the general fund of the state  
3 to the judicial branch for the fiscal year beginning July 1,  
4 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, the following amounts, or so  
5 much thereof as is necessary, to be used for the purposes  
6 designated:

7 a. For salaries of supreme court justices, appellate court  
8 judges, district court judges, district associate judges,  
9 associate juvenile judges, associate probate judges, judicial  
10 magistrates and staff, state court administrator, clerk of  
11 the supreme court, district court administrators, clerks of  
12 the district court, juvenile court officers, board of law  
13 examiners, board of examiners of shorthand reporters, and  
14 commission on judicial qualifications; receipt and disbursement  
15 of child support payments; reimbursement of the auditor  
16 of state for expenses incurred in completing audits of the  
17 offices of the clerks of the district court during the fiscal  
18 year beginning July 1, 2026; and maintenance, equipment, and  
19 miscellaneous purposes:

20 ..... \$203,691,378

21 b. For deposit in the revolving fund created pursuant to  
22 section 602.1302, subsection 3, for jury and witness fees,  
23 mileage, costs related to summoning jurors, costs and fees for  
24 interpreters and translators, and reimbursement of attorney  
25 fees paid by the state public defender:

26 ..... \$ 3,600,000

27 c. For payment of expenses for court-ordered services  
28 provided to juveniles who are under the supervision of juvenile  
29 court services, which expenses are a charge upon the state  
30 pursuant to [section 232.141, subsection 4](#):

31 ..... \$ 3,290,000

32 (1) Of the moneys appropriated in this lettered paragraph,  
33 no more than \$1,556,000 is allocated to provide school-based  
34 supervision of children under [chapter 232](#), of which no more  
35 than \$25,000 may be used for purposes of training.

1 (2) Notwithstanding [section 232.141](#) or any other provision  
2 of law to the contrary, the moneys appropriated in this  
3 lettered paragraph shall be distributed to the judicial  
4 districts as determined by the state court administrator. The  
5 state court administrator shall make the determination of the  
6 distribution amounts within thirty days of the date on which  
7 the annual census data is released.

8 (3) Notwithstanding [chapter 232](#) or any other provision of  
9 law to the contrary, a district or juvenile court shall not  
10 order any service which is a charge upon the state pursuant  
11 to [section 232.141](#) if there are insufficient court-ordered  
12 services moneys available in the district court distribution  
13 amounts to pay for the service. The chief juvenile court  
14 officer shall encourage use of the moneys appropriated in this  
15 lettered paragraph such that there are sufficient moneys to pay  
16 for all court-ordered services during the entire fiscal year.  
17 The chief juvenile court officer shall attempt to anticipate  
18 potential surpluses and shortfalls in the distribution amounts  
19 and shall cooperatively request the state court administrator  
20 to transfer moneys between the judicial districts' distribution  
21 amounts as prudent.

22 (4) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary,  
23 a district or juvenile court shall not order a county to pay  
24 for any service provided to a juvenile pursuant to an order  
25 entered under [chapter 232](#) which is a charge upon the state  
26 under [section 232.141, subsection 4](#).

27 (5) Of the moneys appropriated in this lettered paragraph,  
28 no more than \$83,000 may be used by the judicial branch  
29 for administration of the requirements under this lettered  
30 paragraph.

31 (6) Of the moneys appropriated in this lettered paragraph,  
32 an amount not to exceed the actual cost of the annual  
33 membership fee is allocated to the judicial branch to support  
34 the interstate commission for juveniles in accordance with  
35 the interstate compact for juveniles as provided in section

1 232.173.

2 (7) Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys appropriated in  
3 this lettered paragraph that remain unencumbered or unobligated  
4 at the close of the fiscal year shall not revert but shall  
5 remain available for expenditure for the purposes designated  
6 until the close of the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2029.

7 d. For juvenile delinquent graduated sanctions services  
8 pursuant to section 232.192:

9 ..... \$ 12,253,000

10 (1) Any state moneys saved as a result of efforts by  
11 juvenile court services to earn a federal fund match pursuant  
12 to Tit. IV-E of the federal Family First Prevention Services  
13 Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-123, for juvenile court services  
14 administration is appropriated to the judicial branch for  
15 purposes of this lettered paragraph.

16 (2) Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys appropriated in  
17 this lettered paragraph that remain unencumbered or unobligated  
18 at the close of the fiscal year shall not revert but shall  
19 remain available for expenditure for the purposes designated  
20 until the close of the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2029.

21 2. The judicial branch, except for purposes of internal  
22 processing, shall use the current state budget system, the  
23 state payroll system, and the Iowa finance and accounting  
24 system in administration of programs and payments for services,  
25 and shall not duplicate the state payroll, accounting, and  
26 budgeting systems.

27 3. The judicial branch shall submit monthly financial  
28 statements to the legislative services agency and the  
29 department of management containing all appropriated accounts  
30 in the same manner as provided in the monthly financial status  
31 reports and personal services usage reports of the department  
32 of administrative services. The monthly financial statements  
33 must include a comparison of the dollars and percentage  
34 spent of budgeted versus actual revenues and expenditures on  
35 a cumulative basis for full-time equivalent positions and

1 dollars.

2 4. The judicial branch shall focus efforts upon the  
3 collection of delinquent fines, penalties, court costs, fees,  
4 surcharges, or similar amounts.

5 5. It is the intent of the general assembly that the offices  
6 of the clerks of the district court operate in all 99 counties  
7 and be accessible to the public as much as is reasonably  
8 possible in order to address the relative needs of the citizens  
9 of each county. An office of the clerk of the district court  
10 shall be open regular courthouse hours.

11 6. In addition to the requirements for transfers under  
12 section 8.39, the judicial branch shall not change the  
13 appropriations from the amounts appropriated to the judicial  
14 branch in this Act unless notice of the revisions is given to  
15 the legislative services agency prior to the effective date.  
16 The notice must include information on the judicial branch's  
17 rationale for making the changes and details concerning the  
18 workload and performance measures upon which the changes are  
19 based.

20 7. The judicial branch shall submit a semiannual update to  
21 the legislative services agency and department of management  
22 specifying the amounts of fines, surcharges, and court costs  
23 collected using the Iowa court information system since the  
24 last report. The judicial branch shall continue to facilitate  
25 the sharing of vital sentencing and other information with  
26 other state departments and governmental agencies involved in  
27 the criminal justice system through the Iowa court information  
28 system.

29 8. The judicial branch shall provide a report to the general  
30 assembly and department of management by January 1, 2027,  
31 concerning the amounts received and expended from the court  
32 technology and modernization fund created in section 602.8108,  
33 subsection 7, during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025,  
34 and ending June 30, 2026, and the plans for expenditures from  
35 the fund during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and

1 ending June 30, 2027.

2     Sec. 2. CIVIL TRIALS — LOCATION. Notwithstanding any  
3 provision to the contrary, for the fiscal year beginning July  
4 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, if all parties in a case  
5 agree, a civil trial including a jury trial may take place in a  
6 county contiguous to the county with proper jurisdiction, even  
7 if the contiguous county is located in an adjacent judicial  
8 district or judicial election district. If the trial is moved  
9 pursuant to this section, court personnel shall treat the case  
10 as if a change of venue occurred.

11     Sec. 3. TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT. Notwithstanding section  
12 602.1509, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and  
13 ending June 30, 2027, a judicial officer may waive travel  
14 reimbursement for any travel outside the judicial officer's  
15 county of residence to conduct official judicial business.

16     Sec. 4. JUDICIAL OFFICER — UNPAID LEAVE. Notwithstanding  
17 the annual salary rates for judicial officers established by  
18 2025 Iowa Acts, chapter 158, section 6, for the fiscal year  
19 beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, the supreme  
20 court may by order place all judicial officers on unpaid leave  
21 status on any day employees of the judicial branch are placed  
22 on temporary layoff status. The biweekly pay of the judicial  
23 officers shall be reduced accordingly for the pay period in  
24 which the unpaid leave date occurred in the same manner as  
25 for noncontract employees of the judicial branch. Through  
26 the course of the fiscal year, the judicial branch may use an  
27 amount equal to the aggregate amount of salary reductions due  
28 to the judicial officer unpaid leave days for any purpose other  
29 than for judicial salaries.

30     Sec. 5. IOWA COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK. It is the intent  
31 of the general assembly that the judicial branch utilize  
32 the Iowa communications network or other secure electronic  
33 communications in lieu of traveling for the fiscal year  
34 beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027.

35

EXPLANATION

1           The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
2           the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

3       This bill relates to and makes appropriations to the  
4 judicial branch.

5       The bill appropriates moneys from the general fund  
6 of the state for FY 2026-2027 to the judicial branch for  
7 salaries, receipt and disbursement of child support payments,  
8 reimbursement of the auditor of state, maintenance, equipment,  
9 miscellaneous purposes, deposit in the revolving fund created  
10 pursuant to Code section 602.1302(3) for certain purposes,  
11 payment of court-ordered juvenile services, and juvenile  
12 delinquent graduated sanctions services.

13       The bill provides that a civil trial including a jury trial  
14 may take place in a county contiguous to the county with proper  
15 jurisdiction if all the parties in a case agree. If a trial  
16 is moved to another county that is located in another judicial  
17 district or judicial election district, the judicial officers  
18 serving the judicial district or judicial election district  
19 receiving the case shall preside over the case.

20       The bill permits a judicial officer to waive travel  
21 reimbursement for any travel outside the judicial officer's  
22 county of residence to conduct official business.

23       The bill allows a judicial officer to be placed on unpaid  
24 leave on any day a court employee is required to furlough.  
25 The bill provides that if a judicial officer is placed on  
26 unpaid leave, the salary of the judicial officer shall be  
27 reduced accordingly for the pay period in which the unpaid  
28 leave occurred. The bill provides that the judicial branch  
29 may use an amount equal to the aggregate amount of the salary  
30 reductions due to judicial officer unpaid leave for any purpose  
31 other than judicial salaries.

32       The bill states legislative intent that the judicial  
33 branch utilize the Iowa communications network or other secure  
34 electronic communications in lieu of traveling.