

LFC Requester:	Jacobs
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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, EMAIL ANALYSIS TO:

LFC@NMLEGIS.GOV

and

DFA@STATE.NM.US

{Include the bill no. in the email subject line, e.g., HB2, and only attach one bill analysis and related documentation per email message}

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Check all that apply:

Original Amendment
Correction Substitute

Date January 20, 2026

Bill No: House Bill 95

Sponsor: Rep. Dayan Hochman-Vigil and
Short Additional Second Judicial
Title: District Judgeship

**Agency Name
and Code**

Number: 218 AOC

Person Writing Jane C. Levy

Phone: 505-222-4566 **Email** albdjcl@nmcourts.gov

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26		
None	451,400	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26	FY27		
None	None	None	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to: N/A

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: House Bill 95 creates an additional judicial position at the Second Judicial District Court to be assigned a domestic relations and domestic violence docket.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

House Bill 95 contains an appropriation of \$451,400 to pay for the additional district court judge, court monitor, and trial court assistant for the additional judge.

Bernalillo County has already paid for and built a new courtroom and chambers for the judge. No additional capital outlay is necessary for this position.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

There are currently 30 district court judges at the Second Judicial District Court. Four judges are assigned to the family court division that hears domestic violence cases, divorce, custody, parentage, child support, extreme risk firearm protection cases, kinship guardianship cases and certain adoption cases. Every other division at the Second Judicial District Court has added judges to their division but family court has had four judges since 1997. In the past 29 years, the family court caseload has grown significantly and new case types have been added to the court's docket.

In 2025, there were 9,473 cases filed in the family court division. Those cases are in addition to the 2,493 cases that were still pending from the previous year. Each judge was assigned approximately 2,992 cases in 2025 on top of their caseload still open from 2024. This is a much high caseload-per-judge than other similar family court divisions around the state.

In 2025, there were 3,781 domestic violence cases filed or reopened. Judges are required to review and countersign all DV orders as well as be on-call for emergency restraining orders.

The family court division has eight hearing officers who help the judges but they have limited dockets and cannot make final binding decisions, which all must be made by the assigned judge. The need for timely decisions is hampered if parties cannot have cases either heard or reviewed by a judge in a timely fashion.

Over 75% of family court cases have at least one self-represented party. Usually both parties are unrepresented, which increases time on the bench as well as time drafting orders for the unrepresented parties.

House Bill 95 does not contain an effective date and would be effective 90 days following

adjournment of the Legislature, if signed into law.

The request is part of the Judiciary's unified budget, approved by the Supreme Court.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The family court will be able to hear cases at a faster rate and issue final decisions much more quickly if there is an additional judge to hear and decide family court cases. Currently, emergency hearings are often set six weeks or more out. The additional judge would reduce that to fewer than four weeks. The closure rate for the judges is less than 100%. The additional judge would allow the court to close more cases than are opened.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP – none identified.

TECHNICAL ISSUES – none.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

ALTERNATIVES

Without the additional judge, the Court will likely need more hearing officers to address the increases in caseloads and case complexity. But that will result in longer waiting periods for final orders as a hearing officer only issues recommendations and they have thirty (30) days to issue recommendations in all non-domestic violence cases, and the parties have fourteen (14) days to object to any recommendation by a hearing officer, which sometimes results in a second hearing in front of the assigned judge and further delay.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL – none

AMENDMENTS – none.