

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
4 HOUSE BILL NO. 2771

By: Caldwell (Trey) and Kane of  
the House

5 and

6 Hall and Haste of the  
7 Senate

10 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

11 An Act relating to courts; amending 20 O.S. 2021,  
12 Section 122, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 430,  
13 O.S.L. 2024 (20 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section 122), which  
14 relates to special judges; increasing the number of  
special judges in specific counties; determining a  
date certain for the increase; providing an effective  
date; and declaring an emergency.

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17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

18 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 20 O.S. 2021, Section 122, as  
19 amended by Section 1, Chapter 430, O.S.L. 2024 (20 O.S. Supp. 2024,  
20 Section 122), is amended to read as follows:

21 The number of special judges that may be appointed in each  
22 judicial administrative district shall be determined as follows:

23 1. A special judge shall be appointed on the basis of one  
24 special judge for each county within the administrative district

1 with a population of at least twenty-four thousand (24,000), as  
2 determined by the 1960 Federal Decennial Census. An additional  
3 special judge shall be appointed for each additional fifty thousand  
4 (50,000) in population in a county within the administrative  
5 district, as determined by the 1960 Federal Decennial Census. Such  
6 appointment may be made from any county in the administrative  
7 district. Such appointments shall be made by the district judges in  
8 their respective judicial administrative districts. Any judge of a  
9 special sessions court shall be one of the special judges for the  
10 balance of his or her term and shall be within the number prescribed  
11 for such district.

12       2. In addition to the special judges that may be appointed  
13 pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 1 of this section, there  
14 shall be:

- a. one (1) special judge appointed in the Northwest-Panhandle Judicial Administrative District comprised of District Court Judicial Districts Numbers One (1), Two (2) and Four (4), to serve in Custer County,
  - b. beginning July 1, 2025, three (3) ~~one (1)~~ special judge judges appointed in the Oklahoma-Canadian Counties Judicial Administrative District comprised of District Court Judicial District Number Seven (7),
  - c. beginning July 1, 2024, five (5) special judges appointed in the Tulsa-Pawnee Counties Judicial

- 1                   Administrative District comprised of District Court  
2                   Judicial District Number Fourteen (14),  
3                 d. beginning January 11, 1999, one (1) special judge  
4                   appointed in the Northeastern Judicial Administrative  
5                   District comprised of District Court Judicial  
6                   Districts Numbers Ten (10), Eleven (11), Twelve (12)  
7                   and Thirteen (13), to serve in Rogers County,  
8                 e. one (1) special judge appointed in the North-Central  
9                   Judicial Administrative District comprised of District  
10                  Court Judicial District Numbers Eight (8), Nine (9)  
11                  and Twenty-three (23), to serve in Lincoln and  
12                  Pottawatomie Counties,  
13                 f. beginning January 1, 2006, one (1) special judge  
14                  appointed in the East-Central Judicial Administrative  
15                  District comprised of District Court Judicial District  
16                  Numbers Fifteen (15), Eighteen (18) and Twenty-four  
17                  (24), to serve in Pittsburg and McIntosh Counties,  
18                 g. beginning January 1, 2006, one (1) special judge  
19                  appointed in the Northeastern Judicial Administrative  
20                  District comprised of District Court Judicial District  
21                  Numbers Ten (10), Eleven (11), Twelve (12) and  
22                  Thirteen (13), to serve in Washington County, and  
23                 h. beginning January 1, 2007, one (1) special judge  
24                  appointed in the Southeastern Judicial Administrative

District comprised of District Court Judicial District  
Numbers Sixteen (16), Seventeen (17), Nineteen (19),  
and Twenty-five (25), to serve in Le Flore County.

4       3. If a vacancy occurs in the office of associate district  
5 judge, or if an associate district judge becomes unable to perform  
6 the duties of his or her office, as determined by the presiding  
7 judge of the judicial administrative district, a special judge may  
8 be appointed within the judicial administrative district to hold  
9 office for the duration of such vacancy or incapacity. After the  
10 vacancy is filled, or after the associate district judge becomes  
11 able to perform the duties of his or her office, the special judge  
12 shall have the power to act in regard to any case which he or she  
13 has already tried, but the presiding judge of the judicial  
14 administrative district may transfer such a case to any other judge  
15 in the judicial administrative district.

16       4. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court may authorize the  
17 appointment of such additional special judges as may be necessary  
18 for the proper administration of justice. Such additional special  
19 judges shall be appointed after application by a majority of the  
20 district judges of a judicial administrative district, stating the  
21 reason why an additional special judge is needed. Such additional  
22 judges need not be based upon population figures.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

1 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
2 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby  
3 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and  
4 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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