

1 ENGROSSED HOUSE
2 BILL NO. 2771

By: Caldwell (Trey) and Kane of
the House

3 and

4 Hall and Haste of the
5 Senate

6

7 An Act relating to courts; amending 20 O.S. 2021,
8 Section 122, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 430,
9 O.S.L. 2024 (20 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section 122), which
10 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.

11

12

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

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

17 Section 122. The number of special judges that may be appointed
18 in each judicial administrative district shall be determined as
19 follows:

20 1. A special judge shall be appointed on the basis of one
21 special judge for each county within the administrative district
22 with a population of at least twenty-four thousand (24,000), as
23 determined by the 1960 Federal Decennial Census. An additional
24 special judge shall be appointed for each additional fifty thousand

1 (50,000) in population in a county within the administrative
2 district, as determined by the 1960 Federal Decennial Census. Such
3 appointment may be made from any county in the administrative
4 district. Such appointments shall be made by the district judges in
5 their respective judicial administrative districts. Any judge of a
6 special sessions court shall be one of the special judges for the
7 balance of his or her term and shall be within the number prescribed
8 for such district.

9 2. In addition to the special judges that may be appointed
10 pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 1 of this section, there
11 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. ~~one (1) beginning July 1, 2025, three (3)~~ 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 Administrative District comprised of District Court Judicial District Number Fourteen (14),

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

1 Numbers Sixteen (16), Seventeen (17), Nineteen (19),
2 and Twenty-five (25), to serve in Le Flore County.

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

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

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

23 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
24 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby

1 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
2 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

3 Passed the House of Representatives the 20th day of May, 2025.

4

5 Presiding Officer of the House
6 of Representatives

7

8 Passed the Senate the _____ day of _____, 2025.

9

10 Presiding Officer of the Senate

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24