

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

SENATE BILL 234

By: Senator Dees
By: Representative Dalby

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT-
WEST; TO CREATE AN ADDITIONAL CIRCUIT JUDGESHIP; TO
DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

CONCERNING THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL
DISTRICT-WEST; TO CREATE AN ADDITIONAL
CIRCUIT JUDGESHIP; AND TO DECLARE AN
EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings and intent.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) The Judicial Resources Assessment Committee has reviewed the caseloads of the various judicial districts; and

(2) One (1) additional circuit judgeship is needed in the Nineteenth Judicial District-West to ensure the smooth, efficient, and timely administration of justice.

(b) The General Assembly intends this act to:

(1) Authorize the establishment of one (1) additional circuit judgeship in the Nineteenth Judicial District-West;

(2) Articulate the applicable election process of the additional circuit judge; and

(3) Identify various resources that will be available for the additional circuit judge.



SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 16-13-3002, concerning judges in the Nineteenth Judicial District, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

(j)(1) Effective April 1, 2025, there is created in the Nineteenth Judicial District-West an additional circuit judgeship that shall have jurisdiction in law, equity, probate, and juvenile matters.

(2)(A) The additional circuit judge shall be elected by the qualified voters of the district, shall satisfy the same qualifications for holding office, and shall receive the same salary, expenses, and other allowances as provided by law for judges of the circuit courts.

(B) The circuit judge shall serve for elected terms of six (6) years.

(3) The county that composes the Nineteenth Judicial District-West shall provide courtroom and office facilities and supplies for the newly created circuit judgeship created by subdivision (j)(1) of this section, which shall be paid out of the county treasury in the same manner as other demands against the county and out of funds appropriated by the quorum court of the county for these purposes.

(4) There shall be provided for the circuit judgeship created by subdivision (j)(1) of this section a court reporter and a trial court administrator whose salaries shall be fixed and paid in the manner provided by law for court reporters and trial court administrators of the circuit courts of this state.

SECTION 3. DO NOT CODIFY. Temporary language.

For the circuit judgeship created in the Nineteenth Judicial District-West, the vacancy shall be filled by election at the 2026 nonpartisan judicial general election, with the elected circuit judge to take office on January 1, 2027.

SECTION 4. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the Judicial Resources Assessment Committee has reviewed the caseloads of the various judicial districts; that the caseload of the Nineteenth Judicial District-West necessitates an additional circuit judge; and that this act is necessary to ensure the smooth, efficient, and timely administration of justice in the

affected county. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act, being necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, shall become effective on April 1, 2025.

APPROVED: 2/27/25