

1                   **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2                               STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3                               1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

4 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
5 FOR  
6 HOUSE BILL NO. 2771

By: Caldwell (Trey) and Kane of  
the House

and

Hall and Haste of the  
Senate

11                               COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

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

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

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

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

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

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

17            a. one (1) special judge appointed in the Northwest-  
18 Panhandle Judicial Administrative District comprised  
19 of District Court Judicial Districts Numbers One (1),  
20 Two (2) and Four (4), to serve in Custer County,

21            b. beginning July 1, 2025, three (3) ~~one (1)~~ special  
22 ~~judge~~ judges appointed in the Oklahoma-Canadian  
23 Counties Judicial Administrative District comprised of  
24 District Court Judicial District Number Seven (7),

- 1 c. beginning July 1, 2024, five (5) special judges  
2 appointed in the Tulsa-Pawnee Counties Judicial  
3 Administrative District comprised of District Court  
4 Judicial District Number Fourteen (14),
- 5 d. beginning January 11, 1999, one (1) special judge  
6 appointed in the Northeastern Judicial Administrative  
7 District comprised of District Court Judicial  
8 Districts Numbers Ten (10), Eleven (11), Twelve (12)  
9 and Thirteen (13), to serve in Rogers County,
- 10 e. one (1) special judge appointed in the North-Central  
11 Judicial Administrative District comprised of District  
12 Court Judicial District Numbers Eight (8), Nine (9)  
13 and Twenty-three (23), to serve in Lincoln and  
14 Pottawatomie Counties,
- 15 f. beginning January 1, 2006, one (1) special judge  
16 appointed in the East-Central Judicial Administrative  
17 District comprised of District Court Judicial District  
18 Numbers Fifteen (15), Eighteen (18) and Twenty-four  
19 (24), to serve in Pittsburg and McIntosh Counties,
- 20 g. beginning January 1, 2006, one (1) special judge  
21 appointed in the Northeastern Judicial Administrative  
22 District comprised of District Court Judicial District  
23 Numbers Ten (10), Eleven (11), Twelve (12) and  
24 Thirteen (13), to serve in Washington County, and

1           h.   beginning January 1, 2007, one (1) special judge  
2                   appointed in the Southeastern Judicial Administrative  
3                   District comprised of District Court Judicial District  
4                   Numbers Sixteen (16), Seventeen (17), Nineteen (19),  
5                   and Twenty-five (25), to serve in Le Flore County.

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

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

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

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

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7 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON JOINT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
8 AND BUDGET, dated 05/19/2025 - DO PASS, As Amended.  
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