

Missouri Counties to Pay More for Juvenile Office Court Hearings

(KTNC) - A recent Missouri Supreme Court decision will affect county budgets beginning next year.

Holt County Clerk Kathy Kunkel explains that the ruling requires an attorney to represent the state agency in all Juvenile Office court proceedings. (play audio :20 “all proceedings.”)

Holt County Commissioners discussed the ruling recently with Fourth Circuit Judge Roger Prokes. He told commissioners that they anticipate a 30-percent increase in costs to have an attorney represent the state in all Juvenile Court proceedings. Kunkel says that won't be a huge financial burden for Holt County. (play audio :19 “as an increase.”)

The largest share of the cost for the Fourth Circuit would be borne by Nodaway County. The Fourth Circuit includes Atchison, Holt, Nodaway, and Worth Counties.

Judge Prokes also discussed with commissioners a move by the state courts to a “paperless” system by 2015. Kunkel says that will require new computers, scanners, and off-site backup to store court documents digitally – though she says the county has some time to make the needed changes. (play audio :40 “in that project.”)

Kunkel says it will help the county to be able to spread the needed technology purchases over two or three years, rather than have to expend the money all at one time.