

## RISK ANALYSIS

# The case for a closer look at Orleans Parish courts

The Legislature has an opportunity to save millions and right-size a court system that may have more judges than it needs. But cutting the wrong number carries consequences that go beyond the bottom line.

### BGR RECOMMENDS

**Wait for the full study.** The Supreme Court must complete a comprehensive analysis, including court visits and supplemental research, before any judgeships are eliminated.

### THE POTENTIAL RISKS

## Cutting too many Criminal District Court judgeships without Supreme Court analysis



### **Trials may slow down; case backlogs could grow**

Orleans handled 137 jury trials in 2025, nearly 25% of all criminal jury trials statewide. Fewer judges could mean longer waits for court dates.



### **Pretrial detainees may wait longer for resolution**

The accused, victims and families could wait longer for resolution. Delayed justice has real costs for everyone involved.



### **Pressure on the Orleans Parish Jail could increase**

The jail currently holds 1,349 detainees, nearly 8% over its 1,250-person maximum capacity. Additional pretrial detainees would strain an already crowded facility.



### **The jail's consent decree compliance could become harder to achieve**

Supervision was deemed insufficient by a 2026 audit following the May 2025 jailbreak. A larger detainee population could make compliance more difficult.



### **Risks at the jail for detainees and staff may grow**

The sheriff has struggled to fill vacancies. More detainees could require more deputies and conditions for both staff and detainees could deteriorate.



### **Costs across the justice system could rise**

Extended trial timelines and a larger detainee population could drive up operating costs for the District Attorney, public defender and other justice system entities.



### **The City could face higher jail operating costs**

The City is required to provide most of the jail's funding. Higher costs would fall on an already strained City budget, leaving less for other services residents need.

## **The projected savings could be at risk.**

Higher detention costs, extended consent decree monitoring, and rising system-wide expenses could offset projected savings, particularly if cuts go beyond what the evidence supports.