

# CIRCUIT COURT SERVICES

## DESCRIPTION

The Circuit Court of Henrico County (Fourteenth Judicial Circuit) is the trial court of general jurisdiction with the authority to try a full range of civil, chancery/equity, and criminal cases.

In civil cases, the Circuit Court exercises concurrent jurisdiction with the General District Court in money claims of one to twenty-five thousand dollars, and original jurisdiction for claims over twenty-five thousand dollars. Also included on the civil docket are condemnation trials.

In criminal cases, the Circuit Court has jurisdiction over the trials of misdemeanor and felony cases – offenses punishable by confinement in jails or other correctional institutions. Court costs and fines are assessed in court against those charged.

The Circuit Court also exercises jurisdiction in domestic and other chancery/equity cases. This includes all divorce matters, as well as disputes concerning wills and estates, guardianships and partition suits.

The Circuit Court exercises appellate jurisdiction over appeals of civil and criminal matters from the Henrico Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court and the Henrico General District Court. Circuit Court judges also hear appeals from certain administrative agencies in the Commonwealth and Henrico County.

## OBJECTIVES

- To administer justice fairly, according to applicable laws, in a timely manner.
- To operate an efficient and effective court system in the administration of justice for the citizens of Henrico County.

## FISCAL YEAR 2020 SUMMARY

<b>Description</b>	<b>FY18 Actual</b>	<b>FY19 Original</b>	<b>FY20 Approved</b>	<b>Change 19 to 20</b>
Personnel	\$ 530,259	\$ 632,339	\$ 649,905	2.8%
Operation	60,648	64,344	64,344	0.0%
Capital	2,292	1,400	1,400	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 593,199</b>	<b>\$ 698,083</b>	<b>\$ 715,649</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
Personnel Complement*	8	9	9	1

\* Law Clerk position was added to the personnel complement in FY18-19

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY18</u>	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>	<u>Change 19 to 20</u>
<b>Workload Measures</b>				
Full Time Judges	5	5	5	0
Jury Commissioners	4	6	6	0
Citizens Eligible to Serve as Petit Jurors	4,500	4,500	4,500	0
Citizens Called to Serve as Petit Jurors	4,200	4,200	4,200	0
Jury Panels	700	700	700	0
Grand Jurors Called to Serve	108	108	108	0
Grand Jurors on Master Panel	120	120	120	0

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

There are five judges elected to the Circuit Court by the General Assembly of Virginia, each for a term of eight years. One Judge is elected Chief Judge every two years. The Chief Judge serves as the administrative judge of the support staff, which consists of one part-time and four full-time clerical positions, and four law clerks. The Judges' salaries are paid directly by the Commonwealth. In 2007, the Judicial Council approved a sixth judge for the Circuit Court, but as of 2017 the sixth judge has not been approved by the General Assembly. Fines and costs against those found guilty in certain felony and misdemeanor cases from Henrico charges are assessed by the judges. These fines and costs are collected by the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

The Circuit Court's approved budget for FY2019-20 is \$715,649. This represents an increase of \$17,566 or 2.5 percent from the FY2018-19 budget. This increase was driven by rising personnel costs including salary and benefit costs. The operating and capital component stayed flat from the previous year.

## DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

Service levels of this court can be measured by the number of cases adjudicated in the Circuit Court each year. This includes criminal, civil, domestic, and appeals from the General District and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts, along with those carried over from the past year, and requests for juries. According to 2018 Caseload Statistical Information, the caseload for the Fourteenth Circuit showed 14,290 cases (civil and criminal) commenced in 2018, with an average of 2,858 per judge. There were 6,044 total criminal cases commenced, with an average of 1,208 per judge. There were 8,246 civil cases (which includes the misc. and other category) commenced, with an average of 1,649 per judge. The total number of cases (civil and criminal) concluded was 12,742 in 2018, with an average of 2,546 per judge.

In addition, the Circuit Court responds to telephone inquiries from citizens and other courts, coordinates with the Sheriff on courthouse security, provides internships (unpaid) to law students, and contributes to educational programs to improve the administration of justice.

### *Circuit Court Services*

Individual judges also actively participate in organizations, committees, and programs outside of their everyday duties in the courtroom, including but not limited to the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, the Benchbook Committee, the Drug Court Program, Virginia Continuing Legal Education and Bench Bar Conference.

The judges make themselves available for Three Judge Panels at the request of the Chief Justice and any other committee or panel the Chief Justice may request of them. In addition to these activities, judges also participate in mock trials conducted by the University of Richmond School of Law, local high school students, and for police officer training.