

# GENERAL DISTRICT COURT SERVICES

## DESCRIPTION

The General District Court exercises original jurisdiction over all misdemeanor cases and has jurisdiction over civil matters where less than twenty-five thousand dollars is involved. Preliminary hearings in felony cases are also conducted in this court. The average monthly caseload for the Court is 8,000 new cases. In addition to new cases, the Clerk's Office processes an average of 3,000 witness subpoenas, 300 requests for certified copies of prior convictions, 110 requests for restricted licenses, 50 protective orders, 1,000 garnishments, 800 requests for civil abstracts, and 800 writs of possession monthly. The Clerk's Office also assists citizens with phone inquiries and in-person visits averaging 7,000 phone calls and 2,000 walk-ins monthly. General District Court judges preside over traffic cases and certain violations of the County Code. There are five judges serving in this court, having been appointed by the General Assembly for a term of six years. The judges, clerk, and deputy clerks are all paid directly by the Commonwealth. The County provides space, furniture, and support for the General District Court.

## OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the efficient operation of the General District Court through support of the activities of the Clerk's office.
- To maintain accurate and timely court records.
- To maintain an accurate accounting of court fund.
- To provide adequate maintenance, storage and retrieval of court records.

## FISCAL YEAR 2021 SUMMARY

### Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY19 Actual	FY20 Original	FY21 Approved	Change 20 to 21
Personnel	\$ 104,094	\$ 213,147	\$ 213,147	0.0%
Operation	260,720	251,488	238,914	-5.0%
Capital	0	0	0	0.0%
Total	<u>\$ 364,814</u>	<u>\$ 464,635</u>	<u>\$ 452,061</u>	<u>-2.7%</u>
Personnel Complement	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

\* Full-time Personnel expenses are paid by the Commonwealth of Virginia

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	Performance Measures			Change
	FY19	FY20	FY21	20 to 21
<b>Workload Measures</b>				
Total New Cases Filed	113,429	125,756	125,756	0
Total New Criminal Cases Filed	16,962	17,750	17,750	0
Total New Civil Cases Filed	38,862	39,663	39,663	0
Total New Traffic Cases Filed	56,173	68,343	68,343	0
Number of Full-Time Judges	5	5	5	0

\*Note: These estimates are prepared by State Supreme Court personnel.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The General District Court’s approved budget for FY2020-21 totals \$452,061. The Personnel component of the budget will remain flat for FY2020-21. The operating budget has decreased by 5 percent to mitigate the impact of the of the health emergency created by COVID-19. The capital budgets remain flat from the previous fiscal year.

In 2019, the County began providing supplemental compensation for the thirty-seven state Deputy Clerks in order to assist with recruitment and retention within the General District Court Clerk’s Office. This support continues in the FY2020-21 budget.

The operating component is utilized to support the daily activities of the General District Court, which consists of five courtrooms and administrative offices, occupied by five judges and 37 employees. The fifth judge was appointed by the General Assembly during the 2015 session and began November 1, 2015. The permanent staff of the General District Court is comprised of state employees. Thus, salary and benefit costs are paid by the Commonwealth of Virginia and are not reflected in this budget apart from the supplemental compensation described above.