

COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

DESCRIPTION

The Commonwealth's Attorney is an elected constitutional officer responsible for prosecuting criminal offenses that occur in Henrico County and maintaining public safety in the community. Trials and hearings are held in the Circuit, General District, and Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts. Additionally, the Commonwealth's Attorney's office provides legal advice and training to the Division of Police, State Police, Richmond Airport Police, as well as other law enforcement agencies.

OBJECTIVES

- To enforce criminal laws in Henrico County.
- To operate the Victim/Witness program.
- To cooperate on behalf of Henrico County in the operation of two investigative multi-jurisdictional grand juries.
- To promote a better understanding of the criminal justice system among citizens.
- To proactively investigate and prosecute drug dealers with increased concentration/focus on the opioid epidemic and human trafficking.
- To prosecute criminal cases.
- To work with other agencies to strengthen crime prevention.
- To train local law enforcement agencies in criminal law and criminal procedures.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 SUMMARY

Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY20	FY21	FY22	Change
	Actual	Original	Approved	21 to 22
Personnel	\$ 5,327,449	\$ 5,463,612	\$ 5,827,685	6.7%
Operation	158,731	170,387	170,387	0.0%
Capital	4,223	0	0	0.0%
Total	<u>\$ 5,490,403</u>	<u>\$ 5,633,999</u>	<u>\$ 5,998,072</u>	<u>6.5%</u>
Personnel Complement	56	56	55 *	(1)

* Complement includes 1 vacant Sr. Commonwealth's Attorney position moved to Hold in FY2020-21.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measures				
	FY20	FY21	FY22	Change 21 to 22
Workload Measures				
Circuit Court Defendants	1,430	1,450	1,475	25
Show Cause Hearings	1,066	1,075	1,100	25
Misdemeanor Appeals	380	375	350	(25)
General District Court Criminal Cases	50,108	50,125	50,150	25
General District Court Traffic Cases	92,375	92,400	92,500	100
Juvenile Court Misdemeanors	2,019	2,025	2,050	25
Juvenile Court Felonies	933	950	975	25
Effectiveness Measure				
Circuit Court Indictments	2,214	2,225	2,250	25

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Commonwealth's Attorney's office budget for FY2021-22 totals \$5,998,072, representing an overall increase of \$364,073, or 6.5 percent, when compared to the FY2020-21 budget. The entire increase is related to salary and benefit rates. Operating components remain at FY2020-21 levels with funds shifted between accounts to address anticipated operational requirements.

The table below presents a historical depiction of budgeted State funding for the Commonwealth's Attorney's office:

Fiscal Year	State Funding	County Funding	% County
2012-13	1,560,000	2,790,490	64%
2013-14	1,907,000	2,591,214	58%
2014-15	1,877,000	2,573,112	58%
2015-16	1,877,000	2,602,046	58%
2016-17	2,025,000	2,554,003	56%
2017-18	2,075,000	2,743,141	57%
2018-19	2,150,000	2,862,655	57%
2019-20	2,175,000	3,227,026	60%
2020-21	2,100,000	3,533,999	63%
2021-22	2,275,000	3,723,072	62%

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

In FY2021-22, the Commonwealth's Attorney's office will continue to prosecute traffic and criminal cases, both misdemeanors and felonies, in all the Henrico County courts. Aggressive prosecution of those who commit violent crimes will remain the number one priority. The office will continue to work closely with the Division of Police to reduce crime, proactively as well as reactively, by ensuring that those who commit crimes are held accountable. The Commonwealth's Attorney's office will continue pursuing narcotic traffickers using two multi-jurisdictional grand juries. Additionally, the Commonwealth's Attorney's office will continue providing legal training to the Division of Police in its basic academies and through regular in-service training. The office will continue to devise alternative resolutions to ensure second chances and rehabilitation. Special efforts will also continue to reduce domestic violence, human trafficking, and opioid overdoses.

The Compensation Board of the Commonwealth of Virginia provides funding for constitutional offices, including Commonwealth's Attorneys. The funded staffing for Henrico County's office is 39 positions, including 20 attorneys. The FY2021-22 budget includes 55 positions, which is 16 more than are funded by the Compensation Board, and it should be noted that 13 of these positions are attorneys. County funded staff increased by four positions since FY2018-19, including three attorneys and one paralegal. The Victim Witness and Special Drug Prosecutor functions, including position counts, are discussed in separate narratives within this document.

The Commonwealth's Attorney's office continues to implement the new Circuit Court discovery rules required by the Virginia Supreme Court. The efforts are also being used as an informal pilot project for other prosecution offices across the Commonwealth to use as a guide and model. Additionally, with the support of the county administration, the Commonwealth's Attorney's office is working with the Sheriff's office to address the jail overpopulation issue by working to find alternative treatment and other diversion opportunities. The office will ensure it provides the necessary resources in working with other agencies to support public safety needs.

In March 2020, the county began to feel the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This office worked in conjunction with all county departments in devising a work plan that continued public service while balancing the health and safety of our employees. We devised plans for teleworking, as well as worked with the three Chief Judges for all courts and other agencies to utilize more technology to present cases in court. All aspects of our job duties and responsibilities were impacted and we identified the need for better technology, equipment, i.e., laptops, faxing and scanning capabilities, and dealt with challenges of video conferencing.

The "new" needs meant working with IT to obtain computer equipment for all staff to work from home. The office started to review how it could continue to work towards a digital and fileless system. Staff have all been very flexible while working with IT regarding equipment, supplies, and internet connectivity; they continue to monitor impacts to the workplace schedule as virus guidelines change.