

COUNTY ATTORNEY

DESCRIPTION

The County Attorney's Office serves as legal advisor to the county government, including its various departments, divisions, and agencies. The Office prosecutes or defends all actions involving county officials and employees arising out of acts performed in the course of their employment. In addition to litigation, the office is called upon to interpret State and Federal laws, county ordinances and county resolutions, and to draft county ordinances and proposed State legislation.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide the county government with quality legal services.
- To protect the county treasury from damage awards as a result of litigation.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The office provides legal services of a civil nature required by the county and its various boards, commissions, and agencies. The office drafts county ordinances for presentation to the Board of Supervisors (the “Board”); drafts resolutions for presentation to the Board, the Economic Development Authority (the “EDA”) and the School Board; and reviews and approves property conveyances and contracts of the county, the School Board, and the EDA.

During the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2020, the office handled a large volume of specialized work including emergency preparation of ordinances and agreements necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, negotiation of an interim agreement for the purchase of property for development of an indoor sports and convocation center at Virginia Center Commons, and initial review of development and financing options for the proposed GreenCity development at the former Best Products property, including the creation of a community development authority for the project.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 SUMMARY

Description	FY20 Actual	FY21 Original	FY22 Approved	Change 21 to 22
Personnel	\$ 2,739,517	\$ 2,560,029	\$ 2,681,750	4.8%
Operation	202,826	57,415	64,532	12.4%
Capital	500	0	0	0.0%
Total	<u>\$ 2,942,843</u>	<u>\$ 2,617,444</u>	<u>\$ 2,746,282</u>	<u>4.9%</u>
Personnel Complement	21	21	21	0

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>Change 21 to 22</u>
Workload Measures				
New Cases Filed	27	30	35	5
Cases Disposed of	41	22	35	13
Administrative Proceedings	35	28	35	7
Court Appearances	1,111	1,260	1,280	20

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)

On an ongoing basis, office attorneys provide training on the Virginia Conflict of Interests Act, Virginia Public Procurement Act, and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as well as civil liability, confidentiality of health records, and the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Training session participants include the crisis intervention team, security officers, communications officers, police officers, deputy sheriffs, and employees in Community Revitalization, Building Inspections, and the Division of Fire.

The office also represents the county and its officials and employees in a wide variety of civil actions and in criminal prosecutions of violations of county ordinances. Twenty-seven new lawsuits seeking a minimum of \$25,000 were filed in FY2019-20.

At present, 47 cases are pending in state and federal courts of record, including appellate courts. In FY2019-20, the office made 39 appearances in these courts. In addition, the office handled 1,111 cases in courts not of record: 114 cases in the Henrico County General District Court and 997 cases in the Henrico County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court. The office also handled 35 administrative hearings.

In addition to litigation matters, the office handles a high volume of transactional work on behalf of county departments. This work includes 1,452 contracts drafted or reviewed, 380 deeds and leases drafted or reviewed, 306 board papers drafted or reviewed, 762 Freedom of Information Act requests handled, 276 Subpoenas Duces Tecum handled, 8 restrictive covenants reviewed, 6 festival permit applications reviewed, 117 sets of conditional zoning proffers reviewed, and rendered 5 official opinions. Finally, during FY2019-20, the County Attorney’s office recovered \$147,527, owed to the county through bankruptcy proceedings and \$81,558 in revenue from delinquent tax sales.

The department’s budget for FY2021-22 is \$2,746,282. Personnel costs comprise of 98% of the budget, \$2,681,750; the remaining 2%, \$64,532, represents the operating budget.