



April 6, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Krystal Oriadha, Chair
Health, Human Services and Public Safety Committee (HHSPS)

THRU: ~~Josh Hamlin~~
Director of Budget and Policy Analysis

FROM: Roger Banegas *RGB*
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Circuit Court
Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Review

Budget Overview

The FY 2024 Proposed Budget for the Circuit Court is approximately \$28.5 million. This is an increase of \$1.1 million, or 4.1%, over the FY 2023 Approved Budget. The General Fund portion of the budget is approximately \$22.8 million, representing an increase of \$890,200, or 4.1% over the FY 2023 Approved Budget. The increase is primarily due to an increase in compensation such as mandated salary requirements and fringe costs. The grant funded portion of the Court's budget is approximately \$5.7 million and is proposed to increase by \$221,500, or 4.0%, mainly due to the enhancement of existing programs/services and the elimination of an existing program/service.

Fund	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2023 Estimated	% Change - Est vs App	FY 2024 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
General Fund	\$ 18,906,298	\$ 21,893,900	\$ 21,750,200	-0.7%	\$ 22,784,100	\$ 890,200	4.1%
Grants	3,679,804	5,486,100	5,313,600	-3.1%	5,707,600	221,500	4.0%
Total	\$ 22,586,102	\$ 27,380,000	\$ 27,063,800	-1.2%	\$ 28,491,700	\$ 1,111,700	4.1%

Authorized Staffing - All Classifications		FY 2023 Approved	FY 2024 Proposed	Change	% Change
General Fund		191	191	0	0.0%
Grants		50	50	0	0.0%
Total		241	241	0	0.0%

Budget Comparison - General Fund

Category	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2023 Estimated	FY 2024 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Compensation	\$ 11,528,868	\$ 13,054,700	\$ 12,983,300	\$ 13,430,100	\$ 375,400	2.9%
Fringe Benefits	3,745,377	4,683,500	4,661,000	4,821,400	137,900	2.9%
Operating Expenses	3,632,053	4,155,700	4,105,900	4,532,600	376,900	9.1%
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$ 18,906,298	\$ 21,893,900	\$ 21,750,200	\$ 22,784,100	\$ 890,200	4.1%

Authorized Staffing Count - General Fund

	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2024 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Full-Time	155	155	0	0.0%
Part-Time	36	36	0	0.0%
Total	191	191	0	0.0%

Staffing Changes and Compensation

- The FY 2024 Proposed Budget includes authorization for 155 full-time positions, and 36 part-time General Fund positions, which is unchanged when compared to the FY 2023 Approved Budget.
- According to the Circuit Court, as of March 31, 2023, 124 of their 155 General Funded full-time positions are filled, and 37 of their 37 part-time positions are filled.
- Eight (8) of the authorized full-time General Fund positions are proposed to be unfunded in FY 2024.
- As of March, the Court has lost 42 employees, which averages 5 employee separations per month. The key factors contributing to the current attrition level are employee resignations, which account for 69.1% of employee separations, due to employees seeking flexible telework options and higher salaries. Regular retirements account for 9.6% of employee separation as of March 2023.

Fringe Benefits

- The FY 2024 General Fund Proposed Budget for fringe benefits is \$4,821,400. This is an increase of \$137,900, or 2.9%, above the FY 2023 Approved Budget to align with projected workers compensation, healthcare, and pension costs.
- A five-year trend analysis of fringe benefit expenditures is included below:

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimated	FY 2024 Proposed
Fringe Benefits Expenditures	\$ 3,603,439	\$ 4,023,125	\$ 3,745,377	\$ 4,661,000	\$ 4,821,400
Compensation Expenditures	\$ 11,557,162	\$ 12,186,101	\$ 11,528,868	\$ 12,983,300	\$ 13,430,100
As a % of Compensation	31.2%	33.0%	32.5%	35.9%	35.9%
Annual % Change	15.1%	11.6%	-6.9%	24.4%	3.4%

Operating Expenses

- General Fund FY 2024 operating expenses are proposed at approximately \$4.5 million, and are comprised of the following major items:

– Office Automation	\$2,032,000
– Other Operating Equipment Repair/Maintenance	981,500
– Miscellaneous	500,000
– General & Administrative Contracts	286,500
– Periodicals	142,400
- Overall, FY 2024 General Fund proposed operating expenses are increasing by \$376,900, or 9.1%, above the FY 2023 Approved Budget level.
- The accompanying table compares the FY 2024 Proposed Budget operating expenditures with the FY 2023 Approved Budget operating expenditures. In six (6) of the categories, the FY 2024 Proposed Budget increases planned spending over the FY 2023 Approved Budget. In one (1) of the categories, the FY 2024 Proposed Budget decreases planned spending compared to the FY 2023 Approved Budget. In seven (7) of the categories, the FY 2024 Proposed Budget level remains unchanged compared to the FY 2024 Approved Budget.

Operating Objects	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Proposed	FY 2023 - FY 2024	
			\$ Change	% Change
Office Automation	\$ 1,772,600	\$ 2,032,000	\$ 259,400	15%
Miscellaneous (includes Jury Fees)	400,000	600,000	200,000	50%
Telephone	106,800	109,000	2,200	2.1%
Membership Fees	12,400	12,400	-	0.0%
Equipment Lease	43,000	43,000	-	0.0%
General & Administrative Contracts	283,700	286,500	2,800	1.0%
Periodicals	142,400	142,400	-	0.0%
Training	10,000	25,000	15,000	150.0%
Printing	60,000	60,000	-	0.0%
Office & Operating Equipment Non Capital	260,900	60,900	(200,000)	-76.7%
General Office Supplies	129,200	129,200	-	0.0%
Interagency Charge	25,000	25,000	-	0.0%
Mileage Reimbursement	25,700	25,700	-	0.0%
Other Operating Equipment Repair/Maintenance	884,000	981,500	97,500	11%
TOTAL	\$ 4,155,700	\$ 4,532,600	\$ 376,900	9.1%

- The most significant increases between the FY 2024 Proposed Budget and the FY 2023 Approved Budget are in the Office Automation category (\$259,400 increase), which is a result of the increase in OIT scheduled cost and Miscellaneous (\$200,000), which are a result of jury duty costs.
- The only decrease between the FY 2024 Proposed Budget and the FY 2023 Approved Budget in the Office and Operating Equipment Non-Capital category (\$200,000 decrease). This decrease is done in alignment with the implementation of the Maryland Electronic Courts Project (MDEC) and Office Automation.

Budget Comparison - Grants

Category	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2023 Estimated	FY 2024 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Compensation	\$ 1,691,431	\$ 2,863,000	\$ 3,160,300	\$ 3,484,000	\$ 621,000	21.7%
Fringe Benefits	538,869	844,500	800,400	837,200	(7,300)	-0.9%
Operating Expenses	1,449,504	2,233,100	1,747,700	1,781,200	(451,900)	-20.2%
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$ 3,679,804	\$ 5,940,600	\$ 5,708,400	\$ 6,102,400	\$ 161,800	2.7%

Authorized Staffing Count - Grants

	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2024 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Full-Time	48	48	0	0.0%
Part-Time	2	2	0	0.0%
Total	50	50	0	0.0%

Grant Programs

- The FY 2024 Proposed Budget for the Circuit Court's grant programs is approximately \$6.1 million, which is an increase of \$161,800, or 2.7%, over the FY 2023 Approved Budget. The increase is due to the enhancements in the *Family Division Legislative Initiative*, the *Family Justice Center: Changing Lives, Restoring Hope (VOCA)* and the child support enforcement – *Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement* grant programs. The increases are partially offset by the removal of the *Maryland Administrative Courts – Security Goods and Services* grant along with a reduction in the County match requirements.
- In FY 2024 grant funding remains at FY 2023 level: 48 full-time and 2 part-time positions.
- Grant funded compensation is proposed to increase \$621,000, or 21.7%, above the FY 2023 Approved levels, and Fringe Benefits are proposed to decrease \$7,300, or 0.9%, below the FY 2023 Approved levels.
- Grant funded operating expenses are proposed to decrease by \$451,900, or 20.2%, below the FY 2023 Approved levels.
- The accompanying chart illustrates grant funding proposed for FY 2024, the grant source, and any funding match the County is required to qualify for the grant:

Grant Name	Grant Source	Proposed Grant Amount	County Match	FY 2024
Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement	State	\$ 612,900	\$ 281,859	
Economic Justice Initiative	State	\$ 20,000	\$ 6,667	
Family Division Legislative Initiative	State	\$ 2,273,600	\$ -	
Maryland Family Justice Center's "Changing Lives, Restoring Hope"	State	\$ 621,500		
Office of Violence Against Women	Federal	\$ 978,400	\$ -	
Office of Problem Solving Courts	State	\$ 525,000	\$ -	
BJA Adult Drug Court and Veterans Treatment Court	State	\$ 398,800	\$ 33,604	
Veterans' Treatment Court	Federal	\$ 277,400	\$ 38,770	
Total		\$ 5,707,600	\$ 360,900	

- *The Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement (CRA)* supports the Circuit Court's child support enforcement programs.
- *The Economic Justice Initiative (VAWA)* supports the Circuit Court's child support enforcement programs. This initiative is aimed at survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sex trafficking supporting them through an economic empowerment program.
- *The Family Division Legislative Initiative Grant* aims to help fund the Court's Family Division which functions as an informational hub, a family support service, and overseer of family law.
- *Maryland Family Justice Center's "Changing Lives, Restoring Hope" (VOCA)* is a project aimed at strengthening efforts to provide survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and elder abuse with a wider range of services to address their traumas.
- *The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Adult Drug Court and Veterans Treatment Court* integrates evidence-based substance abuse treatment, mandatory drug testing, sanctions and incentives, and transitional services.
- *Office of Violence Against Women (OVW): Improving Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Violence* aims to enhance the community response in cases of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- *Veterans' Treatment Court* is a program that uses an evidence-based approach to treat veterans with substance abuse problems.

▪ The Proposed FY 2024 grant funding from the Maryland Office of Problem-Solving Court is \$525,000 which is the same as the FY 2023 Approved Budget level. Specifics pertaining to the programs funded by this grant are as follows:

- The Adult Drug Court has 44 current participants and graduated a total of 509 clients since inception, with 985 total clients served and a current capacity of 120. It has one (1) Program Coordinate, one (1) Community Supervision Manager and three (3) Case Managers. The ratio between participants and case manager should not exceed 30:1.

- The Juvenile Drug Court program has four (4) current participants and has graduated 131 participants since inception, with 332 total clients served and a current capacity of 50. It has one (1) Department of Juvenile Services Case Manager and one (1) Circuit Court Case Manager Pending Hiring. The ideal ratio between client and case manager would be 25:1.
- The Re-Entry Court has 24 current participants and 25 graduates since inception, with 65 total clients served and a current capacity of 40. This program has two Case Managers. The ideal ratio between client and case manager would be 20:1.
- For additional information, please see responses to the *FY 2024 Budget Review First Round Question No. 27 pg. 12-13*.

HIGHLIGHTS

Workload/Performance Trends

- The Prince George's County Circuit Court currently has 24 sitting judges, seven (7) Family Magistrates, and one (1) Foreclosure Magistrate. The Circuit Court continues to utilize visiting and retired judges to help meet staffing needs in FY 2023 and in FY 2024.
- The Court's caseload decreased from 49,598 total cases in FY 2020 to 31,479 total cases in FY 2021. The Court's actual caseload increased to 39,612 cases in FY 2022, with an increased estimate of 49,030 cases in FY 2023. The Court projects the caseload to decrease for FY 2024 to 45,054. *See the FY 2024 Proposed Operating Budget book pg. 284 for a breakdown of the different types of cases that support the presented numbers.*
- The Court will provide workforce development with a General and Technical focus. The General workforce development, hosted by the Court's Human Resources Department, will focus on customer service, and change management. The Technical workforce development is a part of the process of joining the Maryland Judiciary on the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC).
- The Circuit Court established the new Youth Gun Possession Program in FY 2023. This program provides academic monitoring and assistance to Prince George's County residents between the ages of 14-18 who have a First Time Gun Possession Offense, non-violent offender and no prior delinquencies. The program's current capacity is 20 participants. There are currently two (2) participants and no graduates. This program has one (1) Department of Juvenile Services Case Manager and one (1) Circuit Court Case Manager that is currently Pending Hiring. The client and case manager ratio for both is 25:1.
- The Circuit Court established the Direction Youth Diversion Program in FY 2022. This program provides individuals engaging in delinquent behaviors, who are between the ages of 12-18 years old and are non-violent offenders with academic monitoring and assistance. The program provides services that support sobriety and abstinence from illegal substances, and

mentoring/tutoring. The program's current capacity is 15 participants, a decrease of 10 from FY 2023. There are currently four (4) participants, with 15 graduates to date and four (4) pending graduates. There have been 22 participants serviced since FY 2022. This program has one (1) Case Manager that is Pending Hiring, with a client and case manager ratio of 25:1.

- The Circuit Court established a Veterans Court Program in FY 2016. This is a voluntary twelve-month comprehensive treatment program. The focus of this program is Veterans entering the judicial system with non-violent offenses, documented substance abuse dependencies, and mental health issues. The program's capacity is 50 participants. There are currently 12 participants, with 2 graduates in FY 2023 and 30 graduates to date. There have been 397 participants served to date. This program has two (2) Full-Time Case Managers, with a client to case manager ratio of 25:1.
- The Truancy Reduction Court was established in FY 2009. This program targets students who are under age 16.5 and who were absent from school 20% of a quarter, semester, or the school year at the time of referral. The program's capacity is 40 students. The program has 29 current participants and five (5) graduates in FY 2023. 153 clients have graduated to date. This program has one (1) Case Managers, with a client to case manager ratio of 21:1.
- The Family Justice Center (FJC) has experienced an increased in clients served from FY 2022 to FY 2023. Between March 2022 and March 2023, the Center has served 1,445 clients to date. Additional resources and services may be required to better address community needs.
- The Court's foreclosure process includes mediation services that defendants may request prior to the sale of their property. In CY 2021, the Court received 271 foreclosure filings with 67 requests for mediation. For CY 2022, the Court received 1,740 foreclosure filings but is unable to provide the updated number of requests for mediation due to their Maryland Electronics Court (MDEC) conversion. In CY 2023, as of March 10, 2023, the Court has received 454 foreclosure filings with 85 requests for mediation.

Information Technology

- The Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) project is an integrated statewide case management system piloted in Anne Arundel County in 2014, where it is now fully operational. The implementation of MDEC in Prince George's County was fully operational on October 17, 2022. The court will continue acclimating to the newly implemented system through various levels of quality review of converted case data, developing monitoring and statistical reports, modifying business processes, and offering enhanced training.
- The Court has the following IT initiatives on-going in FY 2023 and continuing into FY 2024:
 - Brief Cam Artificial Intelligence and Data Driven Technology in FY 2023
 - 2N Intercom System for the Bourne Building in FY 2023, expected to be completed by June 2023
 - Axis Camera Station for all courthouse security cameras was completed in February 2023
 - iClass Readers were installed in February 2023
 - Coverage for the Westgate Judges parking lot in FY 2024
 - Thermal Cameras inside the Westgate in FY 2024

- Installation of a second server for the Brief Cam Project in FY 2024
- Installation of Barriers for the waterside area in FY 2024

Facilities

- The “Courthouse Renovations and Security Upgrades” project provides funds for increased and enhanced security and updating infrastructure throughout the Courthouse complex. This project has a total CIP budget of \$54,285,000. The project has estimated total expenditures of \$43,359,000 as of the end of FY 2023, and \$2,500,000 in the Proposed 2024 CIP Budget.
- The James H. Taylor Innovative Academy project (formerly Court School) has no funding allocated to its budget for FY 2024 as it is no longer an initiative of the Circuit Court.