

Judicial Administration Program Area Summary

Overview

The four agencies in this program area: Circuit Court and Records, Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, General District Court and the Office of the Sheriff, are all dedicated to providing equal access for the fair and timely resolution of court cases. High workloads continue to challenge each of the agencies in the Judicial Administration program area. These workloads require each of the affected agencies to find ways to leverage decreasing resources in the face of increasing demands, largely due to the growing population.

The Circuit Court has jurisdiction in Criminal and Civil cases and provides appellate authority in which an appeal may be taken from a lower tribunal. Criminal cases involve a possible sentence to the State Penitentiary and misdemeanor appeals. Civil jurisdiction provides for adoptions, divorces, and controversies where the claim exceeds \$15,000. Public services include issuance of marriage licenses, processing notary commissions, probating wills, recording business certification of trade names, financing statements and docketing judgments. The Circuit Court collects recordation taxes and filing fees as well as fines, costs and restitution in Criminal cases. Public access of court records is available on site or through the Court's Public Access Network (CPAN), a secure remote access system.

The Commonwealth's Attorney is a constitutional officer of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As such, he is not an officer or employee of the County from which he was elected. In this jurisdiction, the Commonwealth's Attorney is elected by voters of Fairfax City and Fairfax County. The Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney (OCA) is charged primarily with the prosecution of crime. This office prosecutes criminal and traffic matters in the Fairfax County General District Court, criminal and delinquency matters in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, and all felony cases in the Fairfax County Circuit Court. The office handles both the violation of County ordinances and the violation of state statutes. The caseload of the office is substantial and is one of the highest per prosecutor in the Commonwealth. The OCA handles such offenses as murder, rape, robbery, burglary and illegal drug sales, from arrest to trial. It prosecutes a wide variety of misdemeanor and traffic cases, including more than 4,000 driving under-the-influence violations, thousands of assaults, and thousands of petty thefts.

The General District Court (GDC) operates under the administrative guidance of the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Committee on District Courts. It administers justice in the matters before the Court. The Court's operations include two divisions – Court Services Division and Civil, Criminal and Traffic Courts. The General District Court is part of the judicial branch of the state government and its clerical office staff is almost entirely state funded. The Court Services Division (CSD), however, is primarily County funded. The CSD provides investigation information on incarcerated defendants to assist judges and magistrates with release decisions; pretrial community supervision to defendants awaiting trial; and, probation services to convicted misdemeanants and convicted non-violent felons (Class 5 and Class 6). The CSD also manages court-appointed counsel and interpretation services and provides some services to the Circuit and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts.

The Office of the Sheriff falls under two program areas – Judicial Administration and Public Safety. The main focus under Judicial Administration is the security of courtrooms and County courthouses and the service of legal process which contributes to the swift and impartial adjudication of all criminal and civil matters brought before the courts. The court caseloads in the Fairfax County judicial system have experienced steady growth for the past ten years. In FY 2011, approximately 470,500 court cases were heard. Furthermore, the Jennings Judicial Center averages over 5,500 individuals entering the center

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daily. The Sheriff's Office will continue to ensure that there is no corresponding increase in security risks and will continue to provide the highest degree of safety to the residents of Fairfax County.

Strategic Direction

As part of the countywide focus on developing strategic plans, agencies took steps to establish or update their vision and values statements; perform environmental scans; and define strategies for achieving their missions. These are then linked to the overall County Core Purpose and Vision Elements (see adjacent box). Common themes in the Judicial Administration program area include:

- Equal access to justice
- Fair and timely resolution of cases
- Effective use of technology
- Volunteer utilization
- Courthouse security

COUNTY CORE PURPOSE
<i>To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods, and diverse communities of Fairfax County by:</i>
▪ Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities
▪ Building Livable Spaces
▪ Practicing Environmental Stewardship
▪ Connecting People and Places
▪ Creating a Culture of Engagement
▪ Maintaining Healthy Economies
▪ Exercising Corporate Stewardship

More on each agency in this program area can be found in the individual narratives that follow this section. The complete budget narrative pertaining to the Office of the Sheriff can be found in the Public Safety program area section of Volume 1.

Program Area Summary by Character

Category	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2012 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2013 Advertised Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years				
Regular	362 / 362	362 / 362	362 / 362	364 / 364
Exempt	28 / 28	28 / 28	28 / 28	28 / 28
State	135 / 132.6	135 / 132.6	135 / 132.6	135 / 132.6
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	\$24,167,489	\$24,510,945	\$24,864,740	\$25,519,047
Operating Expenses	7,331,746	7,071,293	7,854,301	7,149,802
Capital Equipment	25,297	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$31,524,532	\$31,582,238	\$32,719,041	\$32,668,849
Income	\$21,199,451	\$20,694,790	\$20,656,009	\$20,730,547
Net Cost to the County	\$10,325,081	\$10,887,448	\$12,063,032	\$11,938,302

Program Area Summary by Agency

Category	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2012 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2013 Advertised Budget Plan
Circuit Court and Records	\$10,013,163	\$10,033,175	\$10,393,606	\$10,362,130
Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney	2,491,478	2,525,464	2,562,672	2,635,633
General District Court	2,153,317	2,149,128	2,233,058	2,179,322
Office of the Sheriff	16,866,574	16,874,471	17,529,705	17,491,764
Total Expenditures	\$31,524,532	\$31,582,238	\$32,719,041	\$32,668,849

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Budget Trends

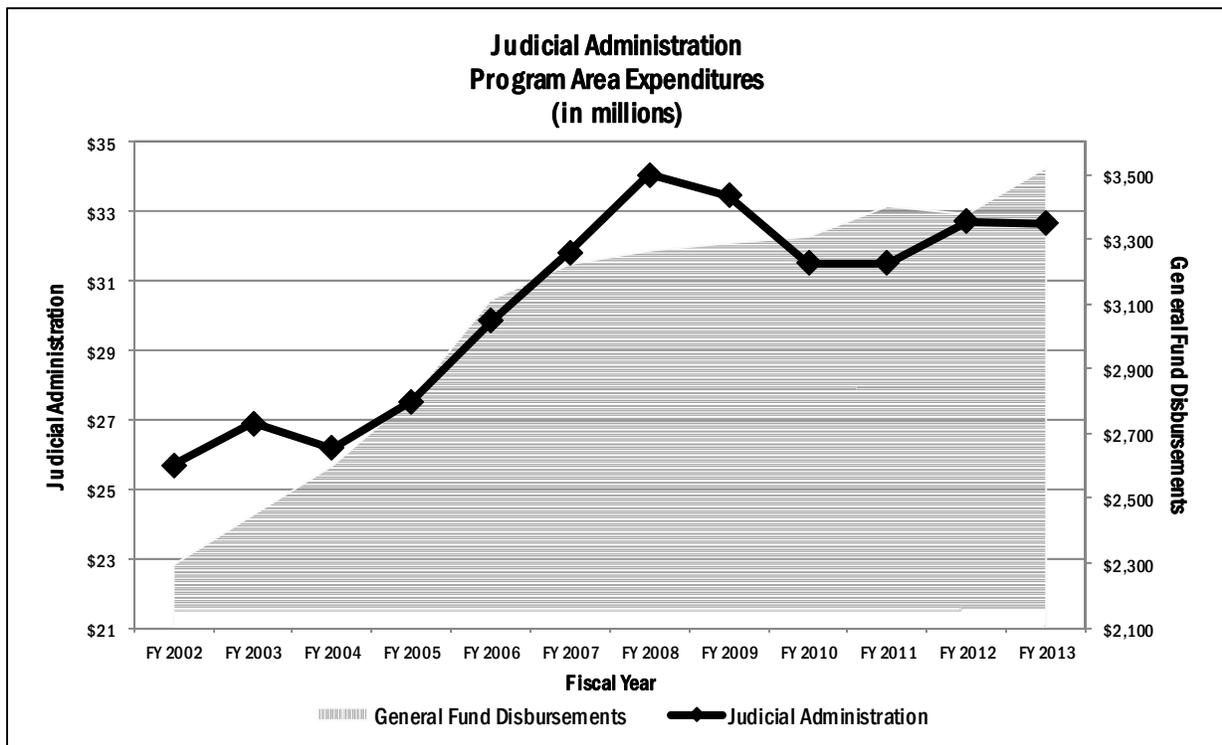
The FY 2013 Advertised Budget Plan funding level of \$32,668,849 for the Judicial Administration program area comprises 2.5 percent of the total recommended General Fund expenditures of \$1,287,088,407. In FY 2013, Judicial Administration program area expenditures are proposed to increase \$1,086,611, or 3.4 percent, over the FY 2012 Adopted Budget Plan total of \$31,582,238. This increase is due to Personnel Services-related increases, partially offset by targeted budget reductions to meet FY 2013 budget requirements.

The Judicial Administration program area includes 392 positions (not including state positions), an increase of 2/2.0 SYE positions from the *FY 2012 Revised Budget Plan* level. This adjustment reflects the transfer of 2/2.0 SYE positions from the Office of Public Affairs to Circuit Court and Records to properly align business functions with the core agency missions.

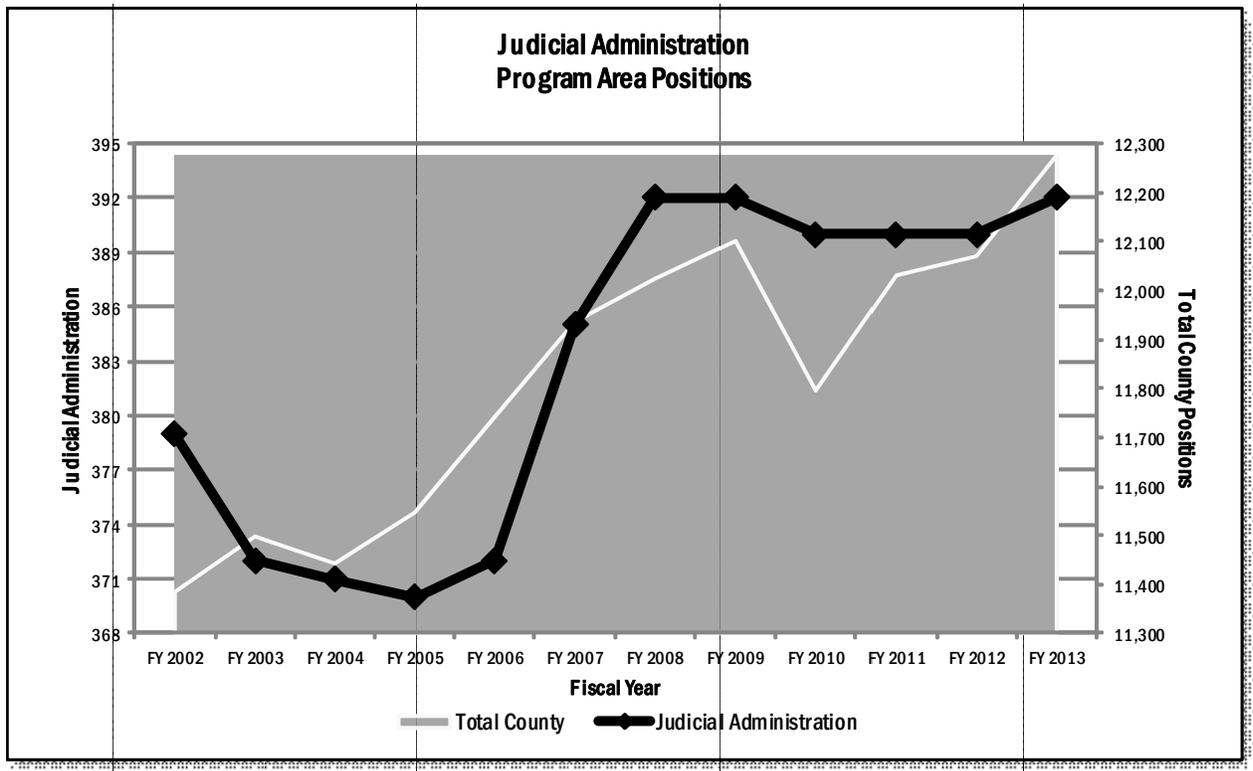
The agencies in this program area contribute to the preservation of public records, provide state mandated services, prosecute criminal offenses, and secure detention and court facilities. FY 2013 reductions were made in an effort to minimize the impact on current services and programs. Of the total \$177,048 in reductions: \$100,302 are in Circuit Court and Records, \$30,000 are in the Office of the Sheriff, \$25,255 are in the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, and \$21,491 are in General District Court. The reductions were more than offset by Personnel Services-related increases associated with FY 2012 and FY 2013 Market Rate Adjustments.

The charts on the following page illustrate funding and position trends for the agencies in this program area compared to countywide expenditure and position trends.

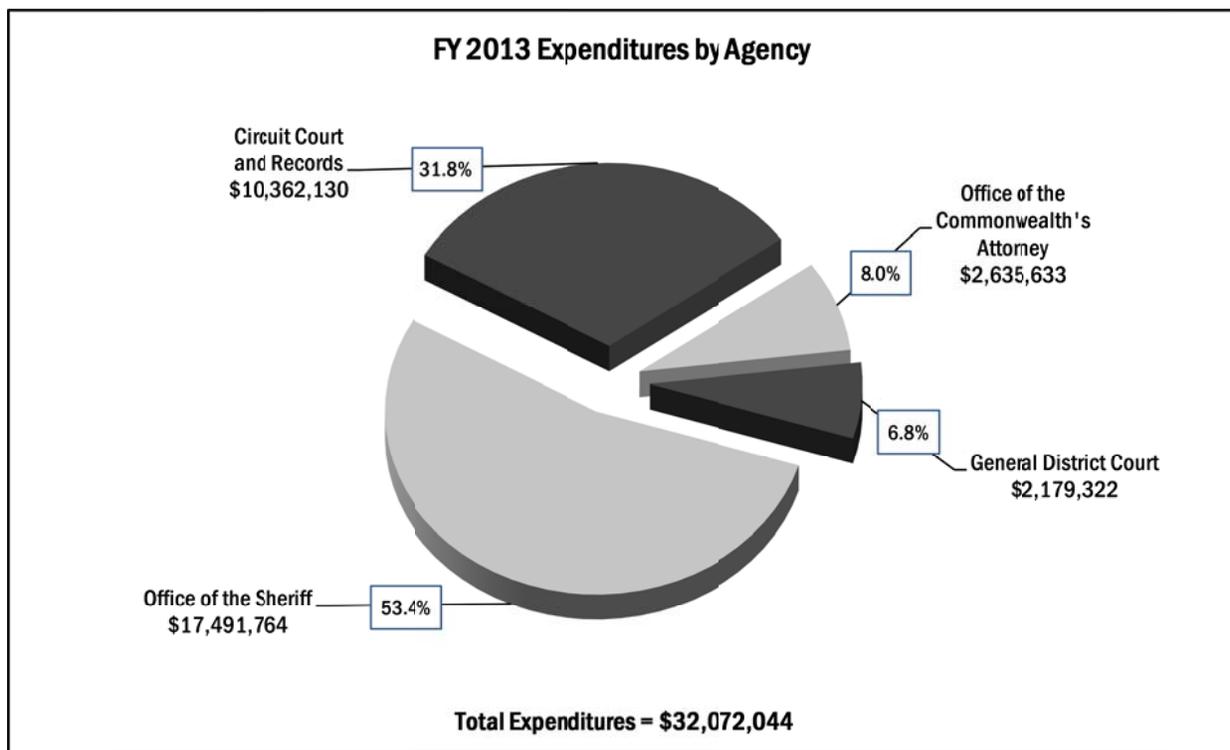
Trends in Expenditures and Positions



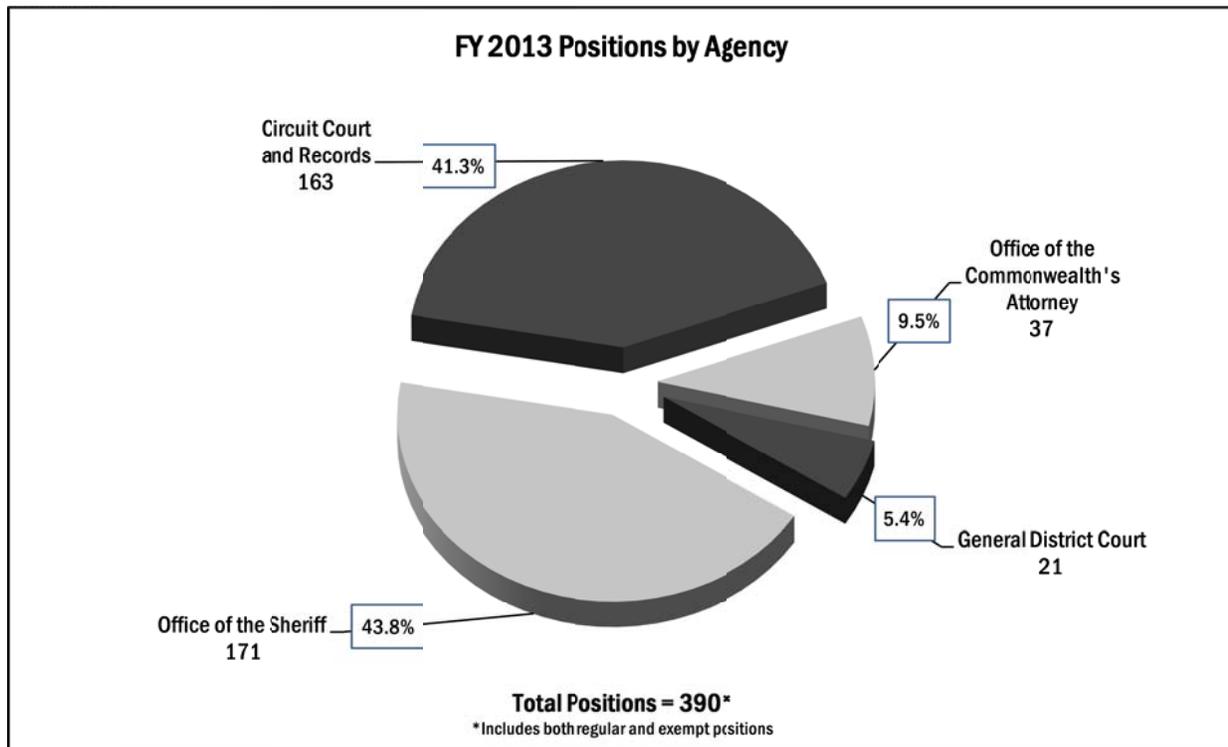
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FY 2013 Expenditures and Positions by Agency



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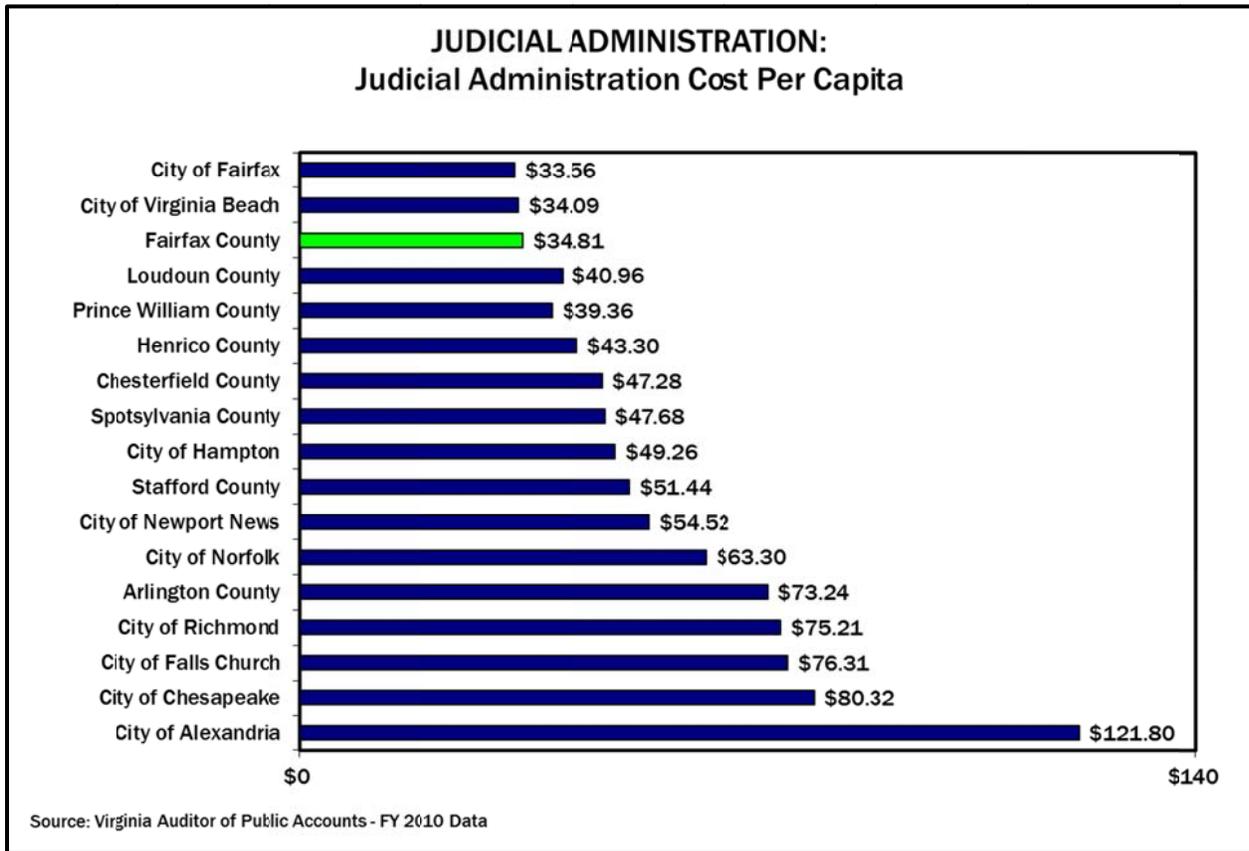
Benchmarking

As a means of demonstrating accountability to the public for results achieved, benchmarking data have been included in the annual budget since the FY 2005 Budget. These data are included in each of the Program Area Summaries in Volume 1 (General Fund) and Volume 2 (Other Funds) as available. To illustrate program efficiency, data collected by the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) for the Commonwealth of Virginia that show cost per capita in each of the seven program areas are included. FY 2010 represents the most recent year for which data are available due to the time required to collect and verify the data. An advantage to including these APA data is comparability. In Virginia, local governments follow stringent guidelines regarding the classification of program area expenses. Cost data are provided annually to the APA for review and compilation in an annual report. Since these data are not prepared by any one jurisdiction, their objectivity is less questionable than they would be if collected by one of the participants. In addition, a standard methodology is consistently followed, allowing comparison over time. For each of the program areas, these comparisons of cost per capita are the first benchmarks shown in these sections. As seen below, Fairfax County has among the lowest cost per capita rates in the Judicial Administration program area for Northern Virginia localities and other large Virginia jurisdictions.

While a major portion of Fairfax County's comparative performance data for other program areas comes from the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) benchmarking effort, judicial administration is not a service area that is addressed in that program. However, the State Supreme Court produces an extensive report on the annual "State of the Judiciary." The most recent report available is for Calendar Year 2009. This report provides detailed data for each of the districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia and addresses the Circuit Court, General District Court, and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court. Trends within each district are provided, as are comparisons to state averages. In addition, in some instances, urban averages for cities are also illustrated to show comparison to statewide averages. The charts shown on the next few pages reflect data from this report. It is anticipated that

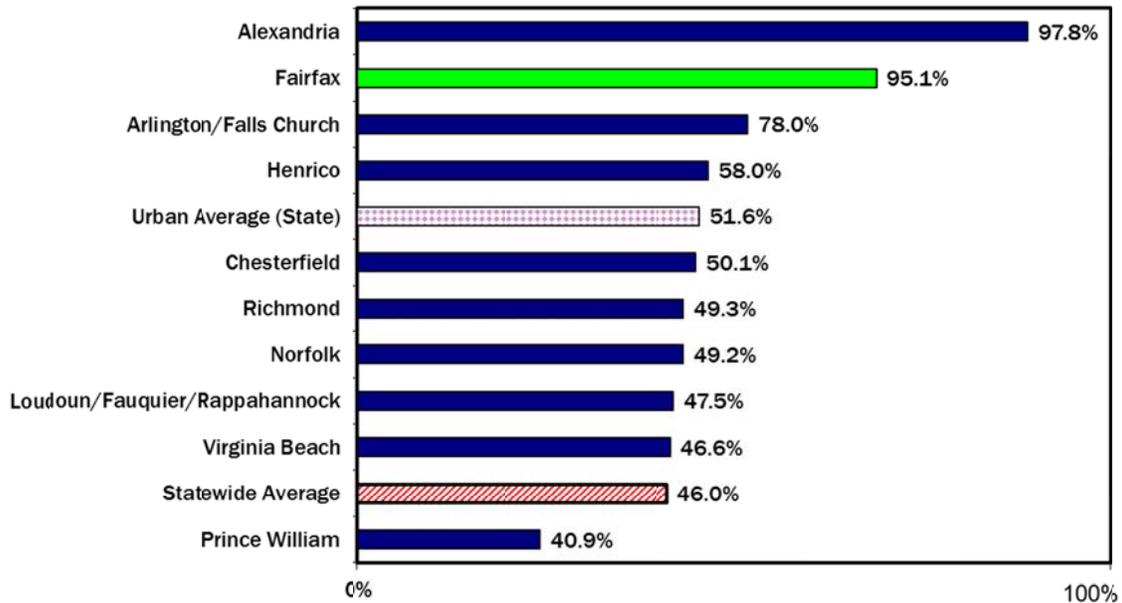
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these charts will be updated for the FY 2013 Adopted Budget Plan with the 2010 State of the Judiciary Annual Report.



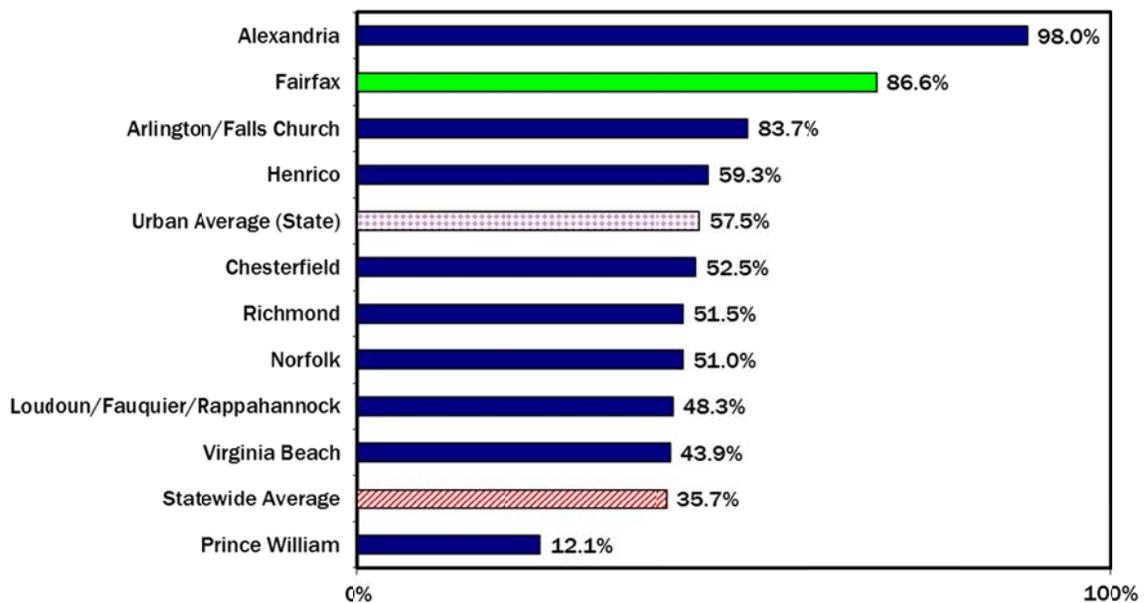
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JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION: Percent Circuit Court Felonies Tried/ Adjudicated Within 120 Days of Arrest



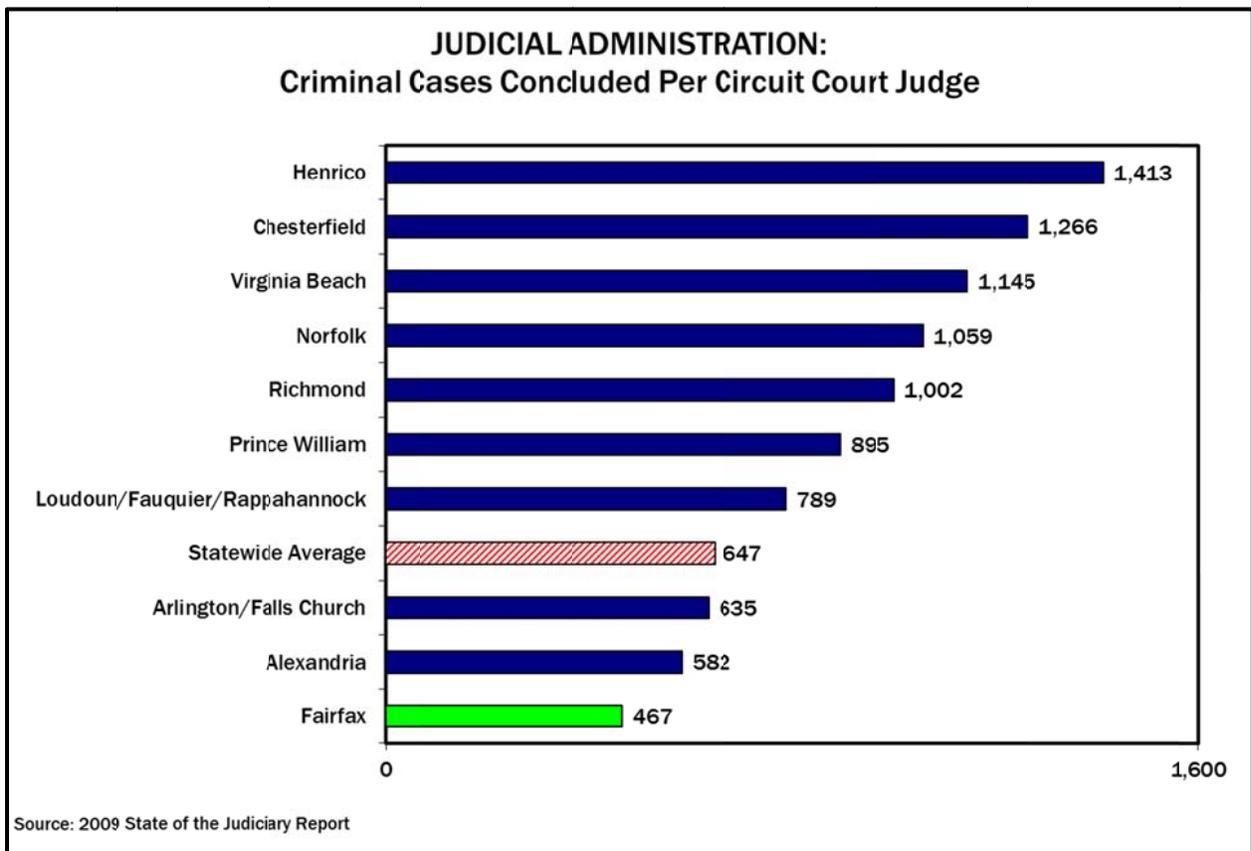
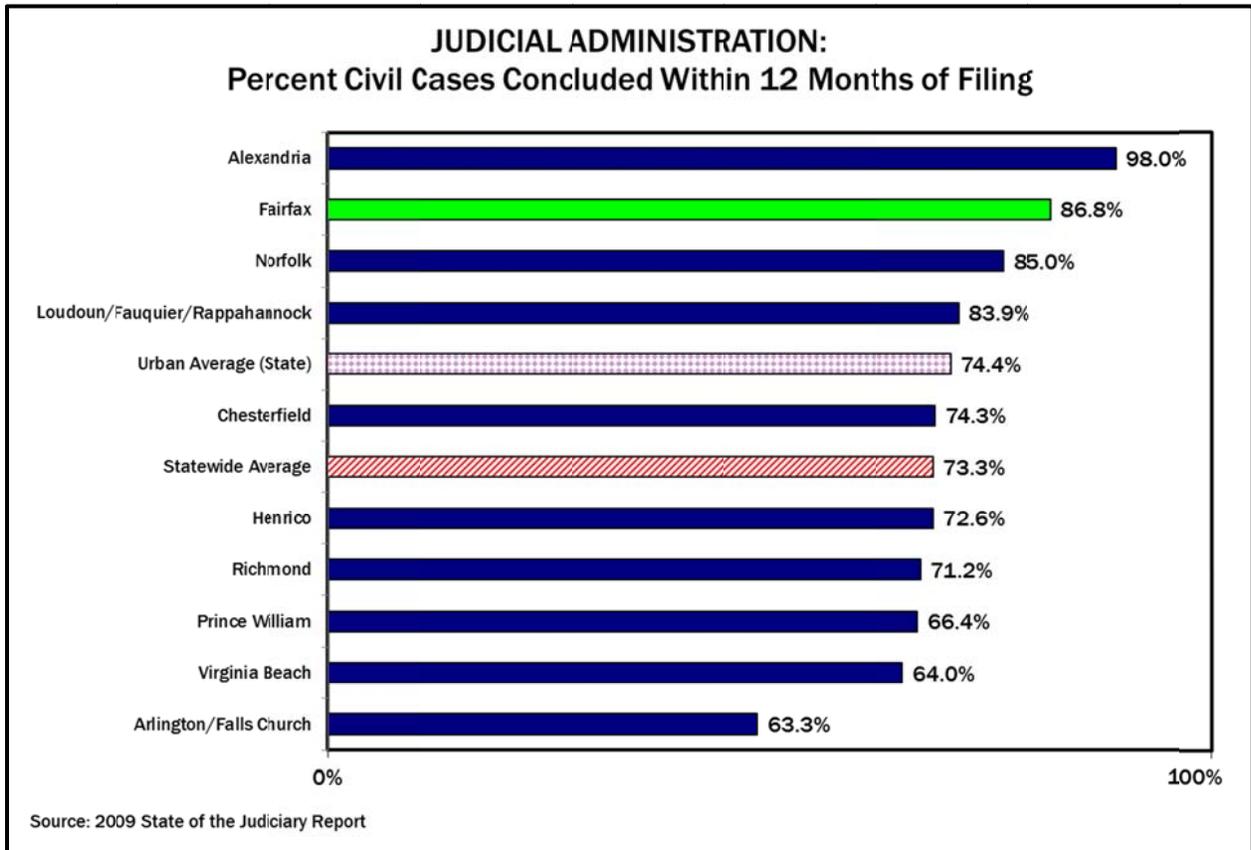
Source: 2009 State of the Judiciary Report

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION: Percent Circuit Court Misdemeanors Tried/ Adjudicated Within 60 Days of Arrest

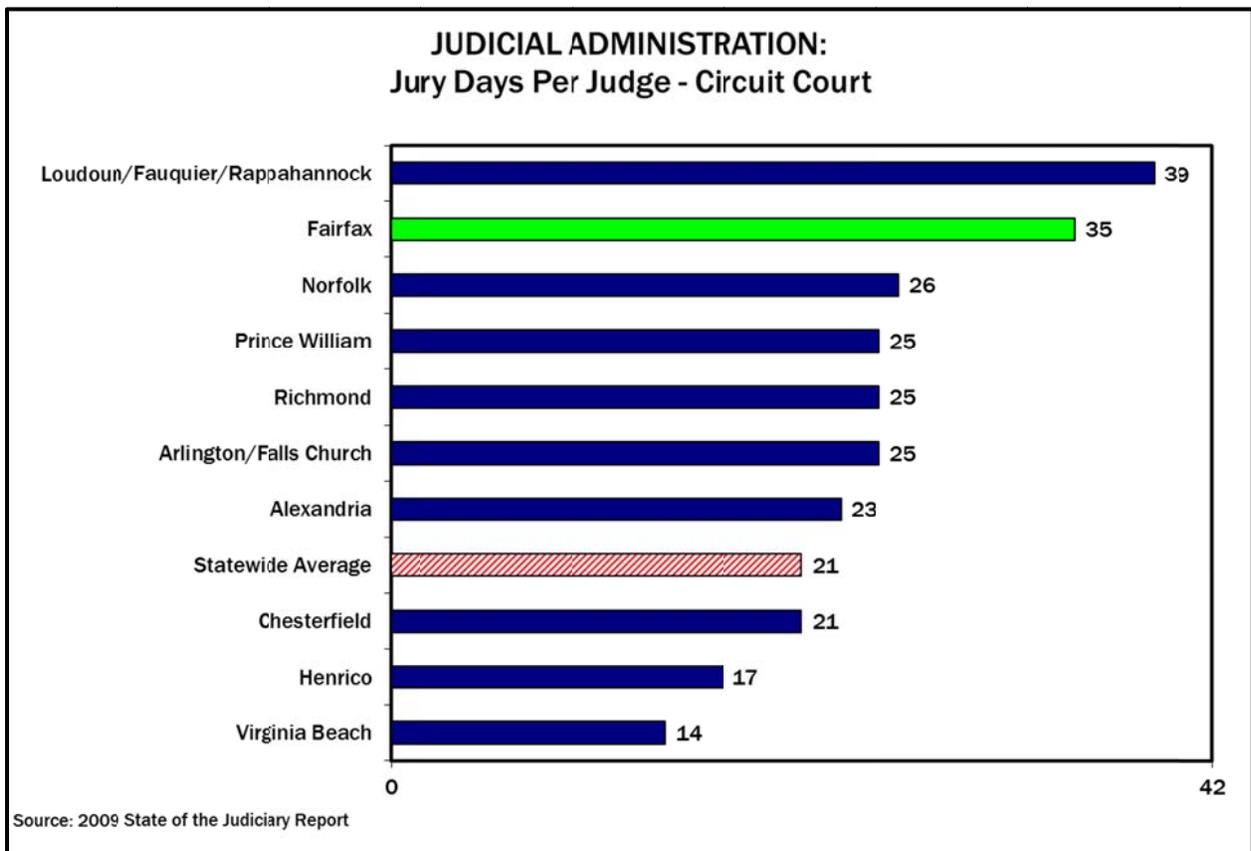
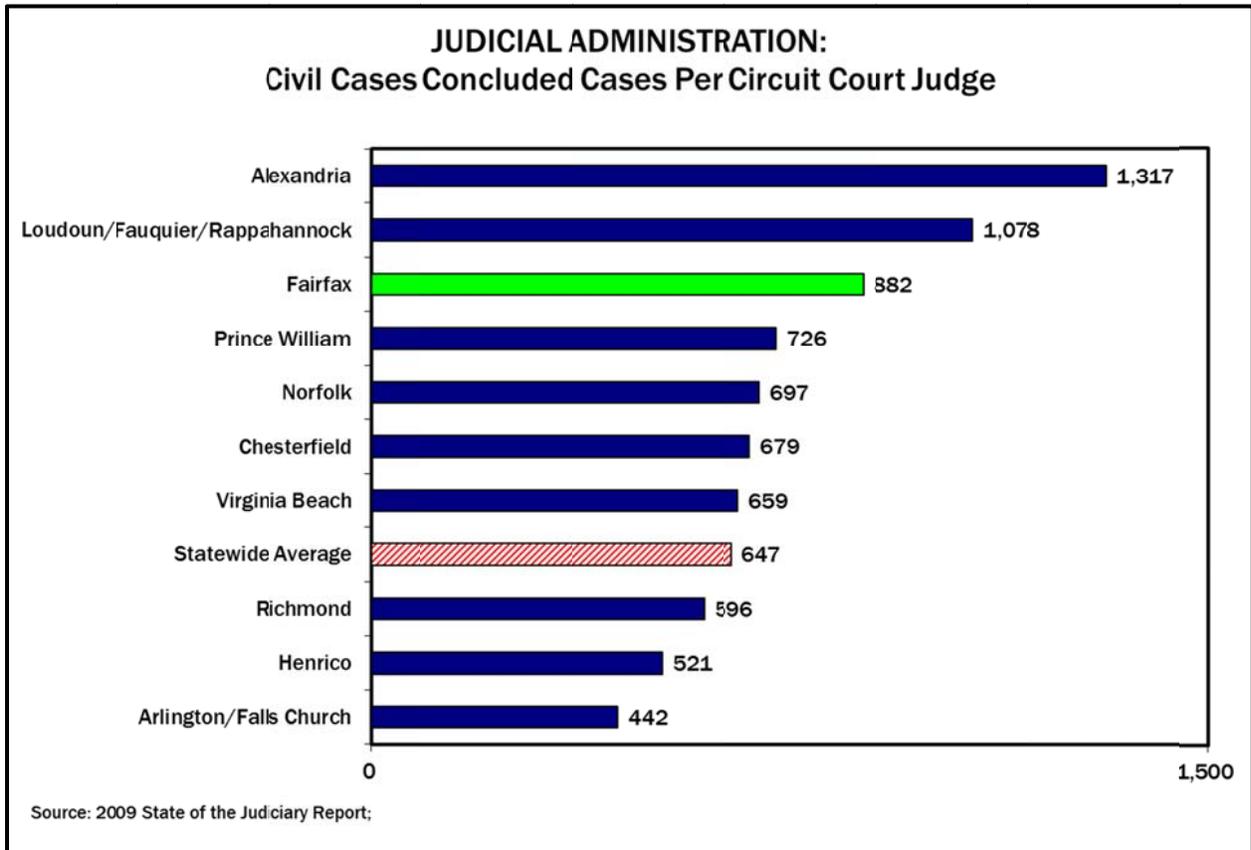


Source: 2009 State of the Judiciary Report

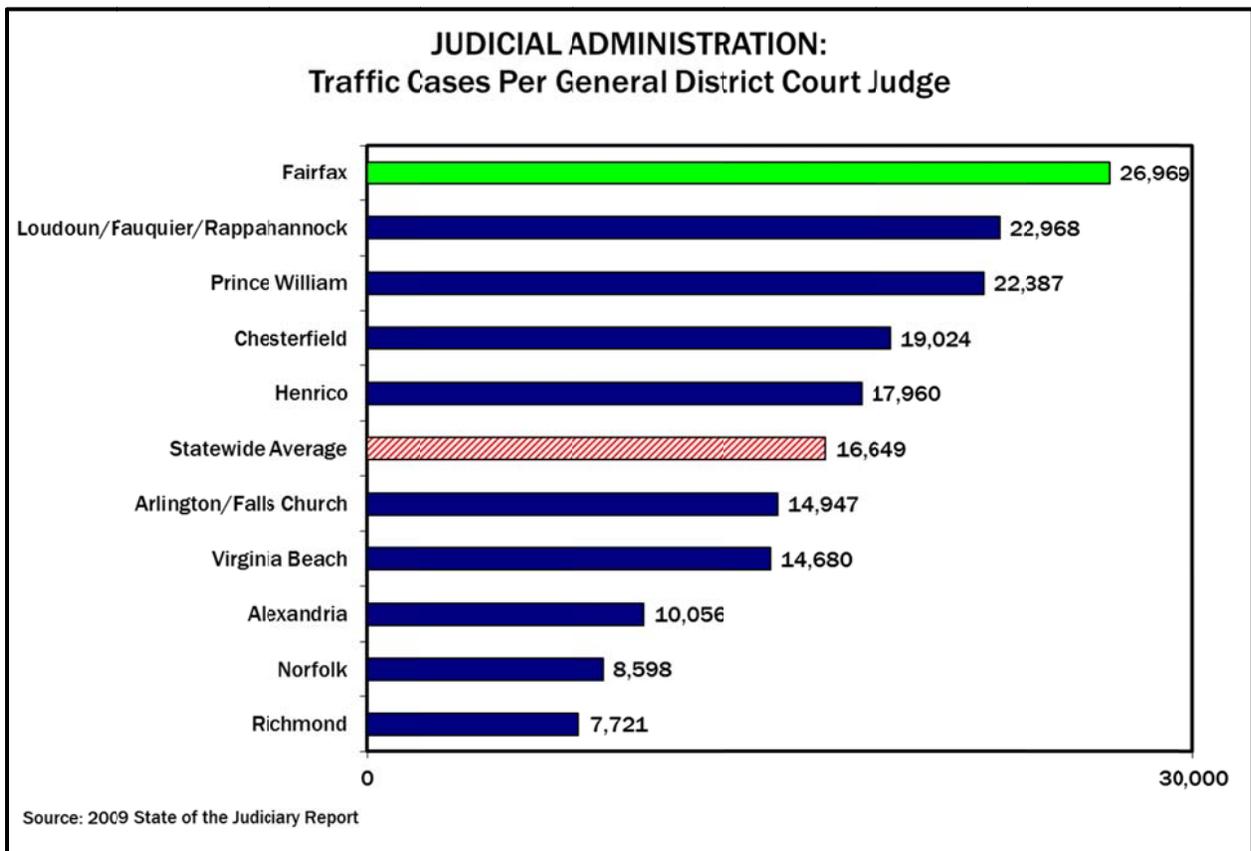
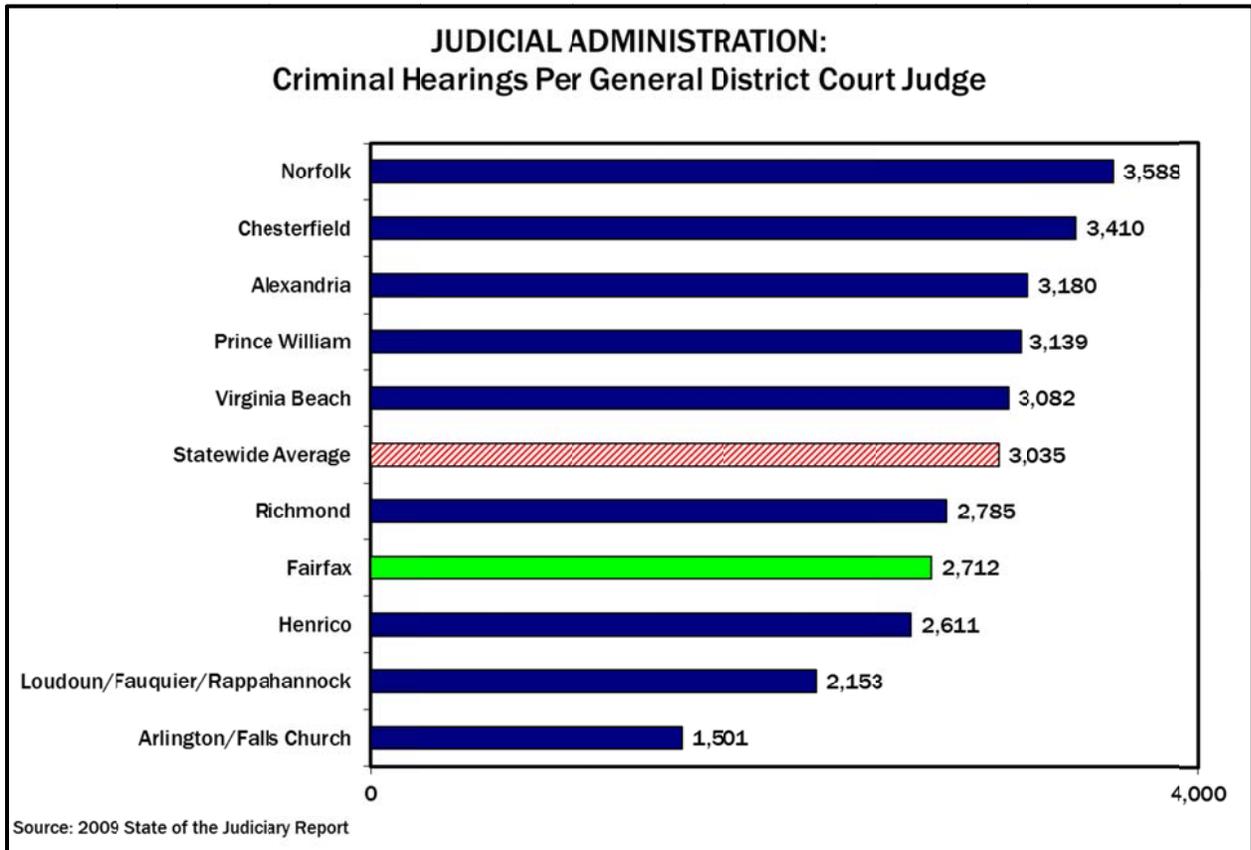
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