

Judicial Administration Program Area Summary

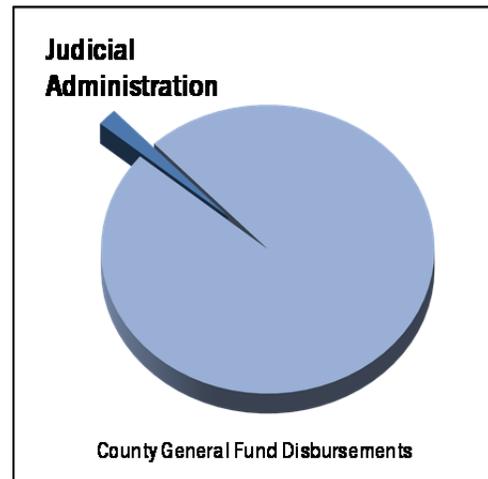
Overview

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 is a Virginia "court of record" and has jurisdiction over Criminal and Civil cases and has appellate, *de novo* review over several lower courts and tribunals. 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 \$25,000. 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 the County Court Services Division and the State Clerk's Office. 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 collects and provides information on incarcerated defendants to assist judges and magistrates with release decisions; provides pretrial community supervision to defendants awaiting trial, and supplies 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 pretrial adult supervision services to the Circuit Court and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (JDRDC).



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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 courthouse 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 2013, 490,492 court cases were heard. 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

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods, and diverse communities of Fairfax County by:

- 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 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Adopted	FY 2014 Revised	FY 2015 Advertised
FUNDING				
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	\$26,669,255	\$26,042,776	\$26,372,576	\$27,151,320
Operating Expenses	6,658,496	7,199,802	7,834,281	7,350,502
Capital Equipment	124,066	0	26,523	0
Total Expenditures	\$33,451,817	\$33,242,578	\$34,233,380	\$34,501,822
Income	\$22,945,967	\$22,506,240	\$22,796,670	\$22,801,659
NET COST TO THE COUNTY	\$10,505,850	\$10,736,338	\$11,436,710	\$11,700,163
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	364 / 363.5	363 / 362.5	363 / 362.5	366 / 365.5
Exempt	28 / 28	28 / 28	28 / 28	28 / 28
State	136 / 133.1	136 / 133.1	136 / 133.1	136 / 133.1

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Program Area Summary by Agency

Category	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Adopted	FY 2014 Revised	FY 2015 Advertised
Circuit Court and Records	\$10,318,566	\$10,462,252	\$10,638,203	\$10,583,284
Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney	2,653,086	2,699,151	2,729,751	3,505,085
General District Court	2,049,657	2,208,314	2,245,761	2,241,210
Office of the Sheriff	18,430,508	17,872,861	18,619,665	18,172,243
Total Expenditures	\$33,451,817	\$33,242,578	\$34,233,380	\$34,501,822

Budget Trends

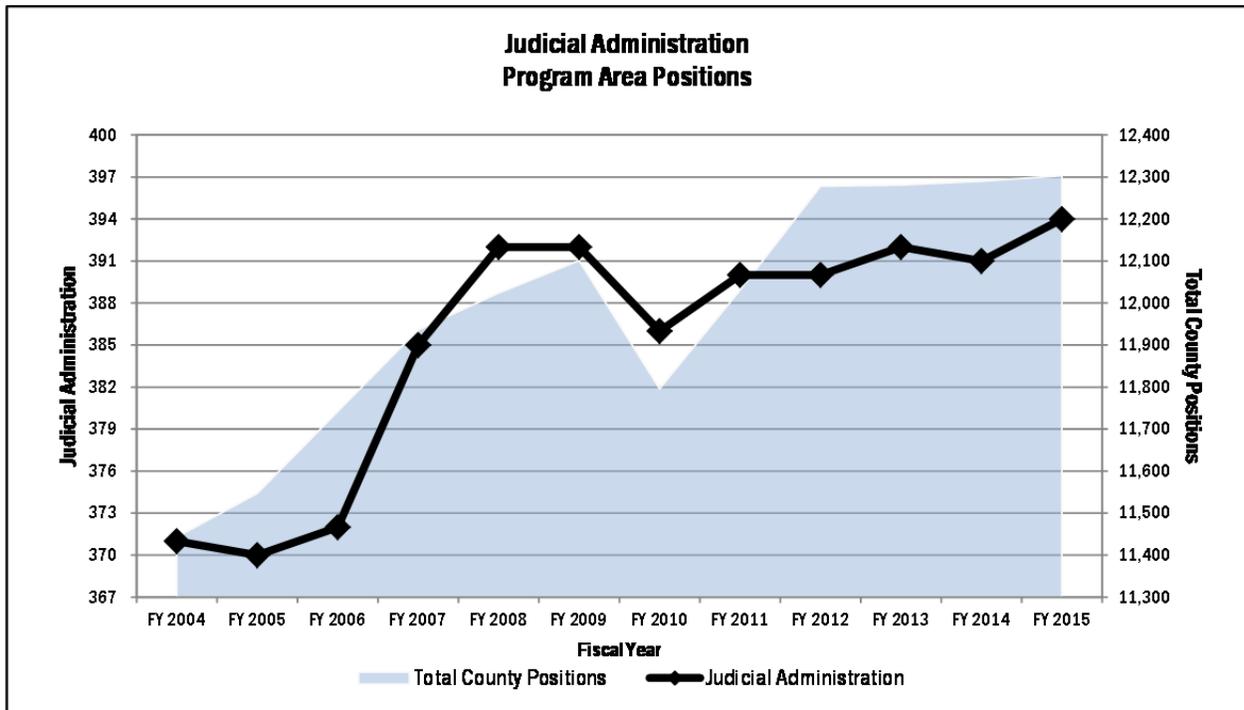
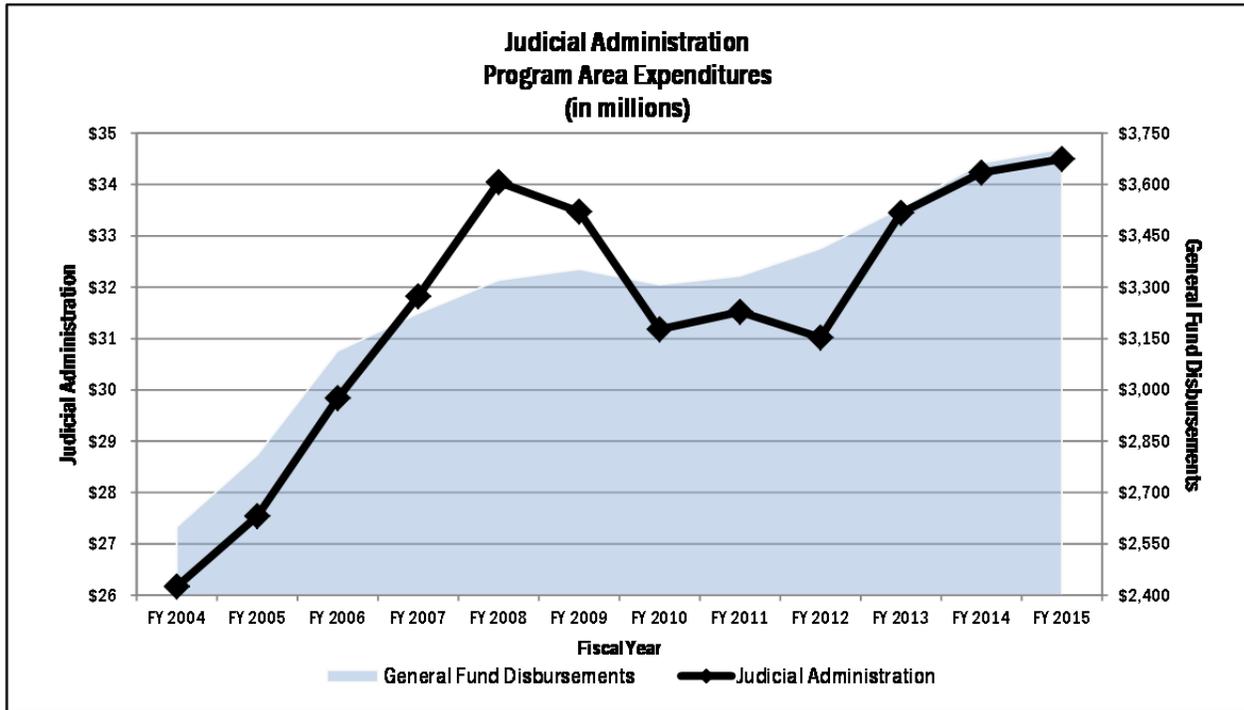
The FY 2015 Advertised Budget Plan funding level of \$34,501,822 for the Judicial Administration program area comprises 2.5 percent of the total General Fund Direct Expenditures of \$1,361,286,419. In FY 2015, Judicial Administration program area expenditures increased by \$1,259,244, or 3.8 percent, over the FY 2014 Adopted Budget Plan total of \$33,242,578. This increase is primarily due to Personnel Services-related increases, increased PC replacement charges and funding to address increased workload requirements in the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney.

The Judicial Administration program area includes 394 positions (not including state positions), an increase of 3/3.0 FTE positions over the *FY 2014 Revised Budget Plan* level. This adjustment reflects the increase of 3/3.0 FTE Senior Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney positions in the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney due to significant workload-related issues.

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.

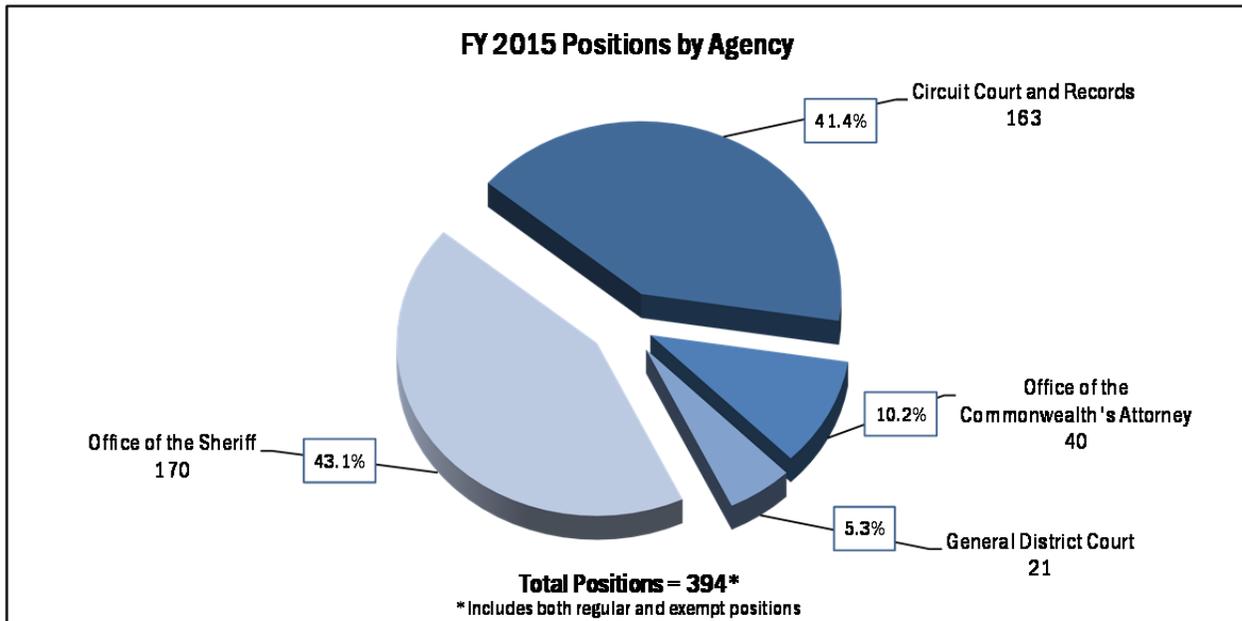
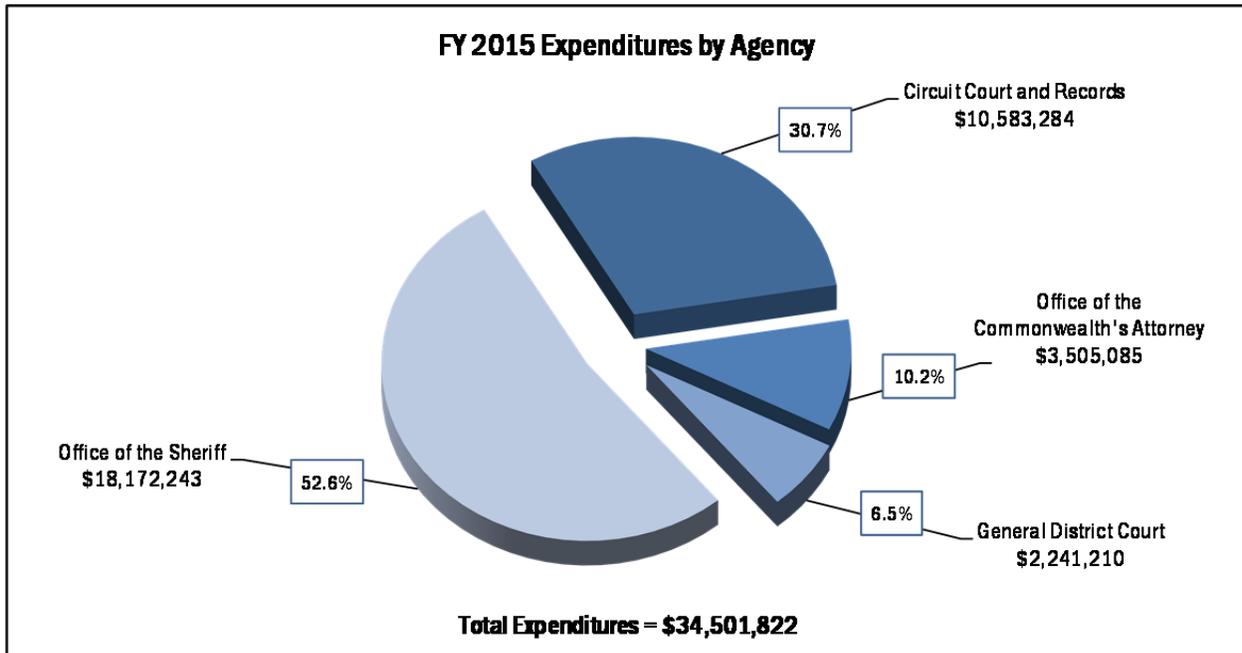
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Trends in Expenditures and Positions



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FY 2015 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 2012 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 2012. 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.

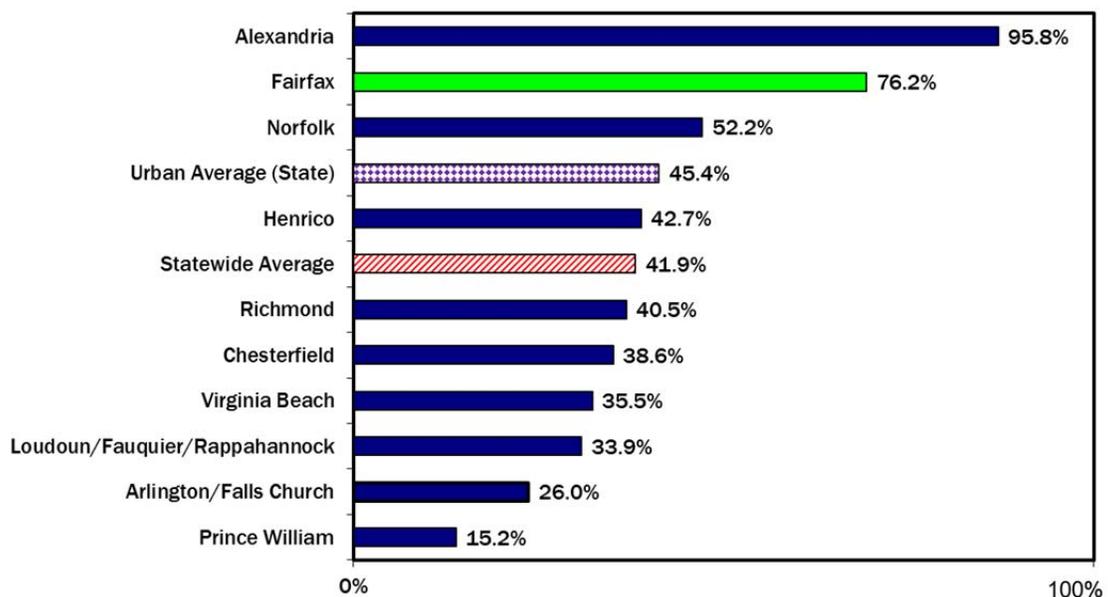
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JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION: Judicial Administration Cost Per Capita



Source: Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts - FY 2012 Data

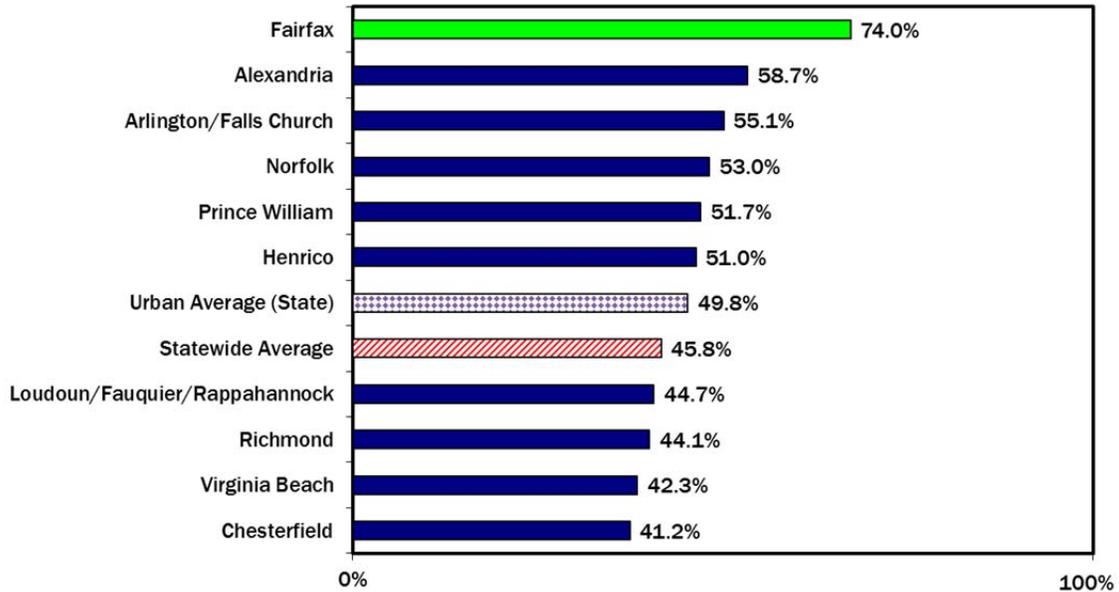
JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION: Percent Circuit Court Felonies Tried/ Adjudicated Within 120 Days of Arrest



Source: 2012 State of the Judiciary Report

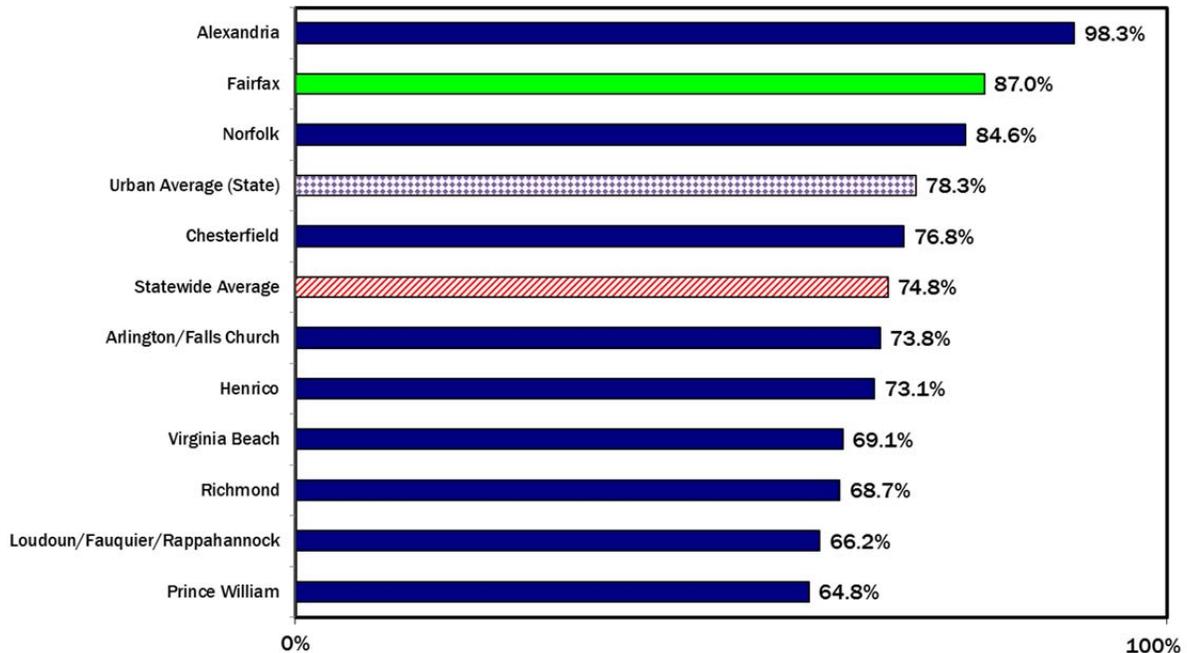
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JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION: Percent Circuit Court Misdemeanors Tried/ Adjudicated Within 60 Days of Arrest



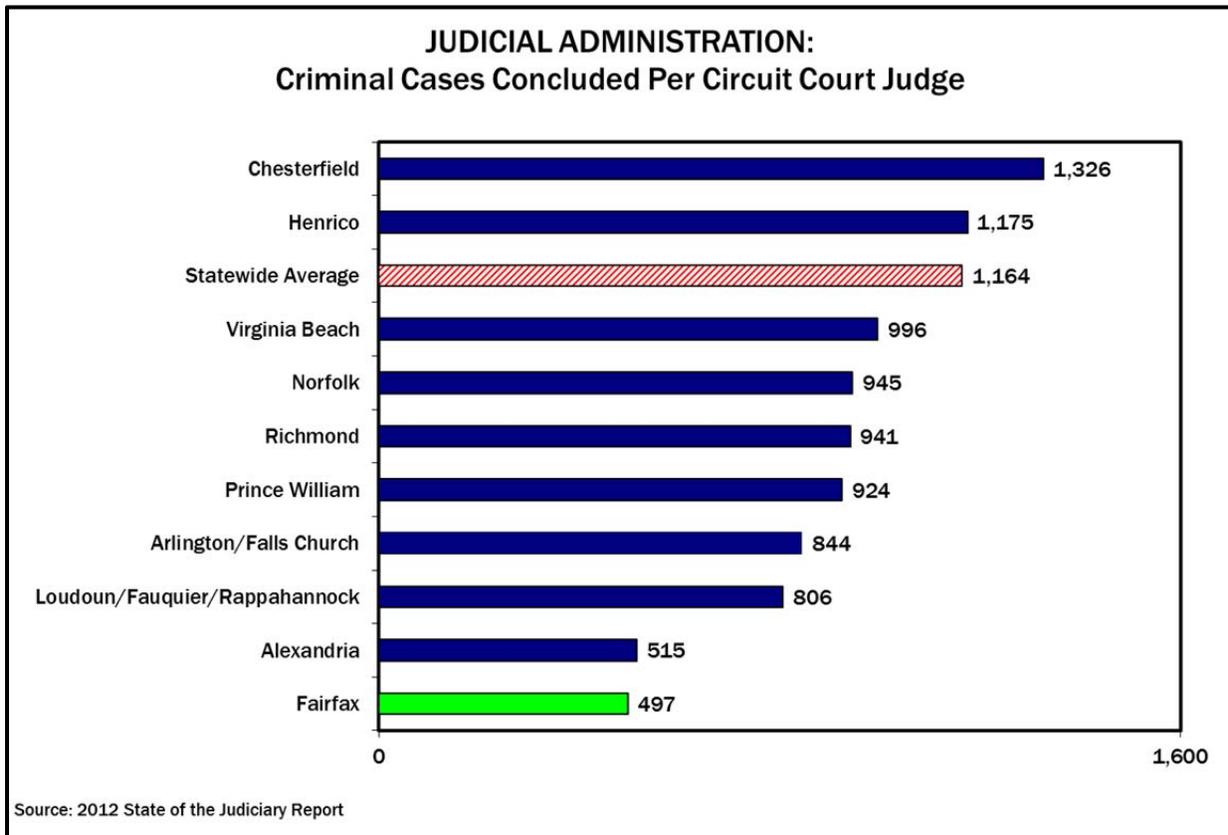
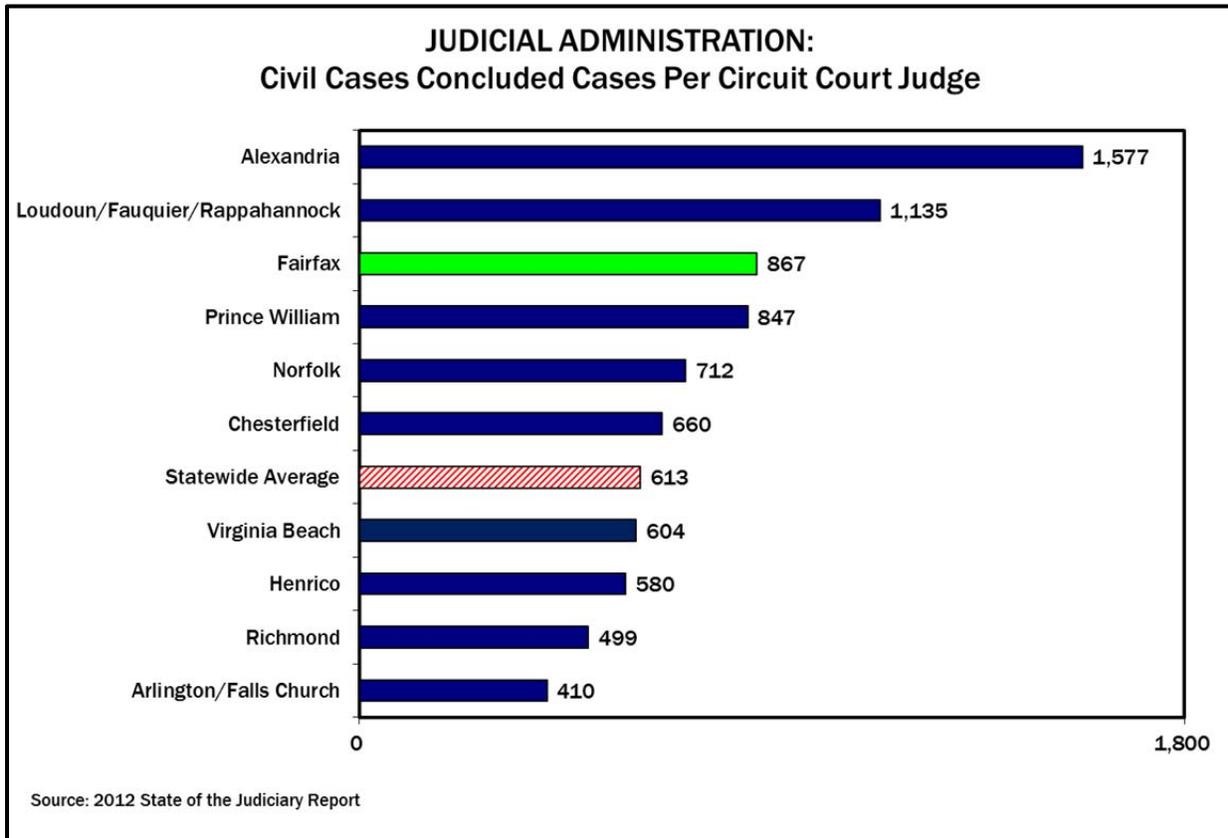
Source: 2012 State of the Judiciary Report

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION: Percent Circuit Court Civil Cases Concluded Within 12 Months of Filing

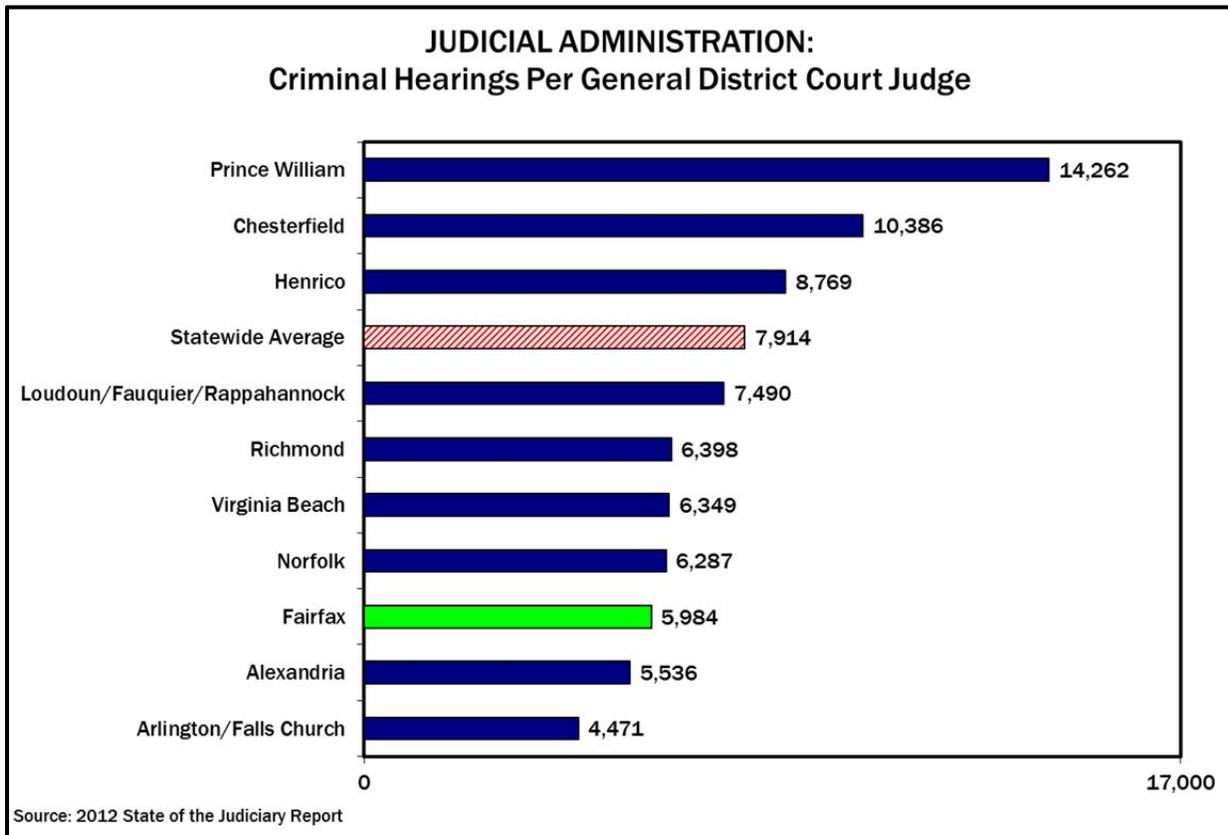
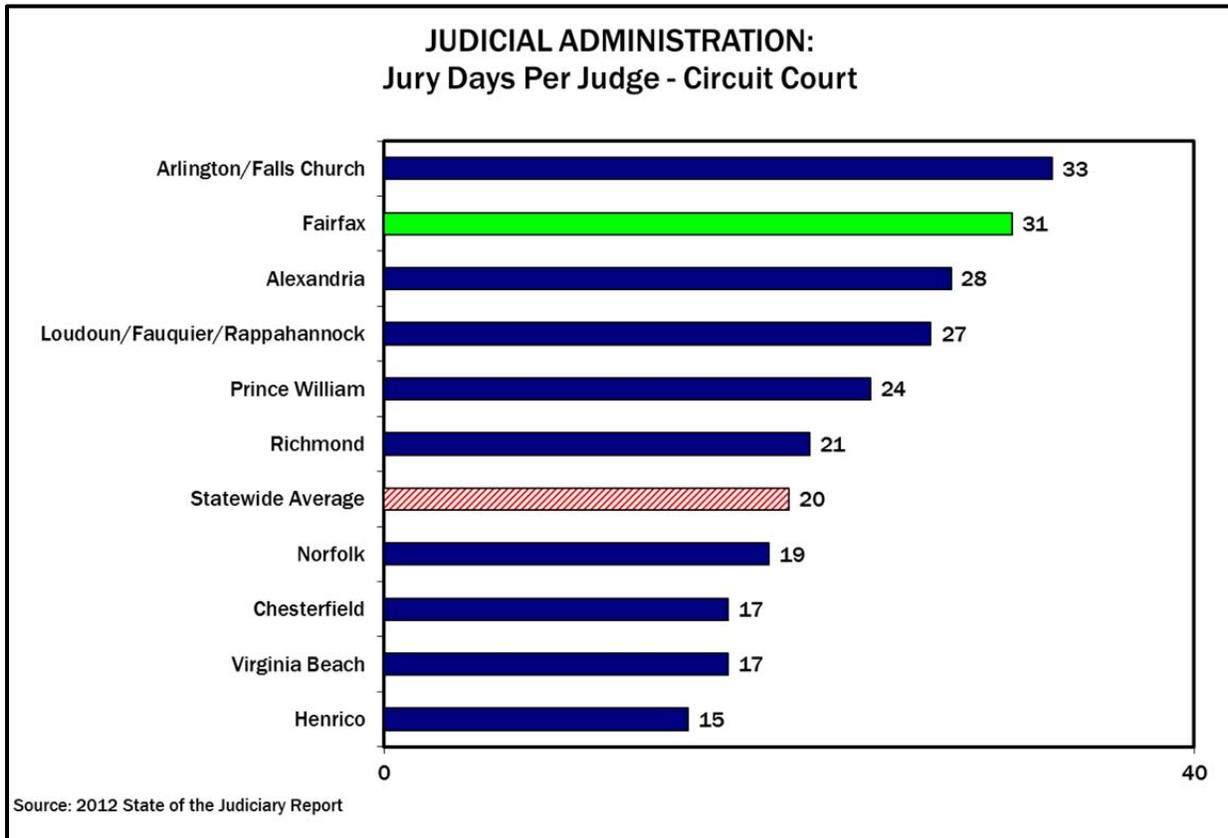


Source: 2012 State of the Judiciary Report

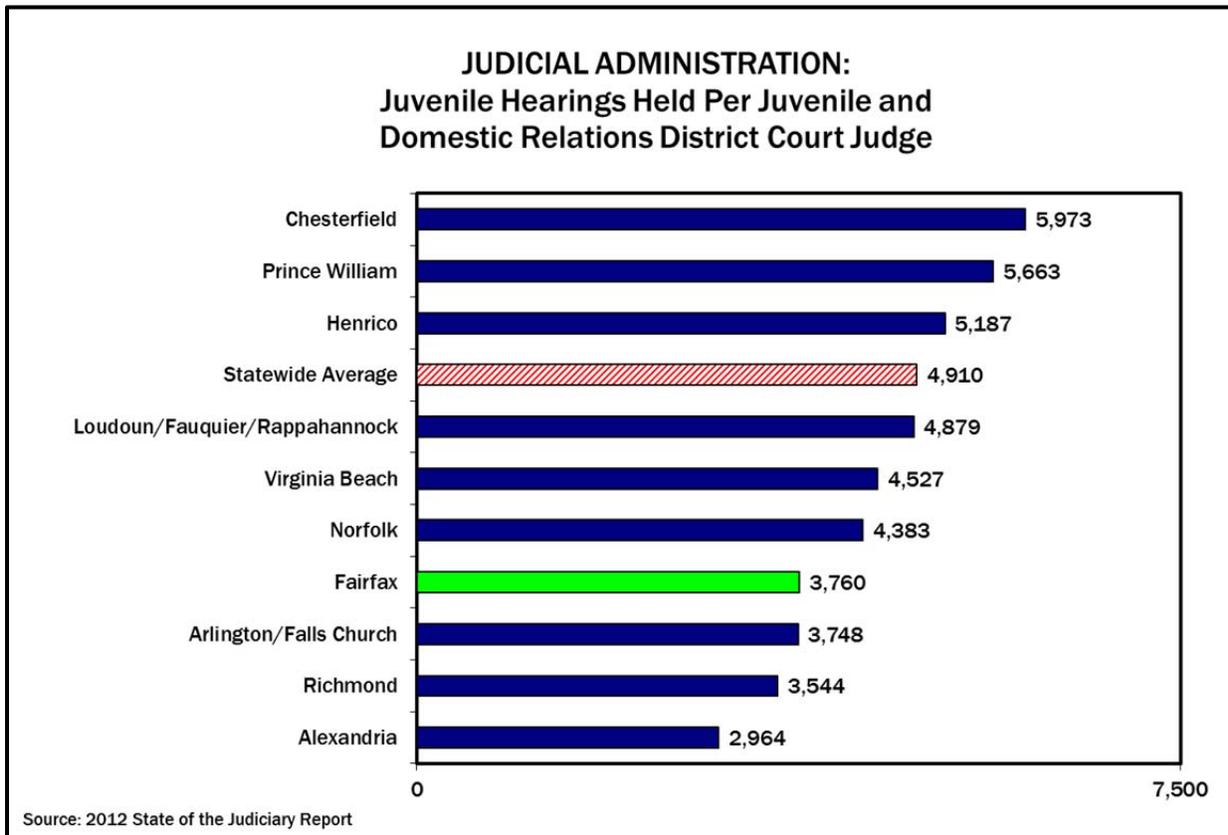
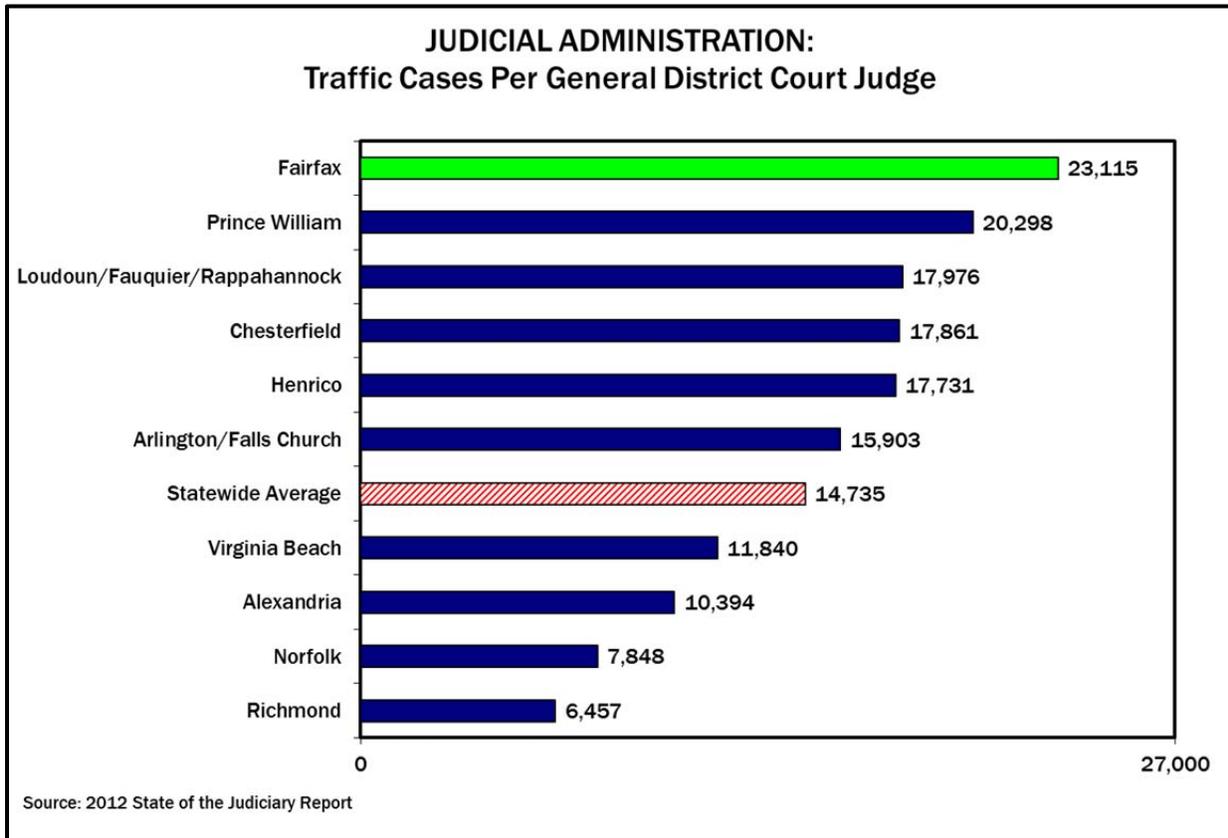
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