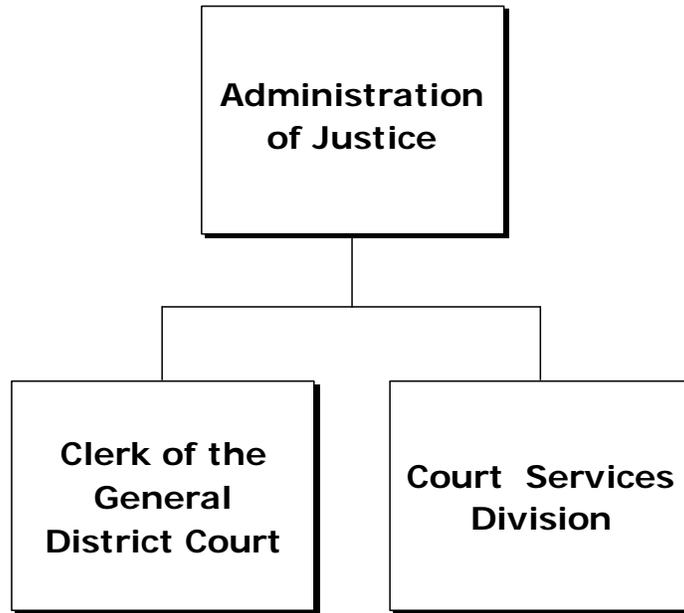


General District Court



Mission

To provide equal access for the fair and timely resolution of court cases. The Court Services Division serves the Courts and the community by providing information, client supervision and a wide range of services in a professional manner while advocating public safety.

AGENCY DASHBOARD			
Key Data	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
1. Average Daily Caseload per Probation Counselor (Includes Supervised Release Program and Probation Cases)	105	102	104
2. Number of Record Checks Conducted	27,108	27,196	26,604
3. Pretrial Interviews/Investigations Conducted	5,742	5,960	5,433
4. Court Caseload	313,369	310,883	313,055
5. Percent Total Operating Budget Allocated to Mandated Services & Computer Services	79	79	79
6. Estimated Cost Savings to County through Supervision	\$4,254,586	\$4,715,800	\$5,187,380

General District Court

Focus

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.

**General District Court supports
the following County Vision Element:**

 **Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities**

The General District Court is part of the judicial branch of the state government. Its judges and clerical staff that comprise the Civil Division, Criminal Division, Traffic Division, and Administration are entirely state funded. The Court Services Division (CSD), however, is funded primarily with County funds and supplemented by state grants and all of its positions are County merit positions. The CSD is composed of four units, the Pretrial Evaluation Unit, the Supervision Unit (Supervised Release Program and Probation Program), the Administrative Unit, and the Volunteer/Intern Unit. 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).

County and state financial constraints and limited grant funding affect staffing and the level of service that the agency can provide. Increases in caseload and legislative changes also have a major impact on how the Court operates. Since all of these factors are outside the Court's control, it is often difficult to anticipate trends and future needs.

The following chart highlights the General District Court's total caseload from FY 2012 through FY 2016 (estimated).

Type of Case	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Estimate	FY 2016 Estimate
Criminal	25,612	25,244	24,615	24,615	24,615
Traffic	242,374	243,719	249,280	260,000	270,000
Civil	45,383	41,920	39,160	39,160	39,160
TOTAL	313,369	310,883	313,055	323,775	333,775

The agency has identified four key drivers that impact future initiatives and guide the Court Services Division's goals and objectives. All are carefully aligned with the mission of the Court: to provide access and fair resolution of court cases while advocating public safety.

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Staffing and Resources: The operation of CSD depends on funding from the County and from state grants from the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). In FY 2014, funding remained relatively flat; however, it's anticipated that a reduction in aid to localities in FY 2015 will effectively decrease the amount of grant funding by \$30,000 - \$40,000, which will likely result in the loss of a position.

Grant awards for the Comprehensive Community Corrections and Pretrial Services were reduced in FY 2011 by 5.46 percent (\$39,969) 5.5 percent (\$40,697) in FY 2012, and 4.65 percent (\$33,980) in FY 2013. To manage these reductions in grant aid and the rising costs of fringe benefits, three grant positions (one full-time Probation Counselor II, one part-time Probation Counselor I, and one part-time Administrative Assistant II) were eliminated during FY 2011. One grant position (full-time Probation Counselor II) was eliminated in FY 2013 and later re-established as a non-merit position when state funding levels increased. Reductions impact services to both clients and the courts.

Due to limited staffing, the average caseload per Probation Counselor continues to significantly exceed the state average, which directly increases the potential for error in supervision and the risk to public safety.

Caseload: The average daily caseload per probation counselor has increased 22 percent since FY 2009, reaching a total of 104 cases per probation counselor in FY 2014 compared to 85 cases per probation counselor in FY 2009. This equates to 32 intensive Supervised Release Program (SRP) cases *in addition to* 72 Probation cases per Probation Counselor which far exceeds the state standard of 40 SRP cases *or* 60 Probation cases, *but not both*. With the addition of two new Probation Counselor II positions that were approved by the Board as part of the FY 2016 Adopted Budget Plan the caseload per probation officer is expected to decrease to an estimated 27 SRP cases and 60 Probation cases in FY 2016, amounts that still exceed the state standard. Further, it should be noted that these additional positions will support the recently initiated Veterans Treatment Docket, a court-supervised comprehensive treatment program for the Veteran population which requires intensive supervision and often suffers from substance abuse, mental health and/or post-traumatic stress disorder. These are the first new positions to be awarded since FY 2006. While the actual number of referrals may increase and decrease each year, this indicator takes into account the actual number of days of supervision each referral required.

Cost-Saving Programs: The cost-saving Supervision Unit saves the County an estimated \$3 million per year through the Supervised Release Program (SRP) alone. This program provides intensive supervision and monitoring of lower risk defendants who might otherwise remain in jail while awaiting trial. Assuming that just 5 percent of the inmate population after conviction was on placed on probation rather than being incarcerated, the savings to the County is estimated at over \$2 million per year, due to the reduction in costs to house inmates in the Adult Detention Center.

The SRP program serves Circuit Court and the Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court and also enables qualified defendants to return to the community and maintain employment and family responsibilities, in addition to alleviating overcrowding in the ADC.

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	Supervised Release Program	Probation
Number of placements	1,041	1,252
Number of active supervision days	115,705	263,165
Percent of defendants likely to remain incarcerated without SRP	15%	5%
Estimated jail days saved	17,356	13,158
Cost to house inmate for one day	\$170	\$170
Savings to County (Estimated)	\$2,950,520	\$2,236,860

See Performance Measurements for more detail on Supervised Release Program (SRP) and Probation Program statistics.

The Volunteer Unit recorded 3,218 hours performed by volunteers in FY 2014, equal to almost two full-time positions. Volunteers conducted 4,162 client interviews for eligibility for court appointed attorneys, a total similar to the previous year. Since the loss of the Volunteer Coordinator position in FY 2008 due to funding shortages, the hours performed by volunteers have dropped almost 60 percent (7,901 hours in FY 2008 to 3,218 hours in FY 2014).

Shared Resources: Criminal Record Specialists in the Pretrial Evaluation Unit were the primary providers of mandated criminal record checks, rather than the arresting officer, which allows police to return to their public safety duties more quickly. Criminal record checks were also provided to the judiciary of the General District Court, Circuit Court, and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (JDRDC) to assist with bond determination, and to the Alcohol Safety Action Program (ASAP), the Opportunities, Alternatives & Resources Program (OAR), and the Court Services Supervision Unit who determine eligibility for placement into various programs and monitor that no further criminal activity occurs. Criminal Record Specialists provided 26,604 criminal record checks in FY 2014, down 2 percent compared to 27,196 record checks in FY 2013, mainly for police seeking criminal arrest warrants.

The agency's only Network Telecommunications Analyst II position joined a shared Court Department of Information Technology (Court DIT) team in order to improve efficiencies among the General District Court and the Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court.

Community Resources: Additional critical and effective CSD programs for the community include Mental Health Competency/Sanity Monitoring Service, Protective Order Tracking Service, the Alcohol Diversion Program (ADP), and the Driving on Suspended Program (DOS). Fluctuations in referrals, enrollments, and totals collected are not synonymous with changes in caseload per probation officer. In fact, a significant increase in caseload per probation counselor has been reported in recent years, despite decreases in referrals, in some cases.

Mental Health case monitoring, a time intensive caseload, has increased 48 percent over four years (89 defendants tracked in FY 2014 from 60 in FY 2011). Monitoring of mental health defendants by probation staff provides a liaison between defense attorneys, the courts, and mental health staff to ensure a timely completion of mental health/sanity evaluations. In FY 2013 and FY 2012, 80 and 70 defendants were tracked respectively.

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Protective Order Tracking Program clients decreased by 31 percent in FY 2014 from the previous year (91 clients monitored in FY 2013 to 63 clients in FY 2014) with high risk behavior to ensure that judges were properly advised in cases where protective orders were authorized to protect victims of stalking or other violent crimes.

The highly effective DOS program served almost 7 percent more clients (359 clients in FY 2014 compared to 337 in FY 2013) by assisting participants in preparing for and navigating through requirements for license reinstatement.

The ADP program clients decreased 45 percent from the previous year (248 ADP clients in FY 2013 compared to 137 in FY 2014) attributed to less underage drinking charges, often issued at concerts attended by college students. Institution of an on-campus diversion program reflects the reduction in cases handled by probation staff.

Restitution collections totaled \$322,995 in FY 2014, an 11 percent drop from \$362,886 in FY 2013 and community service hours performed decreased almost 47 percent (8,032 hours in FY 2013 to 4,229 in FY 2014) along with a slight decrease in probation cases.

Diversity: Interpreter assignments increased 34 percent over three years due to increasing diversity of clients and increased access and awareness of language services (1,132 assignments in FY 2014, compared to 969 in FY 2013, and 846 in FY 2012). The CSD staff manages interpretation services for languages other than Spanish, including sign-language. Recruitment of bilingual probation counselors allows for effective management of the caseload of Spanish speaking clients and ensures equitable services are provided.

Court appointed attorneys are assigned to indigent defendants to ensure they have adequate legal representation when conviction could result in jail time. Attorney assignments were slightly higher in FY 2014 as compared to FY 2013 (14,015 appointments in FY 2014 from 13,031 in FY 2013), but still well below peak levels during the height of the recession.

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Budget and Staff Resources¹

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Adopted	FY 2015 Revised	FY 2016 Advertised	FY 2016 Adopted
FUNDING					
Expenditures:					
Personnel Services	\$1,232,931	\$1,274,759	\$1,262,011	\$1,316,933	\$1,471,873
Operating Expenses	854,539	961,772	1,070,927	898,972	898,972
Capital Equipment	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$2,087,470	\$2,236,531	\$2,332,938	\$2,215,905	\$2,370,845
Income:					
Courthouse Maintenance Fees	\$407,791	\$419,439	\$407,791	\$407,791	\$407,791
General District Court Fines/Interest	127,574	96,000	127,574	127,574	127,574
General District Court Fines	7,875,886	8,307,930	7,088,297	7,088,297	7,088,297
Recovered Costs - General District Court	106,418	125,275	106,418	106,418	106,418
State Reimbursement - General District Court	98,173	85,265	85,265	85,265	85,265
Total Income	\$8,615,842	\$9,033,909	\$7,815,345	\$7,815,345	\$7,815,345
NET COST TO THE COUNTY	(\$6,528,372)	(\$6,797,378)	(\$5,482,407)	(\$5,599,440)	(\$5,444,500)
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)					
Regular	21 / 21	21 / 21	21 / 21	21 / 21	23 / 23
State	94 / 91.1	94 / 91.1	94 / 91.1	94 / 91.1	94 / 91.1

¹ It should be noted that Personnel Services-related costs for state positions are totally funded by the state; however, the County does provide partial Operating Expenses and Capital Equipment support for these positions.

<u>Administration of Justice</u>	<u>Clerk of the General District Court</u>	<u>Court Services Division</u>
1 Chief Judge S	1 Clerk of the General District Court S	1 Manager, Gen. Dist. Court Services
10 General District Judges S	1 Chief Deputy Clerk S	1 Probation Supervisor II
1 Secretary S	3 Division Supervisors S	1 Probation Counselor III
	5 Staff Analysts S, 1 PT	6 Probation Counselors II (2)
	11 Section Supervisors S	5 Probation Counselors I
	61 Deputy Clerks S, 6 PT	1 Administrative Assistant IV
		1 Administrative Assistant III
		5 Administrative Assistants II
		1 Network/Telecom. Analyst II
		1 Management Analyst II
TOTAL POSITIONS		
117 Positions (2) / 114.1 FTE (2.0)		

S Denotes State Positions
PT Denotes Part-time Positions
() Denotes New Positions

This department has 8/8.0 FTE Grant Positions in Fund 50000, Federal-State Grants.

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FY 2016 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2015 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2016 program. Included are all adjustments recommended by the County Executive that were approved by the Board of Supervisors, as well as any additional Board of Supervisors' actions, as approved in the adoption of the budget on April 28, 2015.

◆ **Employee Compensation** **\$45,450**

An increase of \$45,450 in Personnel Services includes \$13,864 for a 1.10 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and \$31,586 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2015.

◆ **Additional Probation Counselor Positions** **\$151,664**

An increase of \$151,664 in Personnel Services and 2/2.0 FTE Probation Counselor II positions is primarily associated with the establishment of the Fairfax County Veterans Treatment Docket, a court-supervised, comprehensive treatment program that was initiated in February 2015. The Veterans Docket is intended to provide a coordinated treatment response for the Veteran population which often requires intensive supervision and suffers from substance abuse, mental health and/or post-traumatic stress disorder. These positions will also help support existing pre-trial Supervised Release Program clients as well as post-trial Probation Services clients. With additional probation counselors, the ratio of probation counselor to cases (clients) becomes slightly more manageable and decreases the risk to the community. It should be noted that an increase of \$59,499 is included in Agency 89, Employee Benefits for a total cost of \$211,163. For further information on Fringe Benefits, please refer to Agency 89, Employee Benefits narrative in the Nondepartmental program area section of Volume 1.

◆ **Reductions** **(\$62,800)**

A decrease of \$62,800 reflects the following reductions utilized to balance the FY 2016 budget. The following table provides details on the specific reductions:

Title	Impact	Posn	FTE	Reduction
Reduce Legal Services Operating Budget	A reduction of \$60,000 in the Legal Services budget will have a manageable impact on the agency and public as long as current expenditure levels in this category are maintained. Expenditures fund court appointed attorneys who represent indigent defendants in criminal matters before the court. During the height of the recession, the number of appointments increased significantly. As the economy has improved, expenditure requirements have decreased.	0	0.00	\$60,000

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Title	Impact	Posn	FTE	Reduction
Reduce Printing and Copying Supplies	This reduction is associated with a countywide policy decision being implemented to reduce the volume of printing and copying documents over a multi-year period. This was a common and recurring theme brought forward by employees as part of the Mission Savings process in Fall 2014. Agencies are being directed to review internal printing policies and reduce the use of individual desktop printers by utilizing the Multi-Functional Devices (MFDs) available throughout County buildings. In addition, agencies are being directed to reduce paper and toner consumption by only printing documents when necessary and by printing materials double-sided whenever possible.	0	0.00	\$2,800

Changes to FY 2015 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2015 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2015 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2014 Carryover Review, FY 2015 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 30, 2015.

- ◆ **Carryover Adjustments** **\$122,781**
 As part of the *FY 2014 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved funding of \$122,781, including encumbered funding of \$116,548 primarily for building maintenance and repair services as well as carpet and furniture not covered in the courthouse renovation project and unencumbered funding of \$6,233 to be reinvested in employee training, conferences and other employee development and succession planning opportunities.
- ◆ **Third Quarter Adjustments** **(\$20,000)**
 As part of the *FY 2015 Third Quarter Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved a net reduction of \$20,000 to generate one-time savings primarily to make a down payment on the recommended changes to the County's reserve policies.
- ◆ **Incentive Reinvestment Initiative** **(\$6,374)**
 A net decrease of \$6,374 reflects 50 percent of the savings generated as the result of careful management of agency expenditures during the fiscal year and was returned to the General Fund as part of the *FY 2015 Third Quarter Review*. The remaining 50 percent was retained by the agency to be reinvested in employee training, conferences and other employee development and succession planning opportunities.

General District Court

Key Performance Measures

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Estimate/Actual	FY 2015	FY 2016
General District Court					
Percent of staff recommendations accepted by the Judiciary	97%	98%	96%/99%	96%	96%
Percent of SRP cases successfully closed	89%	86%	86%/87%	86%	86%
Percent of probation cases successfully closed	77%	77%	75%/79%	75%	75%

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fy2016/adopted/pm/85.pdf

Performance Measurement Results

All services provided by the Court Services Division (CSD) address the agency mission. CSD provides information on incarcerated defendants, provides pretrial and post-trial community supervision, manages the court-appointed attorney system for indigent defendants, manages interpretation services for the non-English speaking and hearing impaired population, manages volunteer services, and answers questions about the judicial process for the public.

Pretrial Investigations

The Pretrial Evaluation Unit provides critical information about defendants to the judiciary (magistrates and judges) in order to assist them in making informed decisions about defendants' release/detention status. The investigation process has several components: defendant's interview, phone calls to references (family, employers, neighbors, etc.), and extensive record checks to include the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Virginia Crime Information Network (VCIN), local criminal records, DMV, and court records throughout the Commonwealth for pending charges. In FY 2014, pretrial investigations decreased by approximately 9 percent from FY 2013 (5,960 in in FY 2013 to 5,433 in FY 2014) due to a decrease in referrals and magistrates releasing individuals later in the process so that investigations were not required. The percent of staff bond recommendations accepted by the Judiciary continue to exceed the 96 percent target.

Supervised Release Program (SRP) and Probation Program

For two consecutive years, there has been a 5 percent increase in placements into the Supervised Release Program (SRP) primarily by magistrates or General District Court judges (1,041 new placements in FY 2014 compared to 985 in FY 2013 and 930 in FY 2012). The program provides intensive supervision and monitoring of lower risk defendants who might otherwise remain in jail while awaiting trial. In FY 2014, the percent of SRP cases successfully closed was 87 percent, exceeding the target of 86 percent for this measure.

The Probation Counselors in the Probation Unit supervise both SRP clients and those referred to probation at the final court date by court order. Probation Counselors are required to see defendants either bi-monthly or weekly and must conduct weekly telephone check-ins and random drug testing. With each contact, it is strongly reinforced to the defendant that, to successfully complete the program, there must be no new violations of the law and that they must appear for all court dates. Probation caseloads decreased approximately 3 percent in FY 2014 (1,252 cases in FY 2014 compared to 1,286 in

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FY 2013), coinciding with a similar decrease in criminal arrests. The percent of probation cases successfully closed increased to 79 percent, exceeding the target of 75 percent by 4 percentage points.

Caseloads in SRP and Probation vary from year to year based on the number and types of arrests; however, the general trend has been growth in both of these program areas over a multiple year period.