



**ARLINGTON**  
VIRGINIA

# Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney

## COUNTY MANAGER'S PROPOSED FY 2023 BUDGET

**County Board Work Session**

Thursday, March 17, 2022

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm





# Our Mission

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“The Office of the Commonwealth’s Attorney for Arlington County and the City of Falls Church pursues justice holistically on behalf of victims, defendants, and all members of our community. We prioritize public safety, transparency, and accountability. We strive to incorporate data-driven practices to inform our policies, while also seeking restoration by engaging with victims of crime and the community to repair harm.”

*--Parisa Dehghani-Tafti*

Commonwealth’s Attorney

# Achievements



Significant Trials  
and Pleas



Victim  
Services



Transforming  
Justice



Focus on Equity



# Significant Trials and Pleas

## Significant Trials

- 15 jury trials in FY 2022
- **Marshall Stephens, Jr.:** Guilty verdict of 1<sup>st</sup> degree murder in case where father murdered son
- **Humberto Ajanel-Sanic:** Guilty verdict, life sentence for child sex case/sodomy
- **Salodus Hicks:** Guilty verdict, life sentence for second of subsequent rape

## Significant Pleas

- **Michael Nash:** Good Samaritan murder, 40-year sentence with 5 years and 1 month suspended
- **Franklin Lambright:** Purple Lounge murder, sentencing pending
- **Michael Thompson:** Serial rape, 30-year-old cold case

## Investigative Grand Juries

- **Andrea Cincotta:** Murder for hire, 23-year-old cold case





# Transforming Justice

- Working with the **Justice Policy Institute** to reimagine **restitution for victims**
- Implementing **Heart of Safety** with Restorative Arlington
- First-ever diversion grant from Bureau of Justice Administration with the **Smart Prosecution Grant**
- Partnering with the **Pretrial Justice Institute** to collaborate with the **Arlington County Sheriff's Office and the Public Defender's Office** on the pretrial system to ensure the maximum amount of pretrial liberty while prioritizing public safety.
- Growing the **Behavioral Health Docket**



# Transforming Justice

- Partnering with the VERA Institute's **Motion for Justice** to reduce racial disparities
- Partnering with **OAR** as part of Motion for Justice program, helped obtain a \$75,000 grant for diversion
- Establishing a **Conviction Review Unit**, the first of its kind in a Commonwealth's Attorney's Office in Virginia
- Creating a **Pilot Project** to handle body worn camera (BWC) video more efficiently and cost effectively



# Victim Services

- **59%** of victims served by our office received direct services, and **41%** of victims received indirect services
- Participating in **Restorative Arlington** victim listening sessions
- Providing **training** to stakeholders on Arlington County's **SART** (Sexual Assault Response Team) protocols
- Participating in **training** to better serve victims, witnesses, and community members with disabilities



**Restorative Arlington**



# Focus on Equity

- **Staff initiated and led anti-racism work group:** uncover racial inequality, encourage full-fledged honesty, and remedy disparities in the criminal justice system
- Collaborated with **Georgetown University's School of Continuing Studies** on a report with recommendations for increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion in our office's recruitment and hiring practices
- Participation in **Leading with RACE** course
- Participation in **OAR Racial Justice and Liberation Cohort**





# FY 2023 Budget Highlights

- The **\$37,500** annual Evidence.com software payment in this budget will enable prosecutors to review and redact nearly **15,000** hours of video evidence for misdemeanor, felony, and serious traffic crimes.
- The addition of **5.0 FTE** in this budget is necessary to handle the significantly higher workload created by the County's **body worn camera program**.

# FY 2023 Budget Summary

|                 | FY 2022<br>Adopted | FY 2023<br>Proposed | Change     | %<br>Change |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Expenses</b> | \$5,246,727        | \$5,838,300         | +\$591,573 | +11.3%      |
| <b>Revenue</b>  | \$1,928,052        | \$2,080,373         | +\$152,321 | +7.9%       |
| <b>Staff</b>    | 42.00 FTEs         | 47.00 FTEs          | +5.0 FTEs  | +11.9%      |

*The staffing increase is due primarily to the increased workload for prosecutors and paralegals of the body worn camera program.*



# Key Budget Considerations

- An estimated **14,860 hours of body worn camera video evidence** will be viewed and redacted by our prosecutors in FY 2023, **equivalent to the working hours of 8 FTE attorneys.**
- **The transition of the Conviction Review Attorney** to a permanent FTE is necessary to continue review of post-conviction DNA cases, ensuring due process and law enforcement accountability, and responding to FOIA requests



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