

Our Mission: To ensure that Circuit Court records are easily accessible and maintained in an orderly and secure fashion; that the public is fully and fairly served; and that justice is administered promptly and without favor to any party.

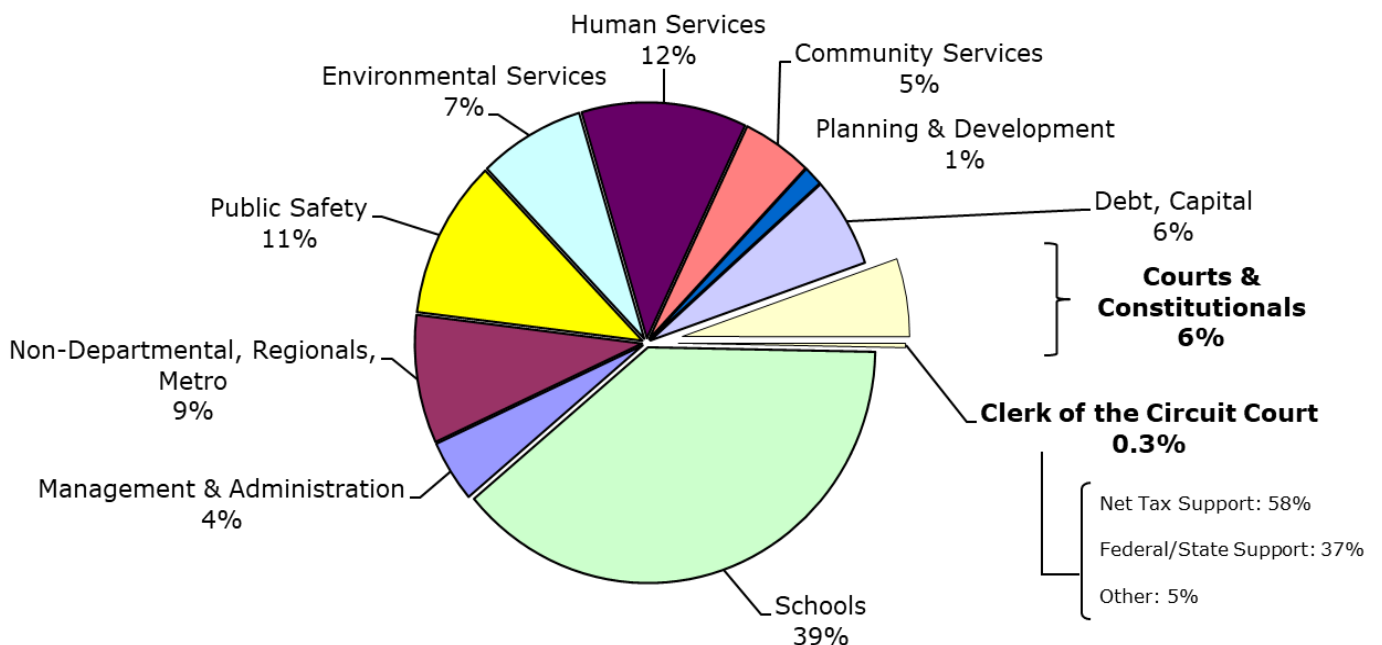
The Clerk of the Circuit Court (the Clerk) is an elected constitutional office in each county and large city in Virginia. The Clerk of Court handles a variety of functions necessary for the efficient administration of justice in the Circuit Court for Arlington County and the City of Falls Church.

The Clerk is the official recorder of Circuit Court civil and criminal court proceedings. The Clerk issues marriage licenses, notary certifications, concealed handgun permits, and similar documents and admits wills and other testamentary documents to probate. The Clerk creates and maintains all civil, criminal, and probate court files and records of proceedings; issues summons and court process; prepares court orders; and summons petit and grand jurors for jury service. The Clerk collects and disseminates criminal fines, costs, and restitution.

The Land Records Division of the Clerk’s Office is responsible for recording and maintaining deeds, judgments, and other documents affecting title to real property located in Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In addition, the Land Records Division assesses and collects required recordation taxes and fees and is responsible for filing and maintaining records of judgments and Uniform Commercial Code Financing Statements.

The Clerk’s Office utilizes an electronic records management system for both its court and land records systems which provide users with the ability to e-file case documents and pleadings and e-record land records documents.

FY 2025 Proposed Budget - General Fund Expenditures



LINES OF BUSINESS

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Circuit Court Clerk's Office

SIGNIFICANT BUDGET CHANGES

The FY 2025 proposed expenditure budget for the Clerk of the Circuit Court is \$4,673,456, a two percent increase from the FY 2024 adopted budget. The proposed budget reflects:

- ↑ Personnel increases due to employee salary increases, an increase in the County's cost for employee health insurance, slightly higher retirement contributions based on current actuarial projections, and salary adjustments resulting from the Judicial and Legal Services and the Accounting, Fiscal, Revenue Services and Financial job family studies (\$108,063), partially offset by the removal of one-time funding for FY 2024 employee bonuses (\$85,830).
- ↓ Non-personnel decreases due to an increase in the contract for the land records system (\$59,648), other contractual increases (\$4,020), and a statutory increase in juror compensation (\$50,000), partially offset by the removal of one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$38,585), and the budget reductions itemized below.
- ↑ Fee revenues increase due to higher projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2025 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$45,500) and an increase in Sheriff fees (\$1,500), partially offset by a reduction in E-ticket fines (\$2,200).
- ↑ Grant revenues increase due to higher Compensation Board revenue (\$46,000) and a statutory increase for juror compensation (\$50,000), partially offset by the removal of one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$38,585).

FY 2025 Proposed Budget Reduction

- ↓ Reduction of Non-Personnel Budget - Reduce expenditures related to training, data processing, operating equipment, and equipment repair (\$100,188)
IMPACT: These reductions will limit technology trainings and certifications for staff, reduce the number of historical records that are scanned and digitally accessible to constituents, and require the Clerk's office to request additional funding for any system upgrades as well as service and repair of equipment.

DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted	FY 2025 Proposed	% Change '24 to '25
Personnel	\$3,457,360	\$3,715,175	\$3,810,612	3%
Non-Personnel	654,945	887,949	862,844	-3%
Total Expenditures	4,112,305	4,603,124	4,673,456	2%
Fees	215,946	238,294	283,094	19%
Grants	1,428,290	1,647,985	1,705,400	3%
Total Revenues	1,644,236	1,886,279	1,988,494	5%
Net Tax Support	\$2,468,069	\$2,716,845	\$2,684,962	-1%
Permanent FTEs	34.50	34.50	34.50	
Temporary FTEs	-	-		
Total Authorized FTEs	34.50	34.50	34.50	

PROGRAM MISSION

To ensure that Circuit Court records are accessible and maintained in an orderly and secure fashion; that the public is fully and fairly served; and that justice is administered promptly and without favor to any party or litigant.

- Process civil and criminal filings properly before the Court.
- Collect and disburse statutory fees, fines, penalties, and restitution payments.
- Summon jurors for civil and criminal trials and grand juries.
- Process marriage license applications, name change applications, business trade names, concealed handgun permits, and other matters specified in the Code of Virginia.
- Handle probate and related matters.
- Maintain records of court proceedings, land transactions, judgments, and all other matters for which public records must be retained by the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Critical Measures	CY 2020 Actual	CY 2021 Actual	CY 2022 Actual	CY 2023 Actual	CY 2024 Estimate
Land records documents recorded	46,662	53,084	21,254	15,975	18,000
Land records documents recorded electronically	18,402	47,144	18,520	12,904	16,200
Jurors (petit, special, and grand) summoned	10,489	18,810	17,090	16,723	17,000
Civil cases filed	3,820	5,073	4,485	4,553	4,500
Criminal cases filed	4,050	3,359	3,702	3,894	3,700
Court documents scanned	74,222	65,731	69,727	68,956	72,000
Court documents filed electronically	16,042	32,190	25,213	24,135	20,000
Court orders generated electronically	4,588	3,058	3,884	3,194	3,600

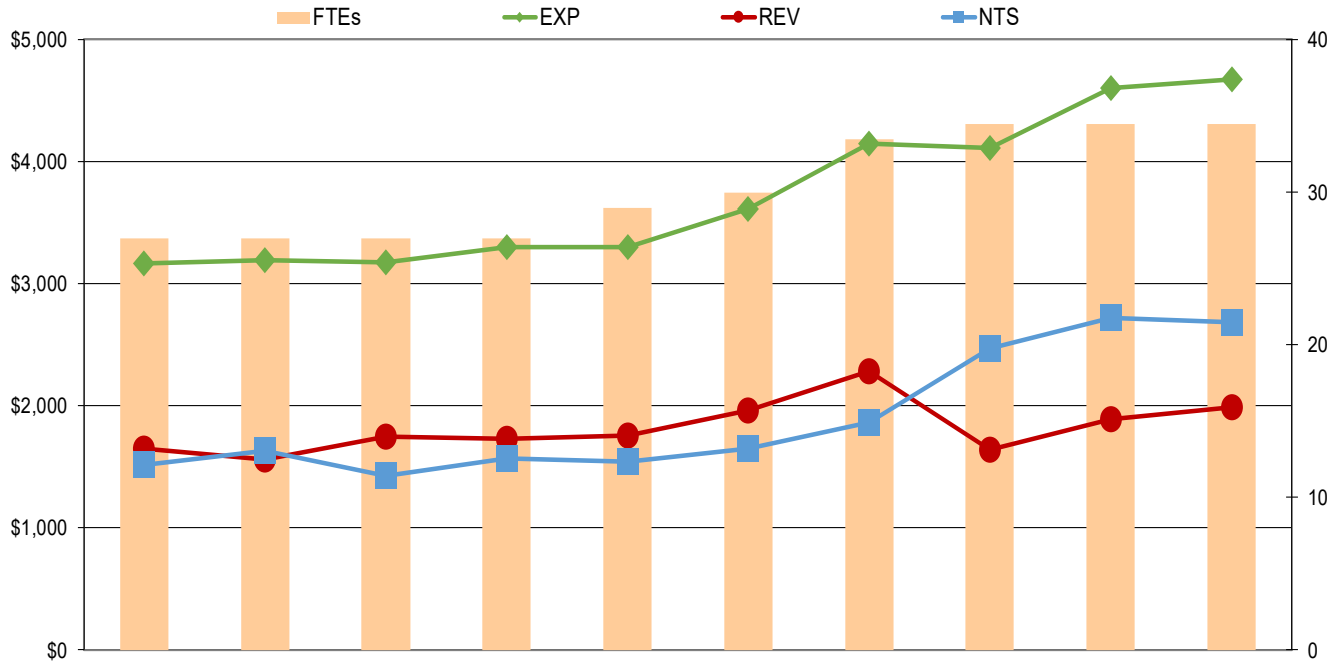
- Land transactions in Arlington County decreased again in CY 2023. This drop is likely due to high interest rates, which resulted in fewer property sales and refinancing. The percentage of land records documents that were recorded electronically decreased slightly from 87% to 81%.
- Civil cases filed in CY 2023 remained steady and were close to the historical high that was reached after successive years of civil filing increases.

Supporting Measures	CY 2020 Actual	CY 2021 Actual	CY 2022 Actual	CY 2023 Actual	CY 2024 Estimate
Concealed handgun permits issued	1,966	1,209	1,255	1,201	1,200
Judgments docketed	3,864	4,800	4,926	4,189	4,800
Financing statements filed	360	484	394	423	400
Financing statements filed electronically	196	284	204	281	280

CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S OFFICE

Supporting Measures	CY 2020 Actual	CY 2021 Actual	CY 2022 Actual	CY 2023 Actual	CY 2024 Estimate
Marriage licenses issued	1,358	1,516	1,243	1,428	1,400
Notaries sworn	822	1,014	962	860	900
Wills probated	702	736	704	729	700

EXPENDITURE, REVENUE, NET TAX SUPPORT AND FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT TRENDS



	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
\$ in 000s	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Adopted Budget	Proposed Budget
EXP	\$3,167	\$3,195	\$3,177	\$3,296	\$3,301	\$3,616	\$4,144	\$4,112	\$4,603	\$4,673
REV	\$1,653	\$1,560	\$1,749	\$1,727	\$1,757	\$1,963	\$2,283	\$1,644	\$1,886	\$1,988
NTS	\$1,514	\$1,635	\$1,427	\$1,569	\$1,544	\$1,653	\$1,861	\$2,468	\$2,717	\$2,685
FTEs	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00	29.00	30.00	33.50	34.50	34.50	34.50

Fiscal Year	Description	FTEs
FY 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fee revenue decreased due to decline in number of land records documents recorded related to the leveling of mortgage refinancing (\$200,000), offset by increased fines (\$10,500) and increased Falls Church reimbursements (\$1,546). 	
FY 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The County Board added one-time funding to upgrade jury phone and questionnaire scanning systems (\$55,000). ▪ Decreased fee revenue due to a reduction in miscellaneous fees (\$40,000). ▪ Increased fee revenue due to higher projections in excess copy fees (\$10,000). ▪ Increased fee revenue due to higher projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2017 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$6,170). ▪ Increased revenue due to higher projections in e-ticket fees (\$2,200). ▪ Increased grant revenue due to an expected increase in Compensation Board reimbursements (\$18,406), offset by a decrease in state technology reimbursements (\$4,000). 	
FY 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The County Board added funding for postage and printing expenses associated with the one-day, one-trial jury program that began in January 2017 (\$45,000). ▪ Removed the one-time funding for the upgrade jury phone and application scanning systems (\$55,000). ▪ Increased fee revenue due to expected state excess fees reimbursement (\$50,000), e-ticket fees (\$1,800), and copy fees (\$15,000). ▪ Decreased fee revenue due to lower projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2018 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenses (\$14,864). ▪ Increased grant revenue due to adjustments in State Compensation Board reimbursements (\$10,650). 	
FY 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No significant changes. 	
FY 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eliminated a Business Systems Analyst I position (\$129,341). A portion of these savings were apportioned to temporary staffing (\$69,340). ▪ Added a Courtroom Clerk to support the fourth judge which was added by the Commonwealth of Virginia due to the caseload of the Circuit Court (\$88,546). 	<p style="text-align: right;">(1.00)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1.00</p>

Fiscal Year	Description	FTEs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added funding for one-time operating equipment (\$8,000) and on-going training and operating expenses (\$17,000) for the addition of the fourth judge. ▪ Increased fee revenue due to expected interest income on criminal fees (\$15,500), e-ticket fines (\$200), and court costs (\$3,535), offset by fee revenue decreases due to decreased projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2020 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenses (\$7,820). ▪ Increased grant revenue due to an increase in State Compensation Board reimbursements as a result of the State’s two percent increase for state employees (\$32,216) and miscellaneous state grants (\$14,049). ▪ <i>In FY 2019 Closeout, the County Board reallocated temporary personnel funds for the creation of two permanent Court Assistant positions.</i> 	2.00
FY 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-personnel decreased due to the removal of one-time funding for operating equipment for the addition of a fourth judge in FY 2020 (\$8,000), partially offset by contractual increases (\$1,602). ▪ Fee revenues increased primarily due to higher projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2021 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$8,036). ▪ Grant revenues decreased due to a decrease in miscellaneous State grants (\$56,838) to align budget with prior year actuals, partially offset by an expected increase in State Compensation Board reimbursements (\$14,211). ▪ <i>In July 2020, the County Board took action to add a Technical Support Specialist to assist with the Body Worn Camera program (\$113,000).</i> 	1.00
FY 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The County Board added funding for a one percent merit pay adjustment, a five percent increase in the range, and an increase to the one-time bonus for staff from \$500 to approximately \$900. ▪ The County Board also added ongoing funding for the addition of a fifth Courtroom Clerk (\$87,146) and converted a temporary, unfunded Court Assistant position in Land Records to permanent. ▪ Added a Technical Support Specialist to assist with the Body Worn Camera program in the Police Department (\$56,500). ▪ Added an IT Support Specialist to support the expanding technology needs in the Circuit Court, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, and General District Court (\$120,876). ▪ Fee revenues decreased due to lower projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2022 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$6,288). 	2.00 0.50 1.00

Fiscal Year	Description	FTEs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant revenues increased due to an expected increase in State Compensation Board reimbursements (\$83,199). ▪ <i>In FY 2021 closeout, funding was added for a one percent merit pay adjustment (\$13,056) and a one-time bonus for staff of \$450 (\$19,936).</i> 	
FY 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The County Board added funding for an additional one percent merit pay adjustment for a total increase of 5.25 percent, increased the pay-for-performance budget by an additional 0.5 percent, increased the pay range movement to five percent, a one-time increase in language premium from \$0.69 to \$0.92 per hour (\$1,601), and an optional one-time cash-out of 40 hours of compensation time for those with balances of 80 or more (\$2,254). ▪ The County Board added one-time funding for a Court Assistant position in the Civil Division (\$75,000). ▪ Non-personnel expenses increased due to contractual increases (\$7,843). ▪ Non-personnel expenses and grant revenues increased due to funding added for juror expenses that are reimbursed by the State (\$125,000). ▪ Fee revenues decreased due to the transfer out of revenue budget to the grant revenue line (\$408,535), partially offset by higher projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2023 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$7,965). ▪ Grant revenues increased due to the transfer in of revenue budget from the fee revenue line (\$408,535) and an increase in State Compensation Board reimbursements primarily due to the State’s five percent increase for state employees (\$408,306). ▪ <i>A technical adjustment was approved by the County Board in April 2023 to appropriate funding from Non-Departmental to Departments to allocate the budget for bonuses funded in the adopted budget. The funding added to Clerk of the Circuit Court was \$75,775.</i> 	1.00
FY 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added funds for one-time \$2,000 (gross) employee bonuses (\$85,830). ▪ Added funds for adjustments to salaries resulting from Accounting and Judicial job family studies (\$12,623). ▪ Added funds for contractual increases (\$4,339). ▪ Added one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$38,585 non-personnel, \$38,585 grant revenue). ▪ Fee revenues increased due to higher projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2024 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$33,367), partially offset by a decrease in interest earned on criminal fees (\$6,500). ▪ Grant revenues decreased to align the County’s share of court fines budget with recent actuals (\$397,108). 	