

Circuit Court - Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Review Summary

- Vacancies (As of 3/9/22): Two (2) FT Grant funded position. The FY 2023 budget includes funding for four (4) FT Grant Funded vacancies.

Proposed FY 2023 -FY 2028 Capital Improvement Program

	Expended thru FY22	Proposed FY23 Capital Budget	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	Total Proposed CIP Funding
2 Projects	\$ 40,320,000	\$ 2,450,000	\$ 23,789,000	\$ 1,204,000	\$ 2,006,000	\$ 1,204,000	\$ 2,006,000	\$ 72,979,000

Highlights

- Funded by General Obligation Bonds (100%)
- Key Projects: Courthouse Renovations and Security Upgrades, James H. Taylor Innovative Academy (Court School)
- Courthouse Renovations sub-projects: Courthouse cafeteria & restroom upgrades, security enhancements at the Commissioners' entrance, Maryland Electronic Courts HVAC installation, Duvall Wing renovations and updates to corridor and common areas
- The James H. Taylor Innovative Academy project is currently in the design phase – Estimated completion date in FY 2024



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Office of Audits and Investigations

MEMORANDUM

April 07, 2022

TO: Sydney J. Harrison, Chair
Health, Human Services, and Public Safety (HHSPS) Committee

THRU: Turkessa M. Green, County Auditor *JMG*

FROM: Malcolm Moody, Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst *MM*

RE: Circuit Court
Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Review

Budget Overview

The FY 2023 Proposed Budget for the Circuit Court is approximately \$26 million. This is an increase of \$3.2 million, or 14.3%, over the FY 2022 Approved Budget. The General Fund portion of the budget is approximately \$20.9 million, an increase of \$2.1 million, or 11.4% over the FY 2022 Approved Budget. The increase is primarily due to an increase in compensation and fringe costs. The grant funded portion of the Court's budget is proposed to increase by \$1,099,800, or 27.6%, mainly due to the addition of a new grant and enhancement of existing programs/services.

Fund	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2022 Estimated	% Change - Est vs App	FY 2023 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
General Fund	\$ 19,895,746	\$ 18,748,300	\$ 20,188,200	7.7%	\$ 20,889,600	\$ 2,141,300	11.4%
Grants	3,170,696	3,987,500	4,599,600	15.4%	5,087,300	1,099,800	27.6%
Total	\$ 23,066,442	\$ 22,735,800	\$ 24,787,800	9.0%	\$ 25,976,900	\$ 3,241,100	14.3%

Authorized Staffing - All Classifications

	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2023 Proposed	Change	% Change
General Fund	192	192	0	0.0%
Grants	48	50	2	4.2%
Total	240	242	2	0.8%

Budget Comparison - General Fund

Approved Fiscal Year 2022 to Proposed Fiscal Year 2023

Category	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2022 Estimated	FY 2023 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Compensation	\$ 12,186,101	\$ 11,284,900	\$ 11,890,500	\$ 12,468,300	\$ 1,183,400	10.5%
Fringe Benefits	4,023,125	3,531,500	4,053,100	4,465,600	934,100	26.5%
Operating Expenses	3,683,320	3,931,900	4,244,600	3,955,700	23,800	0.6%
Capital Outlay	3,200	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$ 19,895,746	\$ 18,748,300	\$ 20,188,200	\$ 20,889,600	\$ 2,141,300	11.4%

Authorized Staffing Count - General Fund

	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2023 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Full-Time	155	155	0	0.0%
Part-Time	37	37	0	0.0%
Total	192	192	0	0.0%

Staffing Changes and Compensation

- The FY 2023 Proposed Budget includes authorization for 155 full-time positions, and 37 part-time General Fund positions, which is unchanged when compared to the FY 2022 Approved Budget.
- According to the Circuit Court, as of March 9, 2022, 132 of their 155 General Funded full-time positions are filled, and 35 of their 37 part-time positions are filled.
- The proposed FY 2023 budget includes 25 vacant positions of which 14 full-time positions and two (2) part-time positions are funded. Nine (9) full-time positions are unfunded. For Grant funded positions there are four (4) full-time positions that are funded.
- The Court reported that its current rate of attrition is 2.58% which has amounted to 31 employees leaving the Court. The key factors contributing to the current attrition level are: employee resignations which there have been 29 of due to employees seeking flexible work options and increases in the use of technology that prompted long-tenured employees to retire. There have also been 2 regular retirements.

Fringe Benefits

- The FY 2023 General Fund Proposed Budget for fringe benefits is \$4,465,600. This is an increase of \$934,100, or 26.5%, over the FY 2022 Approved Budget. This is due to an increase in the fringe benefit rate from 31.3% to 35.8 % to align with projected costs.

- A five-year trend analysis of fringe benefit expenditures is included below.

Fringe Benefits Historical Trend					
	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Estimated	FY 2023 Proposed
Fringe Benefits Expenditures	\$ 3,392,825	\$ 3,603,439	\$ 4,023,125	\$ 4,053,100	\$ 4,465,600
As a % of Compensation	30.1%	31.2%	33.0%	34.1%	35.8%
Annual % Change	8.3%	6.2%	11.6%	0.7%	10.2%

Operating Expenses

- General Fund FY 2023 operating expenses are proposed at approximately \$4 million, and are comprised of the following major items:
 - Office Automation \$1,772,200
 - Other Operating Equipment Repair/Maintenance 884,500
 - Miscellaneous 400,000
 - General & Administrative Contracts 283,700
 - Periodicals 142,400
- Overall, FY 2023 General Fund proposed operating expenses are increasing by \$23,800, or 0.6%, over the FY 2022 Approved Budget level.
- The accompanying table compares the FY 2023 Proposed Budget operating expenditures with the FY 2022 Approved Budget operating expenditures. In two (2) of the categories, the FY 2023 Proposed Budget increases planned spending over the FY 2022 Approved Budget. In one (1) of the categories, the FY 2023 Proposed Budget decreases planned spending compared to the FY 2022 Approved Budget. In eleven (11) of the categories, the FY 2023 Proposed Budget level remains unchanged compared to the FY 2022 Approved Budget.

Operating Objects	FY 2022 Budget	FY 2023 Proposed	FY 2022 - FY 2023	
			\$ Change	% Change
Office Automation	\$ 1,668,200	\$ 1,772,600	\$ 104,400	6%
Miscellaneous (includes Jury Fees)	350,000	400,000	50,000	14%
Telephone	106,800	106,800	-	0.0%
Membership Fees	12,400	12,400	-	0.0%
Equipment Lease	43,000	43,000	-	0.0%
General & Administrative Contracts	283,700	283,700	-	0.0%
Periodicals	142,400	142,400	-	0.0%
Training	10,000	10,000	-	0.0%
Printing	59,500	59,500	-	0.0%
Office & Operating Equipment Non Capital	60,900	60,900	-	0.0%
General Office Supplies	129,200	129,200	-	0.0%
Interagency Charge	25,000	25,000	-	0.0%
Mileage Reimbursement	25,700	25,700	-	0.0%
Other Operating Equipment Repair/Maintenance	1,015,100	884,500	(130,600)	-13%
TOTAL	\$ 3,931,900	\$ 3,955,700	\$ 23,800	0.6%

- The most significant increase between the FY 2023 Proposed Budget and the FY 2022 Approved Budget is in the Office Automation category (\$104,400 increase) which is a result of the increase in OIT scheduled cost.
- The only decrease between the FY 2023 Proposed Budget and the FY 2022 Approved Budget is in the Other Operating Equipment category (\$130,600 decrease). This decrease is done in alignment with the implementation of the Maryland Electronic Courts Project (MDEC).

Potential Recoveries

- In FY 2023, the Circuit Court does not propose to recover from any source. However, the Court has the potential to recover funds from the Bond Forfeiture Fund. Some information pertaining to this fund is as follows:
 - The Bond Forfeiture Fund receives proceeds when a defendant fails to appear and his/her bond is forfeited, which results in the bondsman paying the full amount of the bond. When this occurs, the State of Maryland receives 5%, and Prince George's County receives 95%. These funds must sit in the fund for 10 years before the County can make a claim and utilize these funds.
 - The Court is reporting the current balance of this fund at approximately \$1.47 million, with a 10-year vested balance of \$821,438 eligible for use.
 - Recovery from the Fund can be used to support the Court's Bail Bond Commissioner and Law Library Divisions, which have proposed FY 2023 costs of \$238,500, and \$513,000, respectively. The Court has not recovered funds from this fund in the past five years.

HIGHLIGHTS

Workload/Performance Trends

- The Prince George's County Circuit Court currently has 24 sitting judges, seven (7) Family Magistrates, and one (1) Foreclosure Magistrate. The Circuit Court continues to utilize visiting and retired judges to help meet staffing needs in FY 2022 and in FY 2023. In FY 2022 (through March 2, 2022) the Circuit Court utilized 13 Retired/Visiting Judges.
- Per the March 28, 2022, Administrative Order of Joseph M. Getty, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, the Statewide COVID 19 emergency period will conclude April 4, 2022.
- The Court's caseload decreased from 66,155 total cases in FY 2019, to 49,598 total cases in FY 2020. The Court's actual caseload was 52,875 cases in FY 2021, with an estimate of 29,955 cases in FY 2022. The Court has not produced any caseload projections for FY 2023. *See the FY 2023 Proposed Operating Budget book pg. 288 for a breakdown of the different types of cases that support the presented numbers.*

- The Court will provide workforce development with a General and Technical focus. The General workforce development, hosted by the Court's Human Resources Department, will focus on customer service, and change management. The Technical workforce development is a part of the process of joining the Maryland Judiciary on the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC).
- The Circuit Court established the Direction Youth Diversion Program in FY 2022. This program provides individuals engaging in delinquent behaviors, who are between the ages of 12-18 years old and are non-violent offenders with academic monitoring and assistance. The program provides services that support sobriety and abstinence from illegal substances, and mentoring/tutoring. The program's capacity is 25 participants. There are currently five (5) participants, with no graduates and 13 participants serviced since FY 2022. This program has one (1) Program Coordinator and one (1) Case Manager, with a client and case manager ratio of 25:1.
- The Circuit Court established a Veterans Court Program in FY 2016. This is a voluntary twelve-month comprehensive treatment program. The focus of this program is Veterans entering the judicial system with non-violent offenses, documented substance abuse dependencies, and mental health issues. The program's capacity is 50 participants. There are currently seven (7) participants, with 31 graduates from the program since July 2021. This program has one (1) Program Coordinator, one (1) Case Manager, one (1) Case Manager/Community Supervision Manager, one (1) Mentor Liaison, one (1) Peer Recovery Specialist, with a client to case manager ratio of 25:1.
- The Truancy Reduction Court was established in FY 2009. This program targets 6th through 8th graders who were absent from school 20% of the school year at the time of referral. The program's capacity is 45 students. The program has 31 current participants and has graduated 136 clients. This program has one (1) Coordinator and two (2) Case Managers, with a client to case manager ratio of 22:1.
- The Family Justice Center (FJC) has experienced a slight increase in clients served from FY 2021 to FY 2022 while the pandemic continues to enact hardships on survivors serviced by the FJC. In FY 2021 the Center served 966 clients and in FY 2022 (YTD) serviced 1,041 clients. An additional 2,007 services may be required to better address community needs. Currently, the one trauma therapist working in the FJC continues to have a high caseload. Resources are needed to hire/contract services to another mental health therapist to help relieve the caseload. Other additional resources such as assistance with housing, an emergency cash fund, and or a partnership with housing properties that accept clients with limited income/low credit scores would help the community being served.
- The Court's foreclosure process includes mediation services that defendants may request prior to the sale of their property. A moratorium was placed on foreclosure filings federally backed mortgages on March 18, 2020, through July 31, 2021. Many homeowners were also offered the option to filing a forbearance. Some of the forbearances will be in effect until the end of the current Fiscal Year. In CY 2020, the Court received 808 foreclosure filings with 340 requests for mediation. In CY 2021, the Court received 271 foreclosure filings with 67 requests for mediation. In CY 2022, as of March 2, 2022, the Court has received 124 foreclosure filings with 56 requests for mediation.

Information Technology

- The Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) project is an integrated statewide case management system piloted in Anne Arundel County in 2014, where it is now fully operational. The implementation of MDEC in Prince George's County is scheduled to go live on October 17, 2022. Staff from the Administrative Office of the Courts, Judicial Information Systems, and Tyler Technologies will be on site for three weeks in October/early November to support the Court in its transition. As the implementation process for MDEC begins the Court will seek to use funds in the FY 2023 proposed budget to train most staff in MDEC training sessions during late August through early September. Overtime may be necessary for staff who work evenings/weekends. Some of the employees will function as Subject Matter Experts (SME) and Data Reviewers who will be focused on MDEC. Remaining staff will focus on the daily needs of the Court and the public.
- In FY 2017, at a cost of \$101,781, the Court hired a contractor to provide expertise in developing a 5 to 10-year strategic plan for all Court operations. The contractor will provide succession planning for the Court and identify resources that may be used to obtain the goals. The Circuit Court has completed all phases of the strategic planning process culminating in hosting a Circuit Court Community Town hall. The Court's Strategic Plan for implementation is an ongoing process that resulted in the Court focusing on workforce development, training, preparation, implementation of MDEC, and other technological operations.
- The Court has the following IT initiatives on-going in FY 2022 and continuing into FY 2023:
 - Security Blast Film on the 1st Floor windows in FY 2022
 - Installation of License Plates Recognition (LPR) in FY 2022
 - Security Intercom System in FY 2022
 - Replace the end of life (EOL) Network Video Recorder (NVR) in FY 2023
 - Replace EOL security cameras in FY 2023
 - Integrate the PA System with the Fire Alarm System in FY 2023
 - Increase storage on the NetApp in FY 2023

Facilities

- The "Courthouse Renovations and Security Upgrades" project provides funds for increased and enhanced security and updating infrastructure throughout the Courthouse complex. This project has a total CIP budget of \$49,879,000. The project has estimated total expenditures of \$39,909,000 as of the end of FY 2022, and \$2,450,000 in the Proposed 2023 CIP Budget.
- The James H. Taylor Innovative Academy project (formerly Court School) has no funding allocated to its budget for FY 2023.

Budget Comparison - Grants

Proposed Fiscal Year 2022 to Proposed Fiscal Year 2023

Category	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2022 Estimated	FY 2023 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Compensation	\$ 1,399,983	\$ 2,481,600	\$ 2,444,800	\$ 2,469,200	\$ (12,400)	-0.5%
Fringe Benefits	440,732	774,500	751,300	851,700	77,200	10.0%
Operating Expenses	1,396,268	1,092,300	1,688,400	2,127,300	1,035,000	94.8%
Total	\$ 3,236,983	\$ 4,348,400	\$ 4,884,500	\$ 5,448,200	\$ 1,099,800	25.3%

Authorized Staffing Count - Grants

	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2023 Proposed	Change Amount	Percentage Change
Full-Time	48	50	2	4.2%
Total	48	50	2	4.2%

Grant Programs

- The FY 2023 Proposed Budget for the Circuit Court's grant programs is approximately \$5.4 million, which is an increase of \$1,099,800, or 25.3%, over the FY 2022 Approved Budget. The increase is due to the addition of the Office of Violence Against Women: Improving Criminal Justice Response grant, enhancements in the Maryland Administrative Courts – Security & Goods, Family Division Legislative Initiative, and the Office of Problem-Solving Courts grants.
- In FY 2023 grant funding is anticipated for 50 full-time positions. The staffing level increased by two (2) positions. The two (2) positions are Counselor 2G and Administrative Assistant 3G. Both positions will work with the Magistrate Support Services Team 1. As of March 9, 2022, 46 of the 50 positions were filled.
- Grant funded compensation is decreasing \$12,400, or 0.5%, under the FY 2022 Approved levels, and Fringe Benefits are increasing \$77,200, or 10.0%, above the FY 2022 Approved levels.
- Grant funded operating expenses are increasing by \$1,035,000, or 94.8%, above the FY 2022 Approved levels due to new grants and enhancements.
- The following chart illustrates grant funding proposed for FY 2023, the grant source, and any funding match the County is required to qualify for the grant:

Grant Name	Grant Source	FY 2023 Budgeted Grant Amount		
		(Outside County)	County Match	
Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement	State	\$ 540,100	\$ 278,200	
Economic Justice Initiative	State	\$ 20,000	\$ 6,700	
Family Division Legislative Initiative	State	\$ 2,071,100	\$ -	
Maryland Family Justice Center's "Changing Lives, Restoring Hope"	State	\$ 491,300	\$ 76,000	
Maryland Administrative Courts Security Grant	State	\$ 184,000	\$ -	
Office of Violence Against Women	Federal	\$ 978,400	\$ -	
Office of Problem Solving Courts	State	\$ 525,000	\$ -	
Veterans' Treatment Court	Federal	\$ 277,400	\$ -	
Total		\$ 5,087,300	\$ 360,900	

- The Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement (CRA) supports the Circuit Court's child support enforcement programs.
- The Economic Justice Initiative (VAWA) supports the Circuit Court's child support enforcement programs. This initiative is aimed at survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sex trafficking supporting them through an economic empowerment program.
- The Family Division Legislative Initiative Grant aims to help fund the Court's Family Division which functions as an informational hub, a family support service, and overseer of family law.
- Maryland Family Justice Center's "Changing Lives, Restoring Hope" (VOCA) is a project aimed at strengthening efforts to provide survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and elder abuse with a wider range of services to address their traumas.
- Maryland Administrative Courts (AOC) Security Grant funding is provided by the County procurement process which the Court will use on security related goods and/or services.
- Office of Violence Against Women (OVW): Improving Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Violence aims to enhance the community response in cases of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- Veterans' Treatment Court is a program that uses an evidence-based approach to treat veterans with substance abuse problems.

- The Proposed FY 2023 grant funding from the Maryland Office of Problem-Solving Court is \$525,000 an increase of \$12,000, or 2.3 %, over the FY 2022 Approved Budget level. Specifics pertaining to the programs funded by this grant are as follows:
 - The Adult Drug Court has 52 current participants and graduated a total of 501 clients since inception, with 955 total clients served and a current capacity of 120. It has one (1) Program Manager, one (1) Community Supervision Manager and two (2) Case Managers. The ratio between participants and case manager should not exceed 30:1. *See First Round Question #28 pg. 12-13 for more information regarding statistics, demographics, staffing, and eligibility requirements.*
 - The Juvenile Drug Court program has four (4) current participants and has graduated 131 participants since inception, with 331 total clients served and a current capacity of 50. It has one (1) Program Coordinator and one (1) Case Manager. The ideal ratio between

client and case manager would be 25:1. *See First Round Question #28 pg. 13-14 for more information regarding statistics, demographics, staffing, and eligibility requirements.*

- The Re-Entry Court has 13 current participants and 24 graduates since inception, with 540 total clients served and a current capacity of 20. This program has one (1) Program Coordinator and one (1) Case Manager. The ideal ratio between client and case manager would be 20:1. *See First Round Question #28 pg. 14-15 for more information regarding statistics, demographics, staffing, and eligibility requirements.*