

Circuit Court

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Circuit Court is to serve the Sixth Judicial Circuit residents in the determination of litigation in serious criminal matters and more substantive civil cases in accordance with the Constitution; to administer justice in a fair, timely, and efficient manner; and to adjudicate domestic and child support cases.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total approved FY06 Operating Budget for the Circuit Court is \$11,290,720, an increase of \$1,254,950 or 12.5 percent from the FY05 Approved Budget of \$10,035,770. Personnel Costs comprise 78.5 percent of the budget for 99 full-time positions and 15 part-time positions for 106.4 workyears. Operating Expenses and Capital Outlay account for the remaining 21.5 percent of the FY06 budget.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ *Replace six four-year old digital recording servers to ensure the continuity of courtroom sessions.*
- ❖ *Productivity Enhancements*
 - *The Circuit Court of Montgomery County completed a state-wide audit on calendar year 2003 performance data. The performance of Montgomery County Circuit Court exceeded all comparisons in five categories: civil, criminal, domestic [one year], domestic [two years], and juvenile.*

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Pamela Harris of the Circuit Court at 240.777.9100 or Belinda M. Bunggay of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2794 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

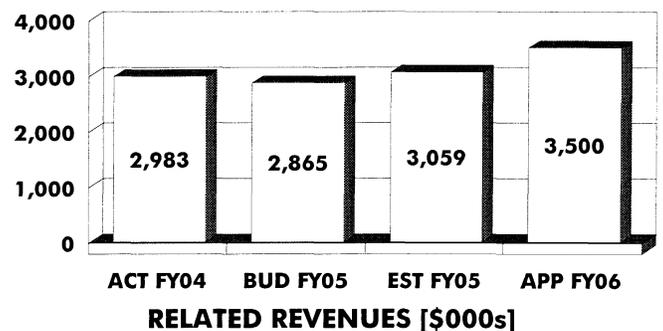
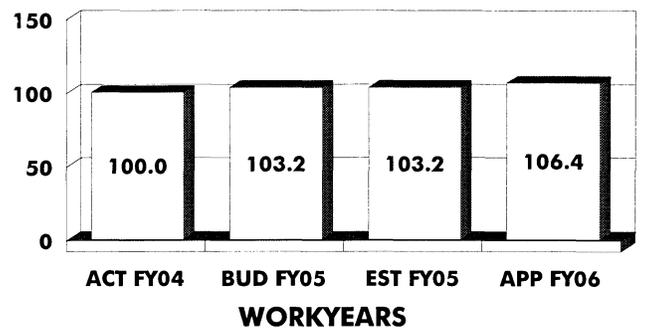
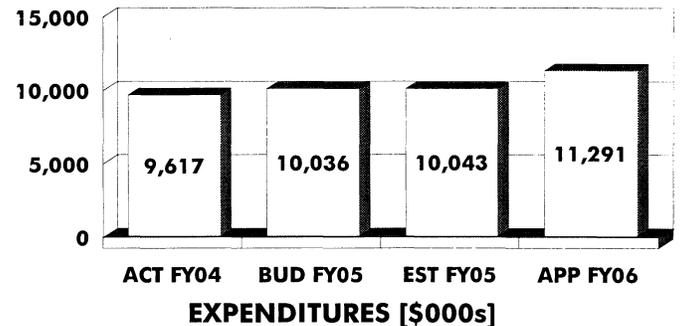
Administration

The Administrative Office of the Circuit Court serves as a conduit for many operations of the court. The Court Administrator's role is to facilitate the administrative functions of the court and to develop policies to enhance systems performance while maintaining the independence of the judiciary. Basic functions performed by the Court Administrator and staff include the following: Fiscal Administration of the budget; Human Resources; Caseload Management and Statistics; Technology Management; Information Management; Jury Management; Space Management; Intergovernmental liaison; and Public Information.

Program Summary

	Expenditures	WYs
Administration	2,265,540	3.4
Adjudication	2,390,370	29.0
Family Masters	875,680	9.0
Case Assignment	916,270	13.0
Jury	719,900	4.0
Family Services Support	710,150	8.0
Technical Services	702,470	10.0
Law Library	448,430	3.0
Trust and Guardianships	163,430	2.5
Grants	2,098,480	24.5
Totals	11,290,720	106.4

Trends



FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	1,667,540	3.2
FY06 Approved	2,265,540	3.4

Adjudication

Adjudication encompasses support staff for the judiciary and Differentiated Case Management (DCM). Conceptually, this division monitors case assignment (criminal, civil, and family cases), provides expedited case disposition for incarcerated offenders; and provides judicial supervision consistent with complexity of each case filed. Adjudication/DCM improves the efficiency of case processing and reduces the demand for judicial intervention at various stages of litigation. To minimize case delay, each case is assigned to an appropriate track assignment that allows for the performance of pre-trial tasks and allocates the appropriate level of judicial intervention. Tracks are monitored for performance and are evaluated with the Circuit Court Program Measures.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	2,365,790	29.0
FY06 Approved	2,390,370	29.0

Family Masters

Family Masters Division handles adoption investigations and child custody/visitation evaluations. After the establishment of a Court Order, independent evaluations for child custody/visitation and adoption investigations are conducted by court staff possessing substantial experience in social science or suitable credentials in the field of social work. The evaluator meets with the litigants and children and conducts interviews with professionals and collateral references to ascertain the appropriate custodial situation for the children.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	820,630	9.0
FY06 Approved	875,680	9.0

Case Assignment

The Assignment Office schedules and maintains all hearings, trials, and motion dates as well as special docket dates for Judges and Family Masters. The Assignment Office maintains all scheduling information related to: Criminal Indictment and Information; Criminal Jury Demands and Appeals; Civil, Juvenile and Family trial assignment; Civil, Family and Juvenile Motions; and Bench Warrants. The Assignment Office also manages all court sheet information, locates all files for assigned calendars, reviews each file, and delivers files to various court-hearing rooms.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	836,130	13.0
FY06 Approved	916,270	13.0

Jury

The Jury Office manages prospective and active jurors for civil and criminal proceedings. In accordance with Maryland Courts and Judicial Proceedings, Title 8, every citizen has the opportunity to serve as a juror and the obligation to serve when summoned. The Jury Commissioner and staff dispatch questionnaires to prospective jurors from information gathered from the lists of Voter Registration and Motor Vehicle Administration. The Commissioner maintains a qualified jury pool from the individuals who are determined to be qualified as jurors under Maryland Courts and Judicial Proceedings § 8-207.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	700,300	4.0
FY06 Approved	719,900	4.0

Family Services Support

Family Services Support handles adoption investigations and child custody/visitation evaluations. After the establishment of a Court Order, independent evaluations for child custody/visitation and adoption investigations are conducted by court staff possessing substantial experience in social science or suitable credentials in the field of social work. The evaluator meets with the litigants and children and conducts interviews with professionals and collateral references to ascertain the appropriate custodial situation for the children.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	727,630	8.0
FY06 Approved	710,150	8.0

Technical Services

Technical Services manages the central recording location that electronically records all courtroom and hearing room proceedings for the Judicial Center and Gray Courthouse. All Video Conferencing between the Circuit Court, District Court, Montgomery County Detention Center (MCDC), and Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) is handled through this division. This equipment is used on a daily basis in order to conduct bond hearings via a video connection. Copies of court transcripts and cassettes are purchased through this division. The Court's website and internal servers for the Court and Clerk's Office are administered by Technical Services.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	661,490	10.0
FY06 Approved	702,470	10.0

Law Library

The Law Library supports the research activities of the court, local bar association and public. The Law Library's collection of American Law is comprehensive in scope. In addition to Maryland and Federal materials, the collection includes the National Reporter System as well as a variety of books needed

for the practice of law in Maryland. Library staff is available to answer questions regarding the library and its collection. Assistance with research is limited to directing patrons to appropriate sources. Library staff does not perform legal research, render legal opinions, or comment on court procedures.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	432,930	3.0
FY06 Approved	448,430	3.0

Trust and Guardianships

The Trust Office administers the case files for fiduciary entities, which consist primarily of guardianships, required to comply with the reporting requirements set forth in the Maryland Court Rules, Title 10, Guardians and Other Fiduciaries. The reports required to be filed include the Inventory and Information Report and Annual Fiduciary Report for guardianships of the property of a minor or disabled person and the Annual Report for guardianships of the person of a disabled person. The Trust Clerk examines the Annual Fiduciary Reports filed and prepares the Report of Trust Clerk for the court.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	160,150	2.5
FY06 Approved	163,430	2.5

Grants

The Family Grant is supported by state funding and provides services to families so that the process reduces conflict and introduces the parties involved in litigation to problem-solving techniques to help reduce future litigation. This program provides for: case managers that provide day-to-day management of cases between Family Masters, judges, counsel and litigants; Custody Mediation involving litigants in an effort to obtain a settlement of custody issues prior to litigation; Pro Se Project staffed by attorneys and paralegals to help individuals representing themselves in uncomplicated family law cases involving divorce, custody and child support; Supervised Visitation providing for a structured setting for visitation between children and their parents; Psychological Evaluations are conducted when psychological testing is necessary as an adjunct to arriving at a decision in the best interest of the children; Guardian ad litem appointments to specifically represent the interests of children; and operating expenses associated with managing the division.

The Montgomery County Juvenile Drug Court is collaborative partnership sponsored by the Montgomery County Circuit Court with other law enforcement agencies, the healthcare treatment system, the education system, and criteria-eligible juveniles and their families to provide rapid intervention, treatment and structure in the lives of juveniles who use alcohol and other drugs. The Project will: (I) improve the educational effectiveness of the court process by expanding prosecutorial, defender and judicial resources and implementing court delay reduction programs; (ii) provide programs that identify and meet the treatment needs of adults and juvenile drug-dependent and

alcohol-dependent offenders; and (iii) implement innovative programs that demonstrate new and different approaches to enforcement, prosecution and adjudication of drug offenses and other serious crimes.

The Montgomery County Adult Drug Court Program is a voluntary program that offers a new opportunity to offenders who require a more intensive focus on treatment and monitoring, and who may benefit from more direct attention from the Court. It is a program that is completed in three phases and can extend anywhere from 9-18 months depending on the offender's progress. Over the course of the participation in the Program, the offender will be involved in individual and group therapy, regular meetings with a Case Manager, random drug testing, case supervision and monitoring, and participation in regular sessions of the Drug Court.

FY06 Changes

	Expenditures	WYs
FY05 Approved	1,663,180	21.5
FY06 Approved	2,098,480	24.5

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY04	Budget FY05	Estimated FY05	Approved FY06	% Chg Bud/App
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	4,642,146	5,080,240	5,080,240	5,379,660	5.9%
Employee Benefits	1,328,914	1,476,940	1,476,940	1,641,240	11.1%
County General Fund Personnel Costs	5,971,060	6,557,180	6,557,180	7,020,900	7.1%
Operating Expenses	1,938,308	1,815,410	1,779,660	2,081,340	14.6%
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	90,000	—
County General Fund Expenditures	7,909,368	8,372,590	8,336,840	9,192,240	9.8%
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	82	83	83	83	—
Part-Time	8	7	7	7	—
Workyears	78.5	81.7	81.7	81.9	0.2%
REVENUES					
Circuit Court Domestic Relations Fee	121	0	0	0	—
Juror Fees State Reimbursement	359,760	400,000	400,000	400,000	—
Masters Salary Reimbursement	516,957	552,000	552,000	552,000	—
Interpreter Fees State Reimbursement	398,939	250,000	400,000	450,000	80.0%
County General Fund Revenues	1,275,777	1,202,000	1,352,000	1,402,000	16.6%
GRANT FUND MCG					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	982,490	1,118,610	1,118,610	1,464,720	30.9%
Employee Benefits	408,496	319,680	319,680	380,330	19.0%
Grant Fund MCG Personnel Costs	1,390,986	1,438,290	1,438,290	1,845,050	28.3%
Operating Expenses	316,655	224,890	268,230	253,430	12.7%
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund MCG Expenditures	1,707,641	1,663,180	1,706,520	2,098,480	26.2%
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	16	16	16	16	—
Part-Time	8	8	8	8	—
Workyears	21.5	21.5	21.5	24.5	14.0%
REVENUES					
Family Law Grant	1,707,641	1,663,180	1,706,520	1,706,520	2.6%
State Grant - Juvenile Drug Court Program	0	0	0	118,830	—
State Grant - Adult Drug Court Program	0	0	0	273,130	—
Grant Fund MCG Revenues	1,707,641	1,663,180	1,706,520	2,098,480	26.2%
DEPARTMENT TOTALS					
Total Expenditures	9,617,009	10,035,770	10,043,360	11,290,720	12.5%
Total Full-Time Positions	98	99	99	99	—
Total Part-Time Positions	16	15	15	15	—
Total Workyears	100.0	103.2	103.2	106.4	3.1%
Total Revenues	2,983,418	2,865,180	3,058,520	3,500,480	22.2%

FY06 APPROVED CHANGES CROSSWALK

	Expenditures	WYs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY05 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	8,372,590	81.7
<u>Changes (with service impacts)</u>		
Enhance: State Interpreter Reimbursement [Administration]	200,000	0.0
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: FY06 Compensation	272,930	0.0
Increase Cost: Replace Four-Year Old Circuit Court Digital Recording Servers [Administration]	90,000	0.0
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY05 Personnel Costs	63,250	0.2
Increase Cost: FY06 Retirement Rate Adjustments	62,780	0.0
Increase Cost: FY06 Group Insurance Rate Adjustments	61,850	0.0
Increase Cost: Central Duplication Services	17,400	0.0
Increase Cost: Records Management	10,680	0.0
Increase Cost: Jury Lounge Facility Maintenance [Administration]	9,830	0.0
Increase Cost: Miscellaneous Operating Expenses [Administration]	9,240	0.0
Increase Cost: Consultant Services and Contracts [Administration]	7,460	0.0
Increase Cost: Communication Services Local Telephone Service Charges [Administration]	7,100	0.0
Increase Cost: Office Supplies and Equipment [Administration]	6,520	0.0
Increase Cost: Equipment Maintenance and Repairs [Administration]	6,000	0.0
Increase Cost: Other Professional Services [Administration]	2,000	0.0
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Charges [Administration]	610	0.0
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY05 [Administration]	-8,000	0.0
FY06 APPROVED:	9,192,240	81.9
GRANT FUND MCG		
FY05 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	1,663,180	21.5
<u>Changes (with service impacts)</u>		
Add: Adult Drug Court Program [Grants]	273,130	3.0
Add: Juvenile Drug Court Program [Grants]	118,830	0.0
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: Family Law Grant [Grants]	43,340	0.0
FY06 APPROVED:	2,098,480	24.5