

County Manager's Proposed FY 2027 Budget

Office of the Magistrate

County Board Work Session
April 7, 2026 | 3:00 p.m.



Department Mission

To protect and preserve the rights and liberties of all the people, as guaranteed by the laws and the constitutions of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Virginia and the ordinances of the County of Arlington and the City of Falls Church, by providing a fair, independent, and accessible forum to the resolution of their legal rights.



Department Overview

- Only Judicial Officers in Arlington County that operate 365/24/7; we are always on duty
- Comprised of 8.5 state-funded positions with County supplement for some staff
- Issues warrants for the arrest of violators of state law and County ordinances
- Issues Emergency Protective Orders, mental health and medical Emergency Custody Orders, and Temporary Detention Orders
- Admits to bail or commits to jail all persons charged with offenses
- Administers oaths, takes acknowledgements, and acts as conservators for the peace

Focus on Equity

- By being the only judicial officers that operate 365/24/7, the Office ensures that all people have access to the legal system at all times.
- 365/24/7 coverage also ensures a prompt review process of the circumstances of the arrest of defendants and detaining of persons in mental health crisis to determine if and under what circumstances their right to liberty may be returned to them.
- The Office serves a diverse population including stakeholders dealing with mental health and criminal matters in particular.



Summary of Proposed Changes

	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Proposed	\$ Change	% Change
Expenses	\$30,832	\$30,262	-\$570	-1.8%
Revenue	\$1,368	\$1,320	-\$48	-3.5%
Staff	-	-		

- Personnel decreases for the salary supplement and payroll taxes (\$570) aligning with anticipated expenditures.
- Fee revenues decrease due to lower projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2027 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$48).

Key Measures

Critical Measures	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Estimate
Bond hearings initially determined	8,618	9,857	9,614	7,399	7,450	7,450
Miscellaneous processes	5,589	6,156	6,115	5,650	5,675	5,675
Probable cause hearings	8,218	9,315	9,302	11,131	11,100	11,100

- Probable Cause processes increased because they now include warrants, search warrants, Emergency Protective Orders, Temporary Detention Orders (medical and mental health), Emergency Custody Orders (medical and mental health), and Emergency Substantial Risk Orders issued, as well as those processes previously described that were denied.
- Miscellaneous processes decreased because processes previously allocated to that category have been reallocated to Probably Cause Hearings or have otherwise declined.

Budget Consideration

- In addition to pay supplement, Arlington County funds operating costs that include office supplies, which are not always consumed in a linear fashion along with operating equipment that can sometimes become nonfunctional and need replacing without warning.

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