

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.

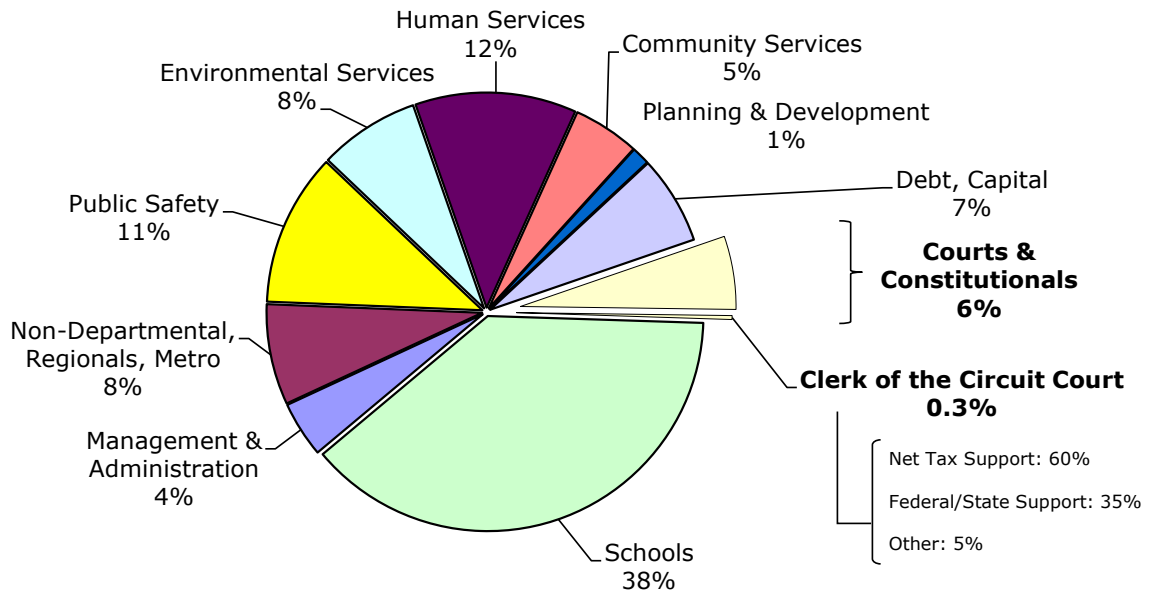
The Clerk of the Circuit Court (the Clerk) is an elected constitutional office in each county and large city in Virginia. The Clerk of Court handles a variety of functions necessary for the efficient administration of justice in the Circuit Court for Arlington County and the City of Falls Church.

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.

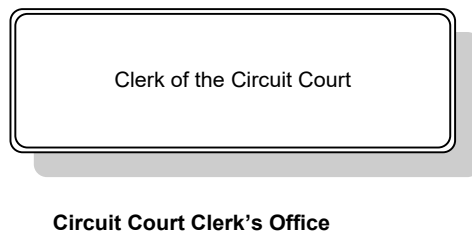
The Land Records Division of the Clerk's Office is responsible for recording and maintaining deeds, judgments, and other documents affecting title to real property located in Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In addition, the Land Records Division assesses and collects required recordation 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 2026 Proposed Budget - General Fund Expenditures



LINES OF BUSINESS



SIGNIFICANT BUDGET CHANGES

The FY 2026 proposed expenditure budget for the Clerk of the Circuit Court is \$4,940,525, a five percent increase from the FY 2025 adopted budget. The proposed budget reflects:

- ↑ Personnel increases due to employee salary increases and an increase in the County's cost for employee health insurance, partially offset by lower retirement contributions based on current actuarial projections.
- ↑ Non-personnel increases due to contractual increases (\$17,803), Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) administrative and legal services (\$30,000), and the addition of one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$11,873), offset by the removal of FY 2025 one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$16,680).
- ↓ Fee revenues decrease due to lower projections in Falls Church reimbursements based on the FY 2026 budget and reconciliation of prior year payments with actual expenditures (\$3,609)

and a decrease in interest earned on criminal fees (\$3,000), partially offset by the proposed addition of the probate fee (\$700).

- ↓ Grant revenues decrease due the removal of FY 2025 one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$16,680), offset by the addition of one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$11,873).

DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Adopted	FY 2026 Proposed	% Change '25 to '26
Personnel	\$3,842,025	\$3,810,612	\$4,018,005	5%
Non-Personnel	752,701	879,524	922,520	5%
Total Expenditures	4,594,726	4,690,136	4,940,525	5%
Fees	239,372	283,094	277,185	-2%
Grants	1,614,665	1,722,080	1,717,273	-
Total Revenues	1,854,037	2,005,174	1,994,458	-1%
Net Tax Support	\$2,740,689	\$2,684,962	\$2,946,067	10%
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 2021 Actual	CY 2022 Actual	CY 2023 Actual	CY 2024 Actual	CY 2025 Estimate
Land records documents recorded	53,084	21,254	15,975	15,048	15,000
Land records documents recorded electronically	47,144	18,520	12,904	13,327	13,100
Jurors (petit, special, and grand) summoned	18,810	17,090	16,723	18,430	17,400
Civil cases filed	5,073	4,485	4,533	4,459	4,500
Criminal cases filed	3,359	3,702	3,894	4,182	4,000
Court documents scanned	65,731	69,727	68,956	70,623	70,000
Court documents filed electronically	32,190	25,213	24,135	23,882	24,000
Court orders generated electronically	3,058	3,884	3,194	3,767	3,600

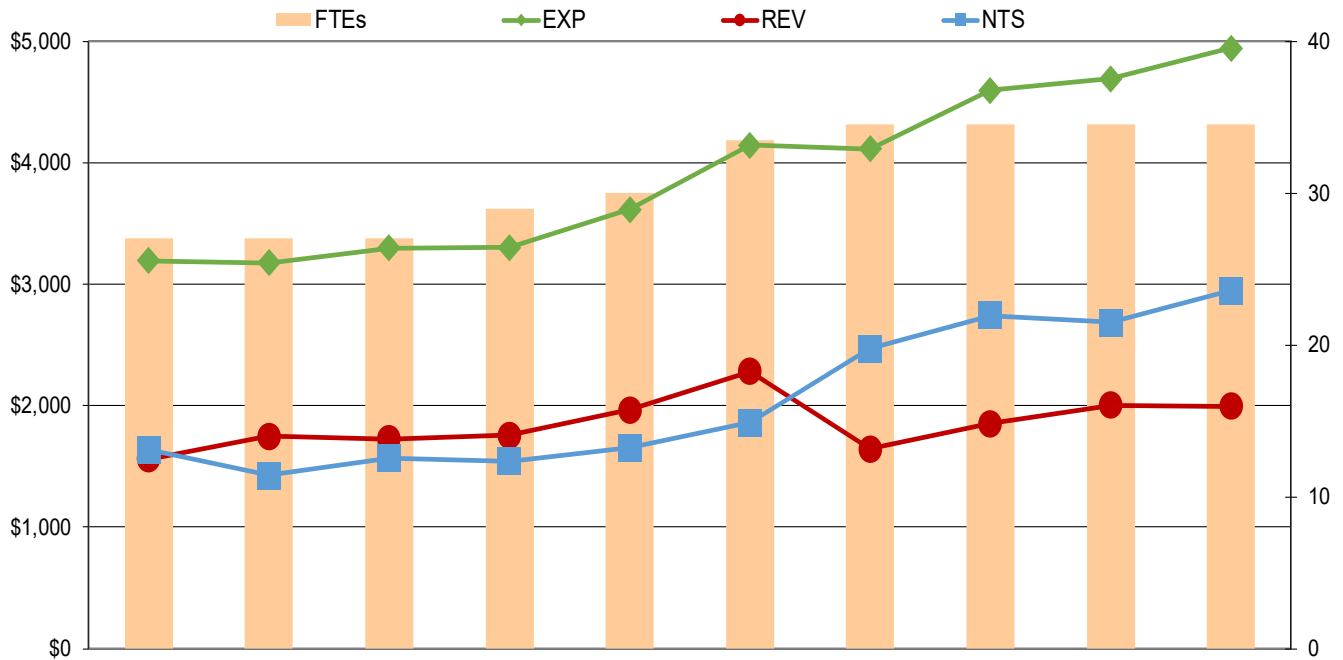
- Land transactions in Arlington County decreased again in CY 2024. This drop is likely due to higher interest rates, which resulted in fewer property sales and refinancing. In CY 2024, the percentage of land records documents that were recorded electronically increased to 89 percent, after a decrease in CY 2023.
- Civil cases decreased by two percent in CY 2024. This is likely due to a decrease in contract complaints and garnishments filed after several years of increasing volume.
- Criminal cases increased by seven percent in CY 2024. This is due to an increase in miscellaneous filings which include bond appeals and search warrants.

Supporting Measures	CY 2021 Actual	CY 2022 Actual	CY 2023 Actual	CY 2024 Actual	CY 2025 Estimate
Concealed handgun permits issued	1,209	1,255	1,201	1,006	1,100
Judgments docketed	4,800	4,926	4,189	4,002	4,100
Financing statements filed	484	394	423	376	400

CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S OFFICE

Supporting Measures	CY 2021 Actual	CY 2022 Actual	CY 2023 Actual	CY 2024 Actual	CY 2025 Estimate
Financing statements filed electronically	284	204	281	237	240
Marriage licenses issued	1,516	1,243	1,428	1,471	1,400
Notaries sworn	1,014	962	860	710	800
Wills probated	736	704	729	728	700

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



	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Adopted Budget	FY 2026 Proposed Budget
EXP	\$3,195	\$3,177	\$3,296	\$3,301	\$3,616	\$4,144	\$4,112	\$4,595	\$4,690	\$4,941
REV	\$1,560	\$1,749	\$1,727	\$1,757	\$1,963	\$2,283	\$1,644	\$1,854	\$2,005	\$1,994
NTS	\$1,635	\$1,427	\$1,569	\$1,544	\$1,653	\$1,861	\$2,468	\$2,741	\$2,685	\$2,947
FTEs	27.00	27.00	27.00	29.00	30.00	33.50	34.50	34.50	34.50	34.50

Fiscal Year	Description	FTEs
FY 2017	▪ 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	▪ 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	▪ No significant changes.	
FY 2020	▪ 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). ▪ 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	(1.00) 1.00

Fiscal Year	Description	FTEs
	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	- 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	- 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). - 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>	2.00 0.50 1.00

Fiscal Year	Description	FTEs
FY 2023	▪ 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	▪ 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).	
FY 2025	▪ Added funds for adjustments to salaries resulting from the Judicial and Legal Services and the Accounting, Fiscal, Revenue Services and Financial job family studies (\$108,063). ▪ Reduced non-personnel expenditures related to training, data processing, operating equipment, and equipment repair (\$100,188).	

Fiscal Year	Description	FTEs
	▪ Added funds for an increase in the contract for the land records system (\$59,648). ▪ Fee revenues increased 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). ▪ Grant revenues increased due to higher Compensation Board revenue (\$46,000). ▪ Added funds for a statutory increase in juror compensation (\$50,000 court costs, \$50,000 grant revenue). ▪ Added one-time grant funds from the Library of Virginia for a Preservation Grant (\$16,680 contracted services, \$16,680 grant revenue).	