

JUVENILE & DOMESTIC RELATIONS DISTRICT COURT SERVICES

DESCRIPTION

The Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court hears criminal, civil, traffic, and social services matters. The Juvenile and Domestic court exercises jurisdiction of juvenile cases in which they are the offender or victim, adult misdemeanor and preliminary felony hearings of cases involving family or household members, juvenile traffic infractions, child/spousal support, custody/visitation, and social services cases including foster care. The Juvenile Court differs from other courts in their commitment to rehabilitate those who come before the court, in addition to protecting the public and holding juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior. The Juvenile and Domestic Relations Clerk's Office is responsible for entering all cases, subpoenaing witnesses, processing criminal cases, writing support/custody orders, entering protective orders, answering phone calls, and assisting walk ins.

The Judges of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court are elected by the General Assembly for a term of six years. The Judges, Clerk, and Deputy Clerks are paid directly by the Commonwealth. The County provides space, furniture, and support for the court, including an administrative position.

OBJECTIVES

- To update records quickly and accurately so that case information is available, and accounting of court funds is correct.
- To provide excellent customer service to effectively assist litigants and court professionals seeking information on cases.

ANNUAL FISCAL PLAN SUMMARY

Description	FY25 Actual	FY26 Original	FY27 Approved	% Change
Personnel	\$111,425	\$107,650	\$107,650	0.0%
Operation	133,351	130,275	153,275	17.7%
Capital	1,060	8,750	6,000	-31.4%
Subtotal	\$245,836	\$246,675	\$266,925	8.2%
Recommended Adjustment	0	0	-7,400	100.0%
Total	\$245,836	\$246,675	\$259,525	5.2%
Personnel Complement	0	0	1 *	1

**One position is added to assist with court administration duties.*

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY25</u>	<u>FY26</u>	<u>FY27</u>	<u>26-27 Change</u>
Workload Measures				
Cases Filed in Juvenile Court	16,792	15,800	16,500	700
Court Hearings	45,149	45,150	46,000	850

OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)

- To ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court for the citizens of Henrico County.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court Services Approved budget for FY27 is \$259,525. This represents an increase of \$12,850 or 5.2% from the previous fiscal year. The personnel component is \$107,650 and is consistent with the previous fiscal year. Funding in the personnel component reflects the salary supplement to the staff of the Juvenile Domestic Relations Court Clerk's Office, who are State employees. The personnel component also includes a county position to assist with the court's administrative duties.

The operating component is \$153,275, reflecting an increase of \$23,000 or 17.7% from the previous year. This increase covers contractual service expenses. The capital totals \$6,000 and reflects a decrease of \$2,750 or 31.4% from the previous year. Funding was reallocated to offset increases in contractual services for Parent Counseling and Brinks services. As part of an exercise in fiscal prudence, this budget includes an operating decrease of \$7,400, which is equivalent to 3% of the department's FY26 approved budget.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court has maintained an 87% staffing level. It takes approximately one year to fully train a deputy clerk whose starting state salary is \$40,042. Henrico County generously supplemented \$4,000 to each clerk as a recruitment incentive.

The Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court maintains Families First as a sub-division of the Court's Best Practices initiative. Families First brings judges and court partners together to discuss concerns and to initiate improvements when needed for the smooth and effective operation of the Court and agencies devoted to the wellbeing of children. Court partners include representatives from the Court Services Unit, the Department of Social Services, Henrico Juvenile Detention Home, James River Juvenile Detention Center, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, Community Corrections, the Children's Services Act, CASA, Henrico County Public Schools, and Henrico Area Mental Health and Developmental Services.

Highlighting the Families First initiative is a day-long Families First Conference, with CLE credit, that is being offered to guardian's ad litem and to court-appointed counsel, along with other attorneys who

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practice frequently in the Court. The conference reflects more than a year of planning. Sessions identify, explain, and promote the use of services that are available to Henrico County families who come before the Court.

In the summer of 2025, the Court piloted a Domestic Violence compliance docket that will be instituted in additional courtrooms for 2026. The docket offers an opportunity to resolve financial hardship or stability issues preventing compliance with the first offender program and provides an opportunity for victims to share their views on services and defendant progress. Additionally, the Court connected Victim Witness with Legal Aid's Family Law section to connect petitioners/victims to have a pro bono attorneys through Legal Aid's Family Law program for family abuse protective order hearings.