

Superior Court / Superior Court Clerk's Office

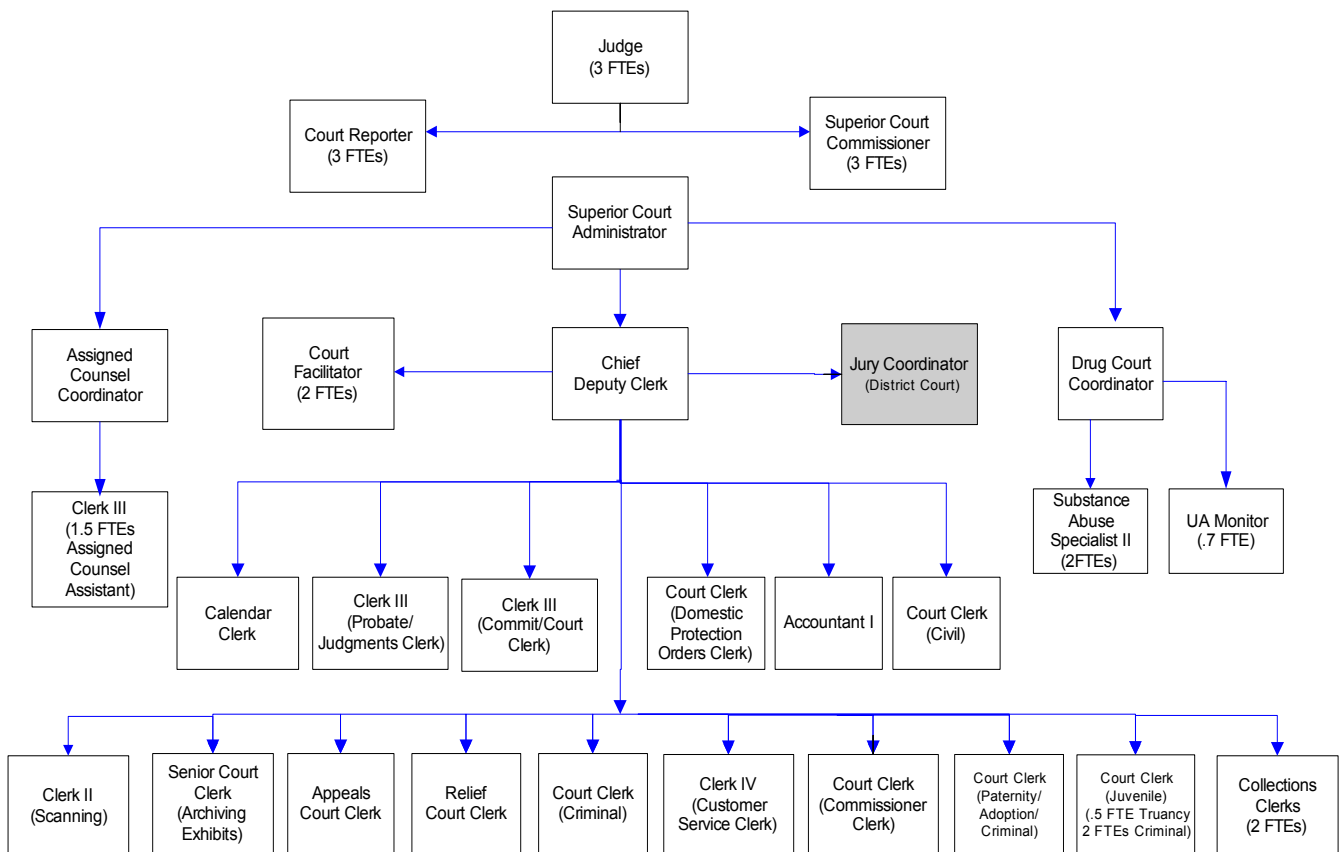
Whatcom County's three Superior Court judges, three full time and two part time court commissioners hear all cases involving: adult felonies, all juvenile offenses, divorce, child custody, support matters, probate, guardianships, adoptions, property claims in excess of \$50,000, paternity actions, mental incompetency, abused or neglected children. The Court Clerk is custodian of all court records and accounts. This office also provides family law facilitation services, mandatory arbitration, public defender applications, domestic violence and anti-harassment protection orders.

FTE's for this department

Year	2001	2002	2003	*2004	*2005	*2006
FTE	33.00	33.00	33.00	34.70	35.70	32.00

**budget*

The chart below shows the organizational structure for 2005 only.



Mission & Objectives

Mission

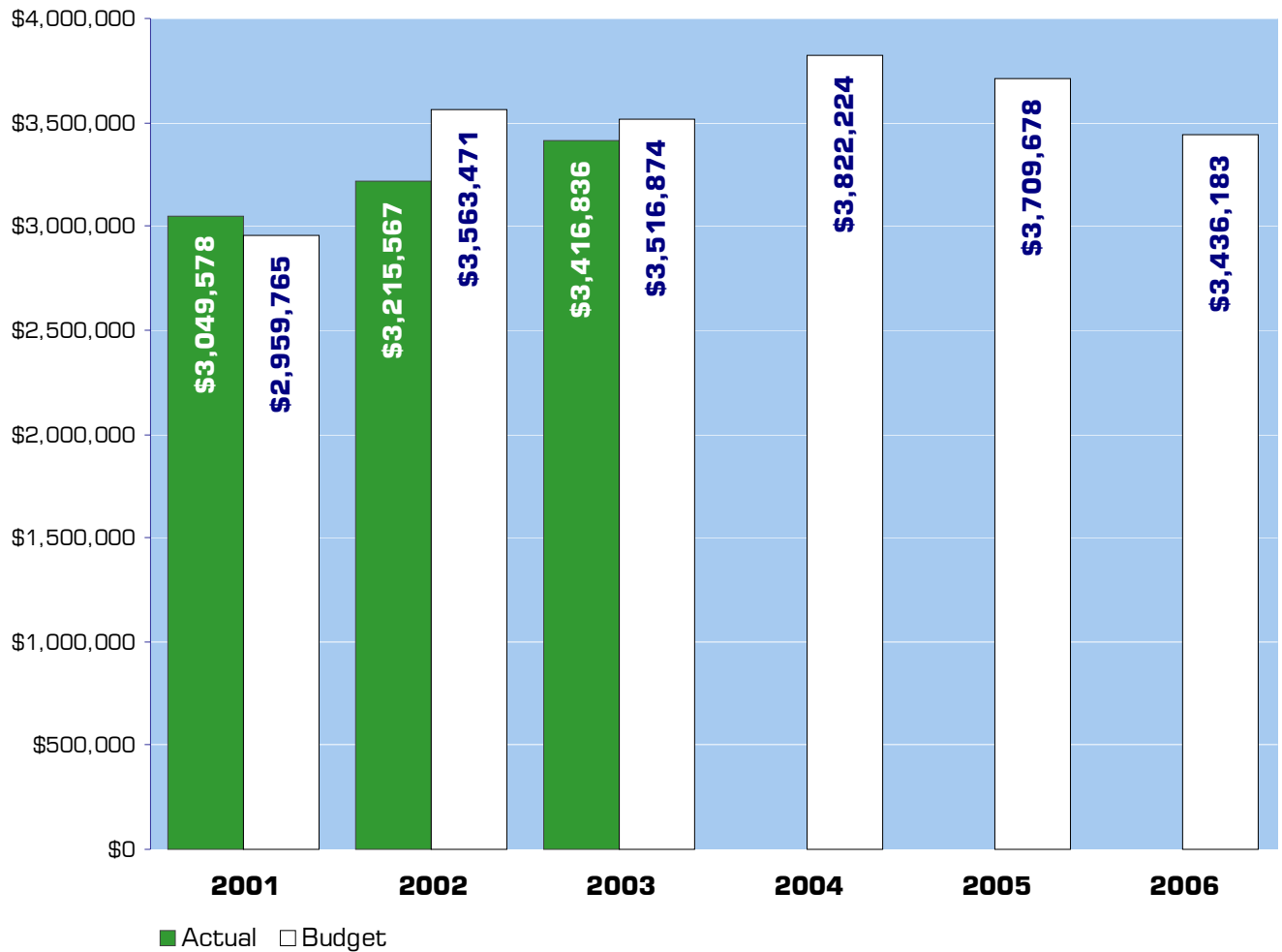
The mission of the Superior Court, Assigned Counsel, County Clerk and Family Court Services is to improve the quality and the perception of the quality of justice in Whatcom County by identifying deficiencies in and implementing measures to improve:

- 1) Access to justice
- 2) Expedition and timeliness
- 3) Equality, fairness and integrity
- 4) Independence and accountability
- 5) Public trust and confidence

Objectives

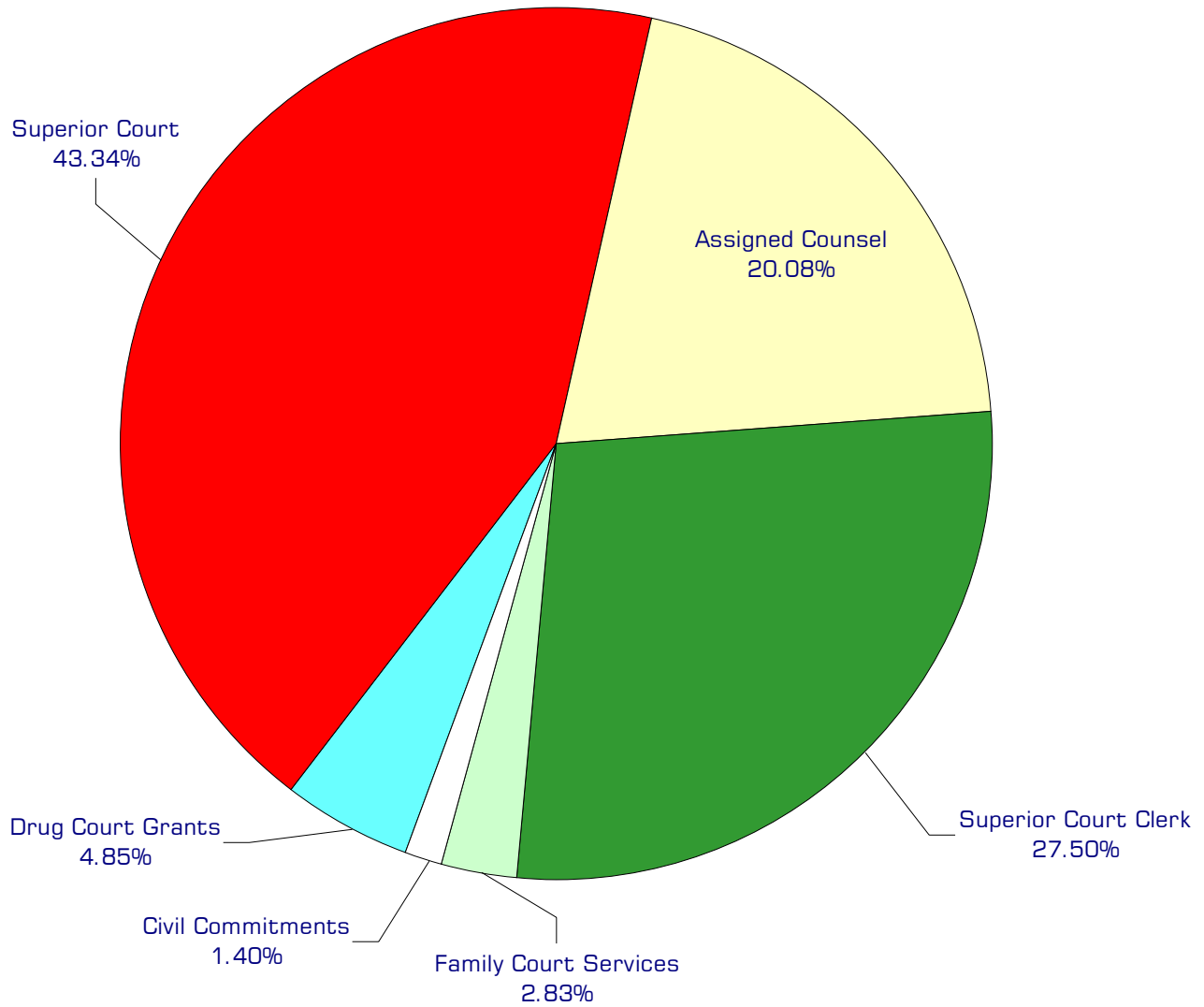
- Implement at-the-time-of-receipt document imaging, replacing daily microfilming and end-of-case archival filming; simultaneous web posting of documents; providing access to electronic file folders to Prosecutor, Public Defender and public access terminals; employ automated distribution of certain orders/documents to Jail, DOC, WSP and other business partners.
- Institute parent-pay program for indigent defense costs and costs of detention.
- Institute fee-for-service for Courthouse Facilitator consultations.
- Launch multi-county web posting of domestic violence protection orders.

Expenditure Trends



NOTE: Capital expenditures and interfund operating transfers are not shown to more accurately reflect ongoing operational costs.

2005-2006 Budget by Program



NOTE: Capital expenditures and interfund operating and residual equity transfers are not shown to more accurately reflect ongoing operational costs.

Program Summary

	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	Actual 2003	Budget 2004	Budget 2005	Budget 2006
OPERATIONS						
General Fund						
3100 Superior Court	1,418,190	1,469,405	1,445,658	1,552,123	1,534,046	1,562,850
3140 Assigned Counsel	662,534	646,147	679,019	790,825	714,549	720,463
3150 Superior Court Clerk	771,309	797,167	872,687	927,448	965,344	999,450
3160 Family Court Services	82,382	90,072	90,592	94,135	98,943	103,420
3170 Drug Courts Grant	110,256	199,073	317,079	407,693	346,796	-
3180 Civil Commitments	4,907	6,250	11,801	50,000	50,000	50,000
3190 STOP Grant	-	7,453	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Superior Court Operations</i>	3,049,578	3,215,567	3,416,836	3,822,224	3,709,678	3,436,183
CAPITAL						
General Fund						
3100 Superior Court	-	7,727	-	45,000	-	-
3150 Superior Court Clerk	1,559	-	-	-	-	-
3160 Family Court Services	2,296	-	-	-	-	-
3170 Drug Courts Grant	3,668	2,487	1,210	-	-	-
<i>Total Superior Court Capital</i>	7,523	10,214	1,210	45,000	-	-
TRANSFERS						
General Fund						
3100 Superior Court	6,707	-	-	-	-	-
3140 Assigned Counsel	1,082	-	-	-	-	-
3150 Superior Court Clerk	6,782	-	-	-	-	-
3160 Family Court Services	715	-	-	-	-	-
3170 Drug Court Grants	1,044	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Superior Court Transfers</i>	16,330	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL SUPERIOR COURT	3,073,431	3,225,781	3,418,046	3,867,224	3,709,678	3,436,183
Percent Change from Previous Year	13.5%	5.0%	6.0%	13.1%	-4.1%	-7.4%

2005-2006 Funding Sources

	2005	2006
Intergovernmental Revenues	499,260	278,813
Charges for Services	295,000	280,000
Miscellaneous Revenues	20,000	20,000
General Fund	2,869,918	2,857,370
Operating Trans - Drug Fund	25,500	0
Total Funding	3,709,678	3,436,183

Intergovernmental Revenue

The court receives reimbursement, in the form of grants from the federal and state governments, for costs incurred in connection with Drug Court, civil commitment, juvenile actions, and child support enforcement.

Charges for Services

The Superior Court charges for filings and various other services. Judicial fines and forfeits are not included as Superior Court revenue.

Miscellaneous Revenues

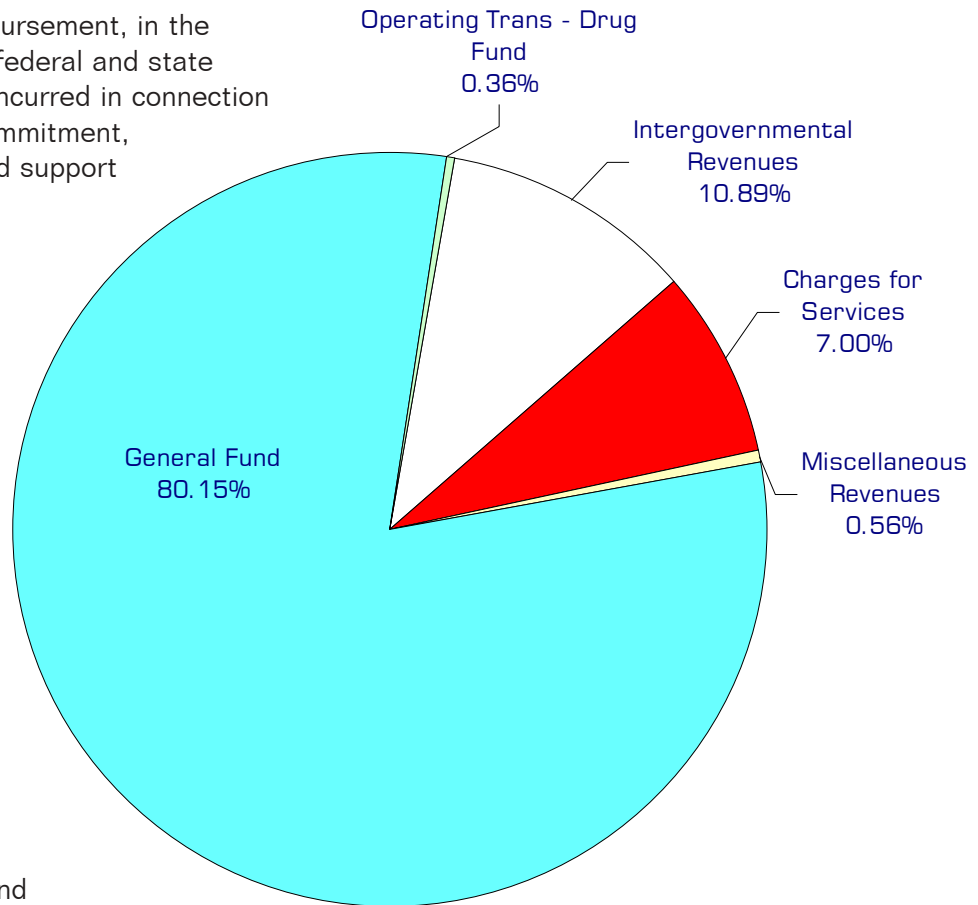
The Superior Court collects a surcharge on marriage licenses, as well as revenue from other miscellaneous sources.

General Fund

Undedicated General Fund resources.

Operating Transfer In - Drug Fund

To provide funding assistance to the Superior Court Drug Court Program.



Performance / Activity Measures

	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	Actual 2003	Projected 2004	Projected 2005	Projected 2006
Hearings/trials per year	17,120	17,809	18,017	19,472	20,056	20,658
Time to trial once ready, civil	6-12 months	6-12 months	6-12 months	6-12 months	6-12 months	6-12 months
Facilitator contacts	Unavailable	5,500	5,800	5,800	5,000	5,000
Pages in microfilm inventory	10,500,000	11,159,000	11,759,124	12,259,124	13,150,000	13,239,000
Cases filed	9,642	10,573	11,569	12,565	13,531	14,497
Documents filed	181,588	186,236	194,726	199,396	207,886	216,376
Computer records entered	1,308,406	1,334,593	1,342,133	1,448,514	1,554,895	1,661,276
Arbitrations filed	51	49	52	70	73	76
District Court AH & DV petitions filed	431	487	593	699	805	911
Superior Court AH & DV petitions filed	269	252	287	318	353	388
Assigned Counsel/contacts in jail	4,473	3,606	3,667	3,780	3,841	3,902
Assigned Counsel/applications denied	893	941	795	722	795	800
Assigned Counsel/cases conflicted out	390	357	348	378	408	438
JIS DV data entry (new cases/not TRO's)	687	647	681	690	715	749
Domestic mandatory mediations heard	64	66	71	86	91	96
Domestic settlement conferences heard	70	89	83	110	110	120
Dependency Guardian ad Litem appointments	382	303	331	540	441	461
Domestic trials	121	124	131	136	141	146
Files checked out/in	64,273	68,981	70,416	72,547	74,678	76,809
Protection Orders Scanned to Web (eff. July/03)			656 (1/2 yr)	1,458	1,604	1,750

Expenditures Summary

	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	Actual 2003	Budget 2004	Budget 2005	Budget 2006
GENERAL FUND						
3100 Superior Court						
Salaries & Wages	776,044	826,576	825,122	836,651	837,554	837,913
Benefits	153,081	120,864	115,156	130,195	146,064	162,025
Supplies	7,185	9,859	10,474	5,500	5,500	5,500
Other Services & Charges	481,880	512,106	494,906	579,777	544,928	557,412
Capital Outlay	-	7,727	-	45,000	-	-
Operating Transfers	6,707	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Superior Court</i>	1,424,897	1,477,132	1,445,658	1,597,123	1,534,046	1,562,850
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	5.1%	3.7%	-2.1%	10.5%	-3.9%	1.9%
3140 Assigned Counsel						
Salaries & Wages	82,619	88,341	100,554	114,239	100,291	102,035
Benefits	27,726	28,265	29,603	34,744	39,027	43,199
Supplies	-	129	136	1,500	1,500	1,500
Other Services & Charges	552,189	529,412	548,726	640,342	573,731	573,729
Operating Transfers	1,082	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Assigned Counsel</i>	663,616	646,147	679,019	790,825	714,549	720,463
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	32.4%	-2.6%	5.1%	16.5%	-9.6%	0.8%
3150 Superior Court Clerk						
Salaries & Wages	517,627	528,035	581,035	611,410	618,336	626,563
Benefits	153,675	158,443	181,133	204,049	232,608	258,487
Supplies	24,422	27,394	27,744	23,000	23,000	23,000
Other Services & Charges	75,585	83,295	82,775	88,989	91,400	91,400
Capital Outlay	1,559	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Transfers	6,782	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Superior Court Clerk</i>	779,650	797,167	872,687	927,448	965,344	999,450
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	6.5%	2.2%	9.5%	6.3%	4.1%	3.5%
3160 Family Court Services						
Salaries & Wages	48,800	63,010	69,664	71,174	72,813	74,235
Benefits	13,970	18,806	20,861	22,961	26,130	29,185
Supplies	2,234	-	67	-	-	-
Other Services & Charges	17,378	8,256	-	-	-	-
Capital Outlay	2,296	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Transfers	715	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Family Court Svcs</i>	85,393	90,072	90,592	94,135	98,943	103,420
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	97.8%	5.5%	0.6%	3.9%	5.1%	4.5%

continued on next page

Expenditures Summary continued

	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	Actual 2003	Budget 2004	Budget 2005	Budget 2006
3170 Drug Courts Grant						
Salaries & Wages	69,403	87,770	133,424	164,933	146,815	-
Benefits	18,479	22,696	37,320	48,420	53,391	-
Supplies	2,386	4,734	6,294	10,000	1,000	-
Other Services & Charges	19,988	83,873	140,041	184,340	145,590	-
Capital Outlay	3,668	2,487	1,210	-	-	-
Operating Transfers	1,044	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Drug Courts Grant</i>	114,968	201,560	318,289	407,693	346,796	-
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	6410.1%	75.3%	57.9%	28.1%	-14.9%	-100.0%
3180 Civil Commitments						
Other Services & Charges	4,907	6,250	11,801	50,000	50,000	50,000
<i>Total Drug Courts Grant</i>	4,907	6,250	11,801	50,000	50,000	50,000
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	-93.5%	27.4%	88.8%	323.7%	0.0%	0.0%
3190 STOP Grant						
Supplies	-	57	-	-	-	-
Other Services & Charges	-	7,396	-	-	-	-
<i>Total STOP Grant</i>	-	7,453	-	-	-	-
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	0.0%	0.0%	-100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
TOTAL SUPERIOR COURT	3,073,431	3,225,781	3,418,046	3,867,224	3,709,678	3,436,183
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	13.5%	5.0%	6.0%	13.1%	-4.1%	-7.4%

Services

Adult Drug Court

Intensive case management and monitoring of long-term drug users, involving treatment and reward and punishment.

Becca Cases (Truancy/CHINS/At-Risk)

Youthful offender programs, to modify incipient criminal behaviors.

Court Computer Management

Management of 30+ PC's and printers; involving the automation of business practices and interactivity with other law and justice agencies; liaison between local and state IS offices.

Court Interpretation

Arrange for in-court foreign language and American Sign Language interpreter services, maintain library of certified and qualified interpreters and coordinate services with other offices and agencies.

Dispute Resolution Center

Provide family law dispute resolution services and small claims dispute resolution.

Family Drug Court

Case management for drug using parents in dependency cases.

Guardians ad Litem

Provide court ordered independent investigations regarding alleged incompetents, abused children and children whose parents are in dispute.

Jury Administration

Summons 24,000 jurors per year. (80% for Superior Court, 20% District Court)

Juvenile Drug Court

Intensive case management of juvenile drug users, providing treatment and life skills.

Mandatory Mediation

In domestic relations cases certain matters MUST be mediated before the parties may come to court. These matters include property, custody and visitation.

Public Education

Provide for public education.

Settlement Conferences

The requirement that parties must attend a settlement conference presided over by a judicial officer, with the intent that parties may be induced to settle cases based on predicted trial outcomes.

Teen Court

Alternative to criminal case, where youthful offender is tried by peers, with peers acting as attorneys, court staff and jury.

Services continued

Assigned Counsel

Provide indigency screening, Superior/District Court's criminal actions, parents in dependencies, alleged incompetents, juveniles, GAL applicants and conflict counsel.

Domestic Violence

Provide protection order processing for both Superior and District Courts, domestic violence and antiharassments and training satellite processors at Crisis Center.

Mandatory Arbitration

Provide arbitration for certain civil cases with limited amounts in dispute. Maintain strike-list of 47 arbitrators.

Appeals

Criminal and civil appeals to Court of Appeals and Supreme Court, appeals from District and Municipal Courts and administrative agencies.

Archiving Records Management

The microfilming, preservation and transfer of approximately 400,000 pages of case files annually, under direction of the Secretary of State.

Bar Code File Tracking (CRIMS)

Infrared scanning program for file folder tracking.

Calendar Scheduling

Scheduling of approximately 20,000 hearings and trials per year.

Change of Venue

The certification and forwarding of complete files to sister counties pursuant to a court order.

Civil Cases

Index and file documents, temporary orders, preliminary hearings, trials, supplemental examinations, garnishments and foreclosures, trust accounting and respond to phone and mail research requests.

Collections

Contractual commercial collections for delinquent payment of adult criminal and juvenile legal financial obligations.

Counter/Phone Reception Customer Service

Full service customer service and phone reception, with on-line research ability.

Criminal Cases

Services include indexing and filing documents, probable cause determinations, first appearances, preliminary hearings, trials, sentencing, issuing warrants of arrest, certifying and mailing J&S's weekly, responding to research requests, taking fingerprints, probation violations, collecting and disbursing restitution/fines.

Services continued

Document search for Office of Support Enforcement

File research and faxing of documents for collection purposes to state office.

Domestic Relations

Index and file documents; respond to phone and mail research requests, temporary orders, preliminary hearings, trials, support, custody and visitation modification, contempt actions, copying tapes of proceedings and preparing monthly DSHS report.

Domestic Violence Data Entry

Parties information entry in statewide database of protection orders.

Exhibit Management

Catalog and monitor release of exhibits, transfer to archives, monitor for hazards, coordinate destruction and/or return.

Grant and Cost Reimbursement Agreement Tracking/Accounting

Record, monitor and submit grant and interlocal agreement financial tracking for JAIBG Grant, Drug Court Grant, Support Enforcement Grant and WAC civil commitment costs.

Involuntary Commitments

For involuntary mental health commitments, provide indexing and filing of documents, respond to research requests. Hearings and trials at hospital courtroom.

Issuance of Warrants

Timely issue arrest warrants and bench warrants.

Judgments

Index and file documents, respond to research requests. Provide official index of all debts reduced to enforceable judgment, entry required within 24 hours and partial and full satisfaction of judgments.

Juvenile Dependency

Provide indexing and filing of documents, and research requests. Attorney General-filed cases of reabused or neglected children, 6-month reviews until 18; hearings and trials.

Juvenile Offenders

Provide indexing and filing of documents, respond to research requests, first appearances, hearings, trials and probation violations.

Paternity & Adoptions

Index and file documents, respond to research requests, generate notices, hearings, trials, monitor sealed and unsealed portions of files.

Probate & Guardianship

Index and file documents; respond to phone and mail research requests; estate settlement; guardianship monitoring; hearings; trials; issuing Form K's; Letters Testamentary/Administration.

Services continued

Restitution and Probation Accounting

Provide accounting services to receipt \$250,000 monthly, bank deposits, restitution disbursements, manage investment accounts for minors, payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable.

Specialized/Confidential Record Tracking

Limited access topics received/indexed/filed confidentially: including one-party wiretap consents, special inquiry proceedings and search warrants.

Time-Pay, Criminal Legal Financial Obligations

Contractual commercial installment payment services for criminal defendants ordered to pay financial obligations.

Web Posting -Domestic Violence Orders

Scan/post to web domestic violence protection orders.

Family Law Courthouse Facilitator

Provide assistance with domestic relations matters for those without attorneys. Clerk is required to provide assistance and the use of a Facilitator is optional.

