

Superior Court

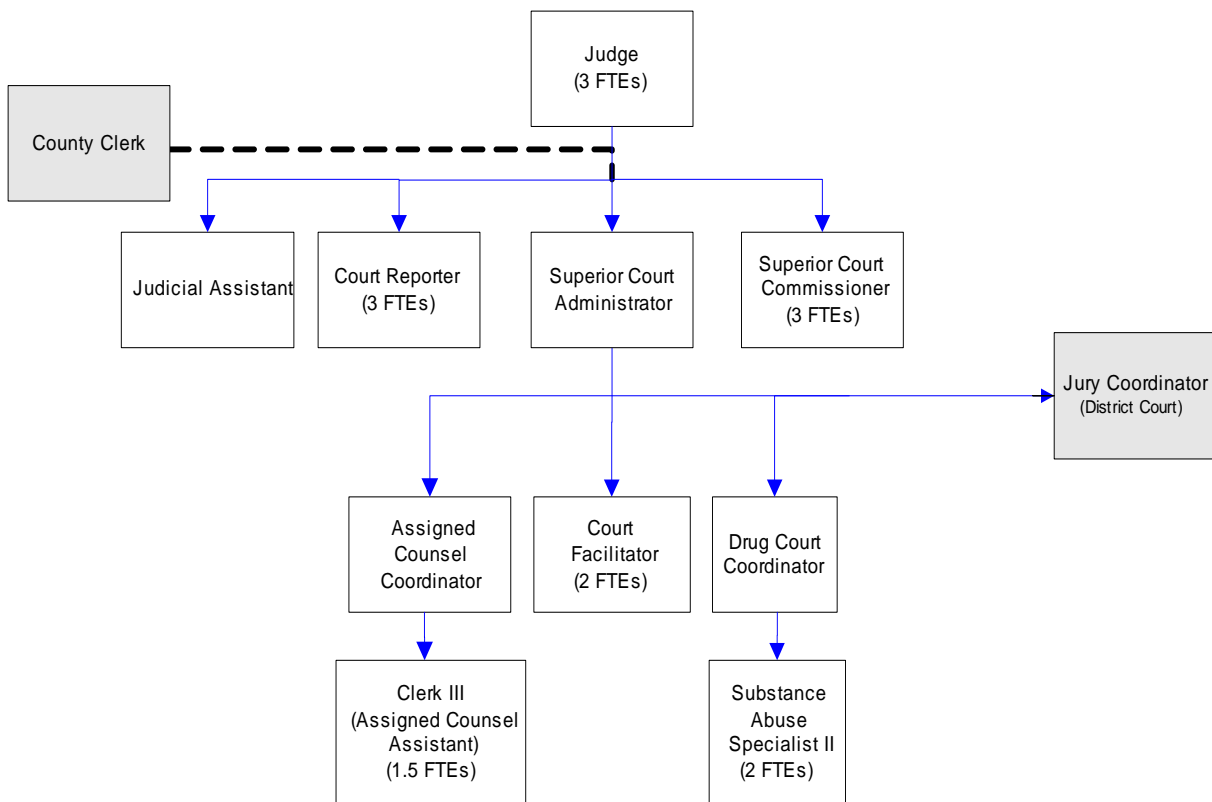
Whatcom County's three Superior Court judges and three full-time and two part-time court commissioners hear all cases involving: adult felonies, all juvenile offenses, divorce, child custody, support matters, probate, guardianships, adoptions, property claims in excess of \$50,000, paternity actions, mental incompetency, and abused or neglected children. The Superior Court Administrator oversees judicial operations and may also supervise related speciality programs.

FTE's for this department

Year	2003	2004	2005	*2006	*2007	*2008
FTE	33.00	34.70	37.20	16.50	18.50	18.50

**budget*

The chart below shows the organizational structure for 2007 only.



Mission & Objectives

Mission

The mission of the Superior Court, Assigned Counsel, 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:

- ◆ Access to justice.
- ◆ Expedition and timeliness.
- ◆ Equality, fairness and integrity.
- ◆ Independence and accountability.
- ◆ Public trust and confidence.

Objectives

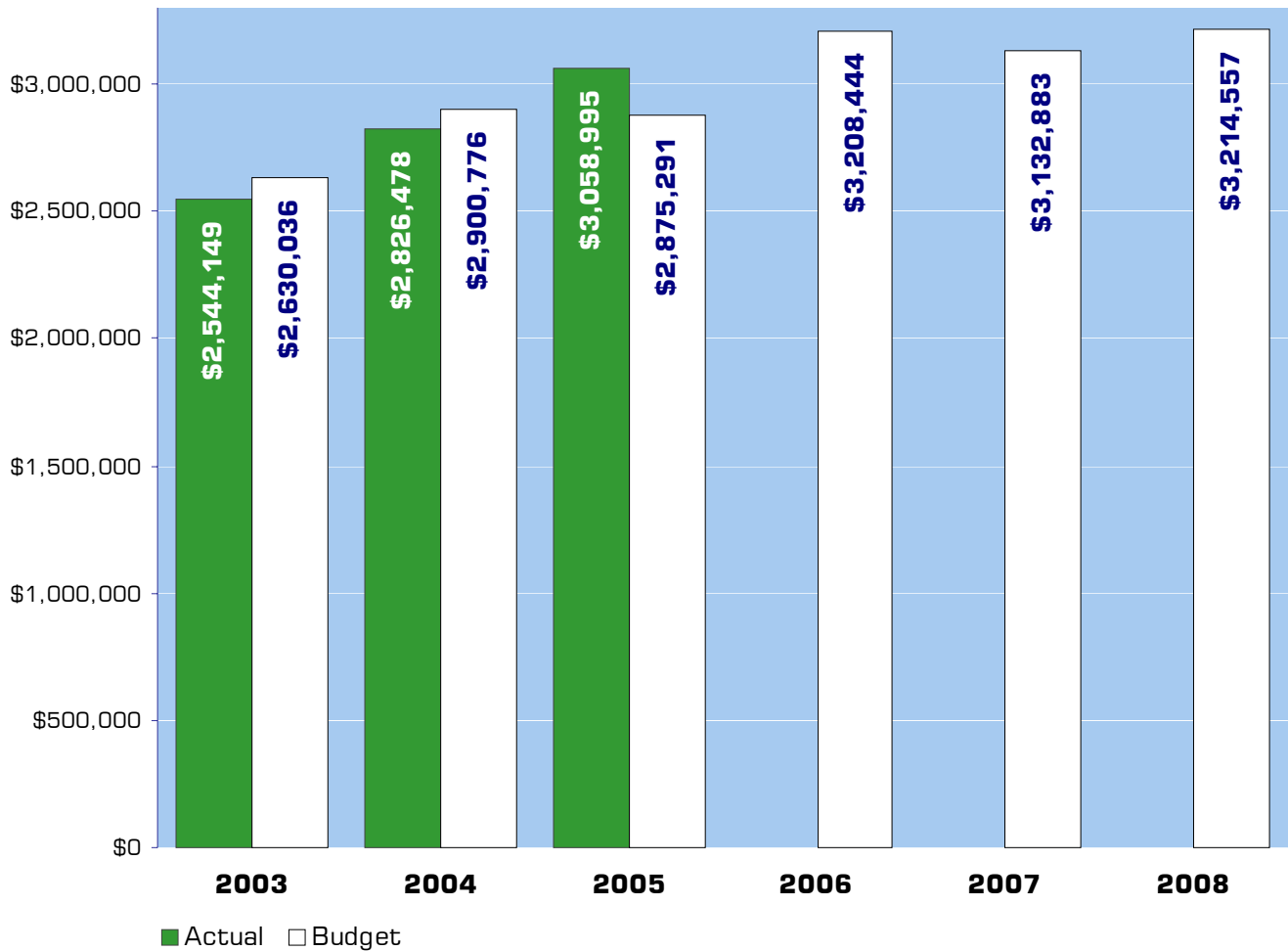
Court Operations

- Effectively manage criminal and noncriminal cases and calendars to assure expeditious resolution and completion within established time frames.
- Reduce backlog of unresolved criminal cases by 20%.
- Design and implement case management practices in probate, guardianship and civil case, to include at-the-time-of-filing complexity assessment, court ordered timelines and dispute resolution alternatives. Implement volunteer-based guardianship monitoring program.
- Implement improved in-court practices to more efficiently access virtual files and electronic calendars.
- Explore and implement in-court document generation to avoid subsequent hearings for entry of orders.
- Work with administration and Public Defender to reduce indigent defense costs.

Drug Courts

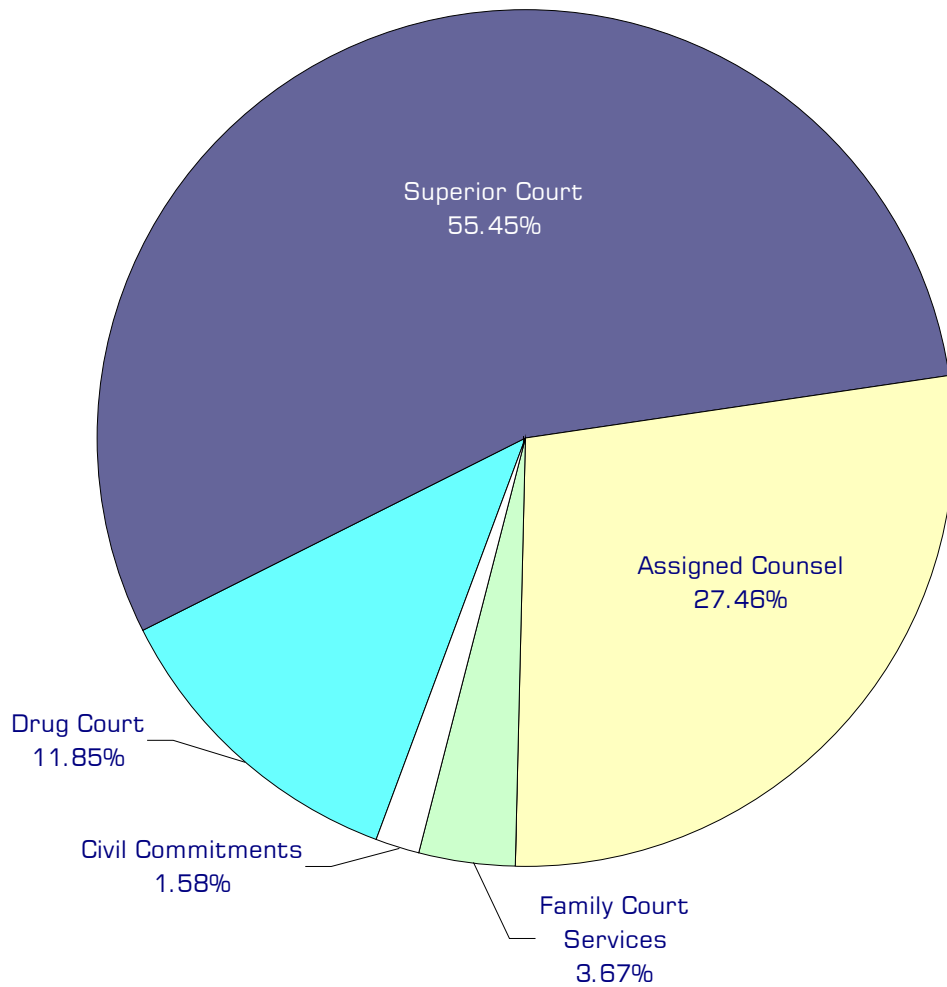
- Expedite enrollment approvals.
- Continue to seek stable funding sources.

Expenditure Trends



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

2007-2008 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 2003	Actual 2004	Actual 2005	Budget 2006	Budget 2007	Budget 2008
OPERATIONS						
General Fund						
3100 Superior Court	1,445,658	1,531,441	1,673,653	1,660,779	1,741,750	1,769,643
3111 Training/Registration	-	-	-	4,000	4,000	4,000
3140 Assigned Counsel	679,019	763,306	899,474	1,075,329	854,247	888,877
3160 Family Court Services	90,592	93,873	102,721	106,560	114,081	118,687
3170 Drug Courts Grant	317,079	366,007	373,553	307,776	368,805	383,350
3180 Civil Commitments	11,801	71,851	9,594	54,000	50,000	50,000
<i>Total Superior Court Operations</i>	<i>2,544,149</i>	<i>2,826,478</i>	<i>3,058,995</i>	<i>3,208,444</i>	<i>3,132,883</i>	<i>3,214,557</i>
CAPITAL						
General Fund						
3100 Superior Court	-	1,631	-	-	-	-
3170 Drug Court	1,210	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Superior Court Capital</i>	<i>1,210</i>	<i>1,631</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
TOTAL SUPERIOR COURT	2,545,359	2,828,109	3,058,995	3,208,444	3,132,883	3,214,557
Percent Change from Previous Year	4.8%	11.1%	8.2%	4.9%	-2.4%	2.6%

2007-2008 Funding Sources

	2007	2008
Intergovernmental Revenues	365,943	360,943
Charges for Services	75,000	75,000
Miscellaneous Revenues	14,000	14,000
General Fund	2,652,440	2,739,114
Operating Trans - Drug Fund	25,500	25,500
Total Funding	3,132,883	3,214,557

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

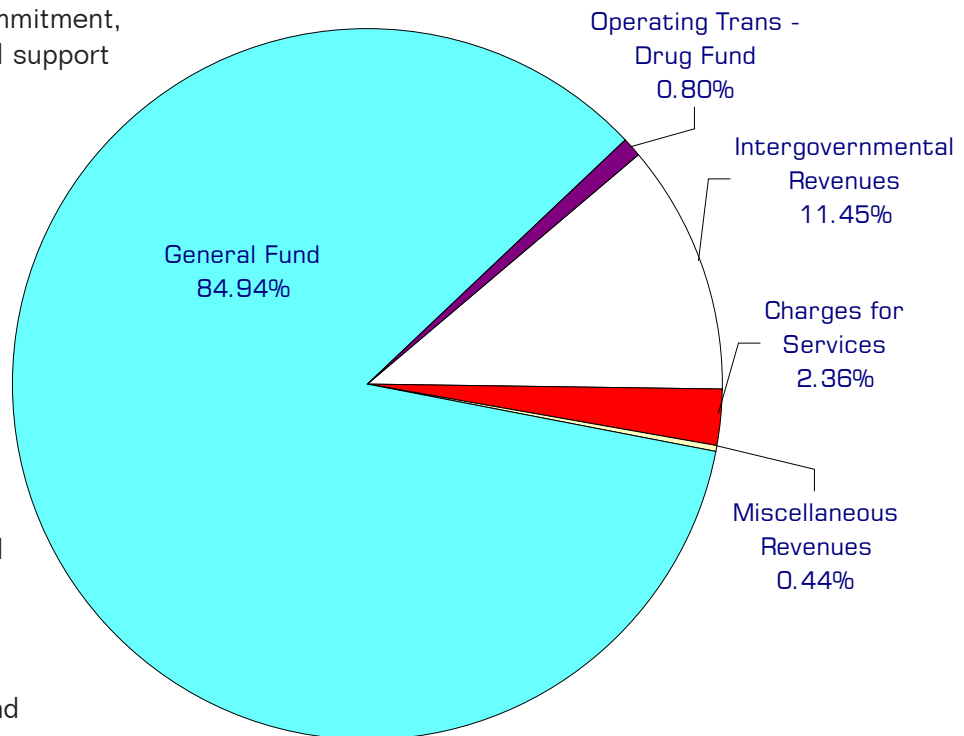
The Superior Court collects a surcharge on marriage licenses, as well as revenue from other miscellaneous sources.

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 2003	Actual 2004	Actual 2005	Projected 2006	Projected 2007	Projected 2008
Ratio of active criminal cases pending to cases resolved	100%	107%	94%	90%	70%	50%

Lower numbers suggest proportionately smaller backlogs of pending cases.

Expenditures Summary

	Actual 2003	Actual 2004	Actual 2005	Budget 2006	Budget 2007	Budget 2008
GENERAL FUND						
3100 Superior Court						
Salaries & Wages	825,122	828,258	949,152	903,496	966,752	968,636
Benefits	115,156	128,004	147,152	156,921	201,598	219,278
Supplies	10,474	9,865	18,569	6,000	13,500	11,270
Other Services & Charges	494,906	565,314	558,780	594,362	559,900	570,459
Capital Outlay	-	1,631	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Superior Court</i>	1,445,658	1,533,072	1,673,653	1,660,779	1,741,750	1,769,643
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	-2.1%	6.0%	9.2%	-0.8%	4.9%	1.6%
3111 Training/Registration						
Supplies	-	-	-	1,400	1,400	1,400
Other Services & Charges	-	-	-	2,600	2,600	2,600
<i>Total Assigned Counsel</i>	-	-	-	4,000	4,000	4,000
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
3140 Assigned Counsel						
Salaries & Wages	100,554	116,494	98,543	115,293	108,238	110,053
Benefits	29,603	35,658	31,837	42,112	48,061	52,489
Supplies	136	330	0	1,500	1,500	1,500
Other Services & Charges	548,726	610,824	769,094	916,424	696,448	724,835
<i>Total Assigned Counsel</i>	679,019	763,306	899,474	1,075,329	854,247	888,877
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	5.1%	12.4%	17.8%	19.6%	-20.6%	4.1%
3160 Family Court Services						
Salaries & Wages	69,664	71,114	77,352	77,982	81,066	82,482
Benefits	20,861	22,759	25,257	28,578	33,015	36,205
Supplies	67	-	112	-	-	-
<i>Total Family Court Svcs</i>	90,592	93,873	102,721	106,560	114,081	118,687
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	0.6%	3.6%	9.4%	3.7%	7.1%	4.0%
3170 Drug Court						
Salaries & Wages	133,424	149,119	160,057	141,294	160,603	166,871
Benefits	37,320	47,459	52,319	45,385	55,823	61,672
Supplies	6,294	2,196	5,043	1,001	3,000	3,000
Other Services & Charges	140,041	167,233	156,134	120,096	149,379	151,807
Capital Outlay	1,210	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Total Drug Courts</i>	318,289	366,007	373,553	307,776	368,805	383,350
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	57.9%	15.0%	2.1%	-17.6%	19.8%	3.9%
3180 Civil Commitments						
Other Services & Charges	11,801	71,851	9,594	54,000	50,000	50,000
<i>Total Civil Commitments</i>	11,801	71,851	9,594	54,000	50,000	50,000
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	88.8%	508.9%	-86.6%	462.9%	-7.4%	0.0%
TOTAL SUPERIOR COURT ADMIN	2,545,359	2,828,109	3,058,995	3,208,444	3,132,883	3,214,557
<i>Percent Change from Previous Year</i>	4.8%	11.1%	8.2%	4.9%	-2.4%	2.6%

Services

Adult Drug Court

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

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.

Assigned Counsel

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

Mandatory Arbitration

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

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.

