

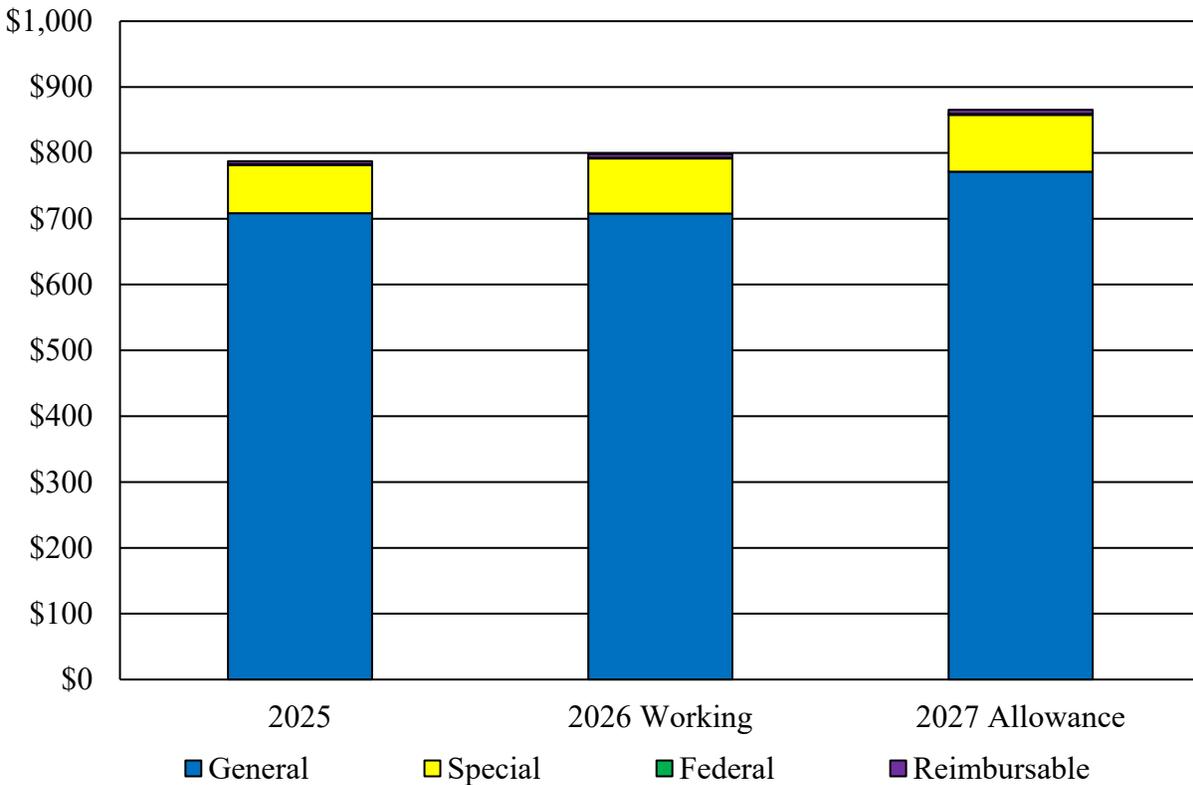
C00A00 Judiciary

Executive Summary

The Judiciary is the branch of State government tasked with adjudicating legal disputes and interpreting and applying the laws of the State. While the Judiciary’s budget is submitted as part of the Governor’s budget, it is developed without Executive Branch oversight.

Operating Budget Summary

**Fiscal 2027 Budget Increases \$67.1 Million, or 8.4%, to \$865.3 Million
(\$ in Millions)**



Note: The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

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- General funds in the fiscal 2027 allowance increase by \$63.4 million, or 9.0%, compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation. This increase is largely due to personnel expenditures including 51 new regular positions, contractual staffing, and grants for local courts. Special funds in the fiscal 2027 allowance increase by \$2.9 million, or 3.5%, compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation due to an increase in the use of the Land Records Improvement Fund (LRIF). These changes are largely driven by increases in personnel expenditures, equipment for office functions, and funds to support the public retrieval system for statewide recorded land records.

Key Observations

- ***Fiscal 2025 Court Performance Measures Report:*** The fiscal 2025 court performance measures highlighted improvements in average case processing time in the District Court, with decreases occurring in all but two of the tracked case types. In the circuit court, the average case processing times decreased for seven of the eight tracked case types.
- ***Judiciary Programs Continue to Offer Support to Marylanders in Need:*** The Judiciary operates multiple programs designed to provide justice for Marylanders in need. These programs provide representation, legal advice, and other forms of support to Marylanders. The total number of Problem-Solving Courts (PSC) increased by 6 since February 2025 to a total of 74, with successful completions also increasing from 297 in fiscal 2024 to 406 in fiscal 2025. Total served in Adult Drug Court also continued to increase, from 1,641 in fiscal 2024 to 1,939 in fiscal 2025. Participation in the Appointed Attorney Program decreased in fiscal 2025 by 548, from 17,429 in fiscal 2024 to 16,881.

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

	<u>Amount Change</u>
1. Reduce \$250,000 in general funds for the purpose of postage expenses.	-\$250,000
2. Reduce \$2,500,000 in general funds made for salary increases for contractual personnel.	-\$2,500,000
3. Reduce \$200,000 in general funds made for telephone expenses.	-\$200,000
4. Reduce \$150,000 in general funds for the purpose of travel.	-\$150,000
5. Reduce \$750,000 in general funds made for printing expenses.	-\$750,000

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6. Reduce \$400,000 made for the purpose of providing attorneys for required representation at initial appearances before District Court Commissioners consistent with the holding of the Supreme Court of Maryland in *DeWolfe v. Richmond*. -\$400,000
7. Reduce \$7,000,000 for the Judiciary's major information technology development projects. -\$7,000,000
8. Reduce \$509,671 in general funds for the purpose of new positions. -\$509,671
9. Add budget bill language to reduce general funds to align the increase in judicial salaries with the recommendations made by the Judicial Compensation Commission.
10. Add budget bill language to reduce general funds, special funds, and reimbursable funds to remove the 1% merit increase for personnel.
11. Add language to restrict the use of funds for the Appointed Attorney Program.
12. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on the costs and utilization associated with the Appointed Attorney Program.
13. Adopt committee narrative requesting an annual report on court performance measures.
14. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on Problem-Solving Court funding and expenditures.
15. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on the need for judgeships in fiscal 2028.
16. Adopt committee narrative requesting an annual report on Major Information Technology Development Project statuses.
17. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on the balance of the Land Records Improvement Fund.
18. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on private home detention monitoring.

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19. Adopt committee narrative requesting a report on long-term vacant positions.

Total Net Change to Fiscal 2027 Allowance **-\$17,310,317**

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Operating Budget Analysis

Program Description

The Judiciary is composed of four courts and six other programs that support the administrative, personnel, technological, and regulatory functions of the Judicial branch of the State government. The courts consist of the Supreme Court of Maryland, the Appellate Court of Maryland, the circuit courts, and the District Court. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland is the administrative head of the State’s judicial system. The Chief Justice appoints the State court administrator as head of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to carry out administrative duties including data analysis, personnel management, education, and training for judicial personnel.

Other units are also included under the administrative and budgetary purview of the Judiciary. These units include the Rules Committee, the Commission on Judicial Disabilities, and the Maryland State Board of Law Examiners. Additionally, the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library serves the legal information needs of the State. The Judicial Information Systems unit manages information systems maintenance and information technology (IT) development for the Judiciary.

Performance Analysis: Managing for Results

1. District Court Case Clearance Rates Continue to Improve

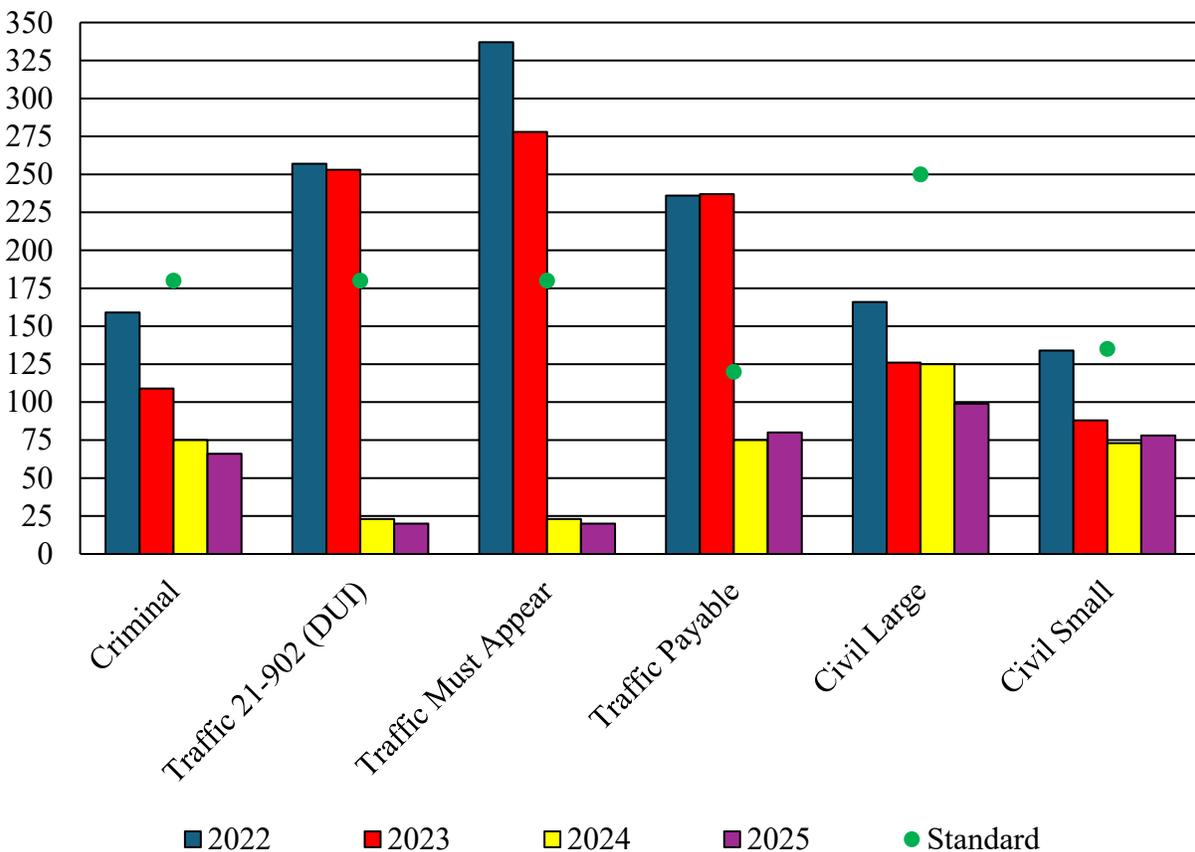
In December 2025, the Judiciary submitted its annual report on court performance measures, which compared data between fiscal 2024 and 2025 to measure changes in the Judiciary’s performance. The Judiciary sets a standard for the number of days that each case should take for processing from start to finish. The standards set for Criminal, driving under the influence (DUI), and Traffic Must Appear cases are all set at 180 days. Civil Small cases are set to take no more than 135 days, an increase from fiscal 2024 in which the standard was set at no more than 120 days. Traffic Payable is set to take no more than 120 days, and Civil Large cases are set to take up to 250 days. The District Court hears a variety of cases, including all landlord-tenant cases, motor vehicle violations, misdemeanors, certain felonies, and claims of \$5,000 or less among other types of cases. This wide range of cases requires the Judiciary to have procedures in place to effectively process cases and analyze performance to make changes as needed in personnel and practices. The data submitted by the Judiciary is a sample of all cases in the State, and the analysis of performance in the report is based on the sample data.

As shown in **Exhibit 1**, in fiscal 2025, performance in the District Court continued to improve for every tracked case type, except for Traffic Payable and Civil Small, compared to fiscal 2024. Additionally, the average processing time for every tracked case type continued to be

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below the time standard set by the Judiciary after three of the six tracked case types exceeded the time standard in fiscal 2023. The Judiciary has cited the transition to the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) case management system and changes to DUI and Traffic Must Appear cases as reasons for the decrease in overall processing times. DUI and Traffic Must Appear cases previously began on the date of the citation issuance, but the Judiciary changed this in fiscal 2024 as these cases now start on the date of the defendant’s first appearance before a judicial officer.

**Exhibit 1
Average District Court Case Processing Times
Fiscal 2022-2025**



DUI: driving under the influence

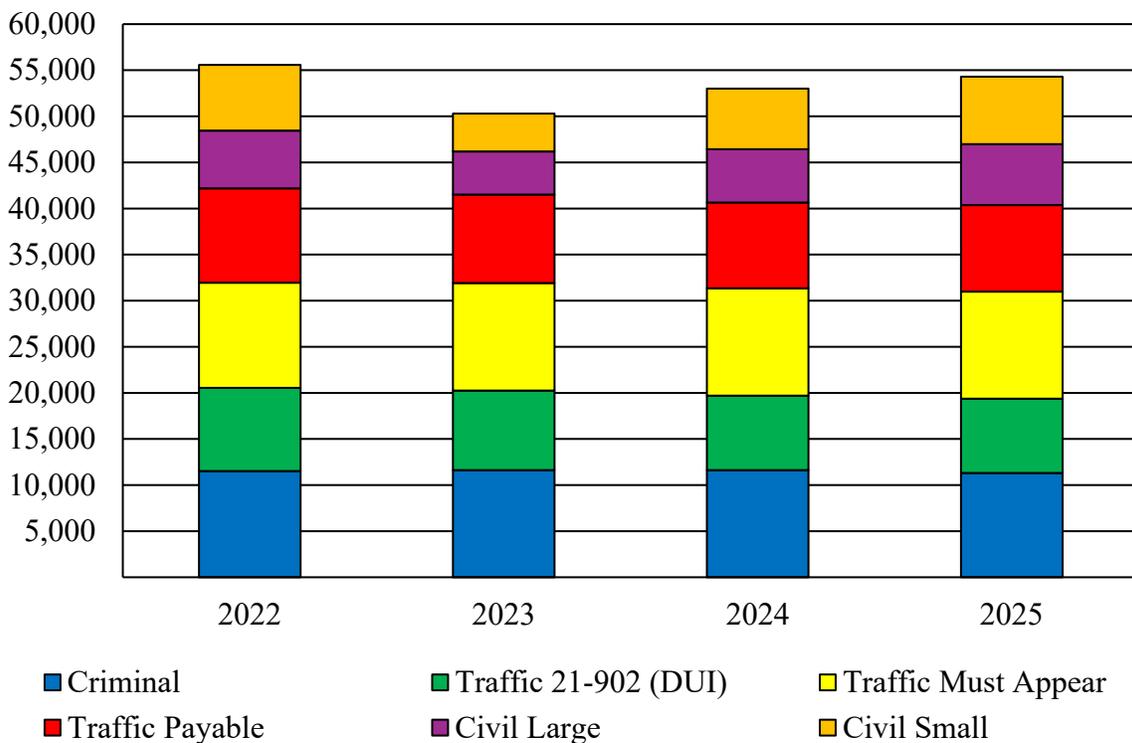
Source: Maryland Judiciary

As shown in **Exhibit 2**, the number of cases heard by the District Court increased in fiscal 2025 by 1,291 compared to fiscal 2024 to a total of 54,302 total cases. The largest increases were in Civil Large and Civil Small cases. These case types have increased over the last

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three consecutive fiscal years, while DUI case types have decreased each year for the last four consecutive fiscal years. When excluding Civil Large and Civil Small cases, the cases heard by the District Court overall decreased by 270 compared to fiscal 2024 to 40,372 in fiscal 2025. The Judiciary has cited economic challenges such as inflation over the last few years as reasons for the increase in Civil Large and Civil Small cases. Workload will continue to be monitored, and the Judiciary intends to utilize the MDEC system to assist in work distribution.

Exhibit 2
Sample of Cases Heard by the District Court
Fiscal 2022-2025



DUI: driving under the influence

Source: Maryland Judiciary

2. Circuit Court Case Processing Times Improve

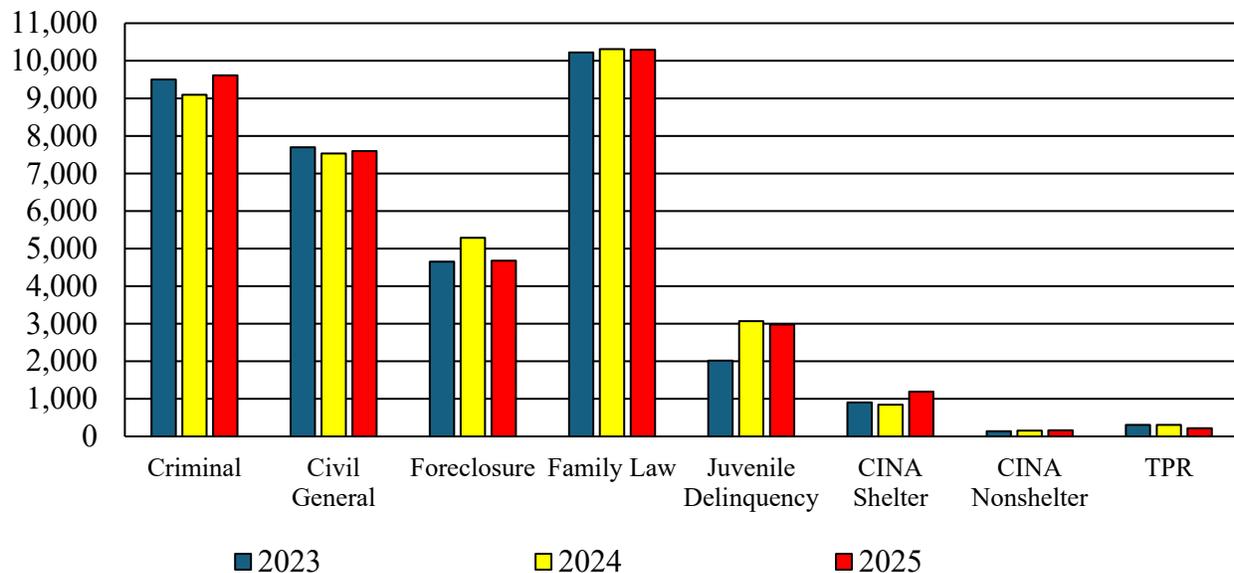
The Judiciary’s annual report on performance measures also covers the circuit courts in every county and Baltimore City. The circuit courts hold jury trials, unlike the District Court, and

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deal with serious criminal cases along with major civil cases, family law cases, and many appeals from the District Court. The circuit courts are grouped into eight judicial circuits. As with the District Court, the data submitted by the Judiciary is a sample of data from the whole State, and the analysis of performance is based on the sample data.

As shown in **Exhibit 3**, the number of cases heard by the circuit court increased in fiscal 2025 by a net 131 cases compared to fiscal 2024. The largest increase was in criminal cases, which increased by 515 to a total of 9,612. Additional increases included 346 Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) Shelter cases, 65 civil cases, and 11 CINA Nonshelter cases. These increases were partially offset by a reduction in foreclosure cases, which decreased by 609 in fiscal 2025 to a total of 4,679 cases. Other decreases include 92 juvenile delinquency cases, 85 Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) cases, and 20 family law cases.

Exhibit 3
Sample of Cases Heard by the Circuit Court
Fiscal 2023-2025



CINA: Child in Need of Assistance
TPR: Termination of Parental Rights

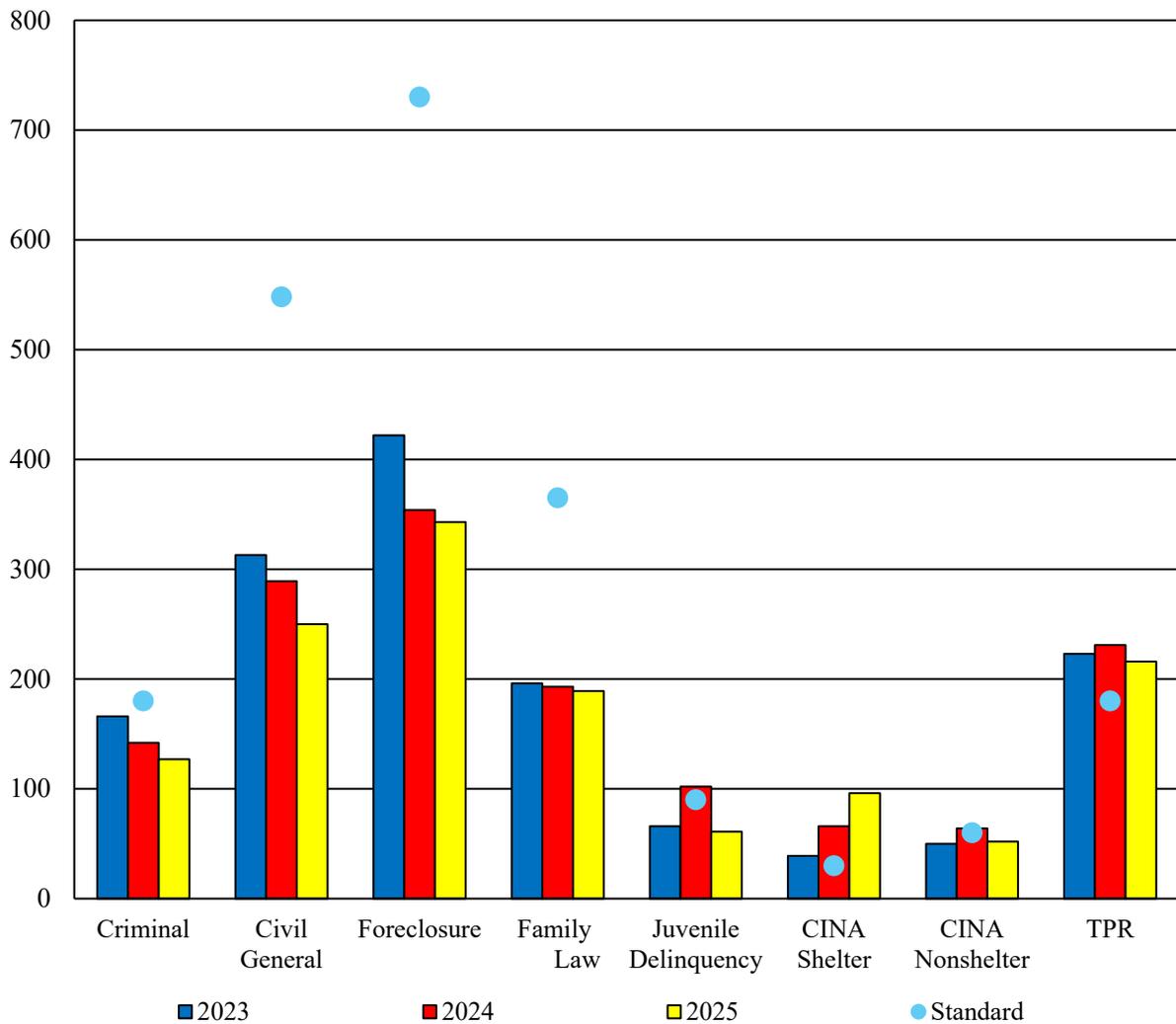
Source: Maryland Judiciary

As shown in **Exhibit 4**, the average case processing time decreased for all of the tracked case types, with the exception of CINA Shelter cases, which increased by 45.5%, or 30 days. Juvenile delinquency and CINA Nonshelter cases decreased below the time standards set by the Judiciary in fiscal 2025, with only CINA Shelter and TPR cases failing to meet the time standard.

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The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends the adoption of committee narrative requesting the submission of a report on court performance measures for fiscal 2026.

Exhibit 4
Average Circuit Court Case Processing Times
Fiscal 2023-2025



CINA: Child in Need of Assistance
TPR: Termination of Parental Rights

Source: Maryland Judiciary

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3. Total PSC Initiatives Continue to Increase

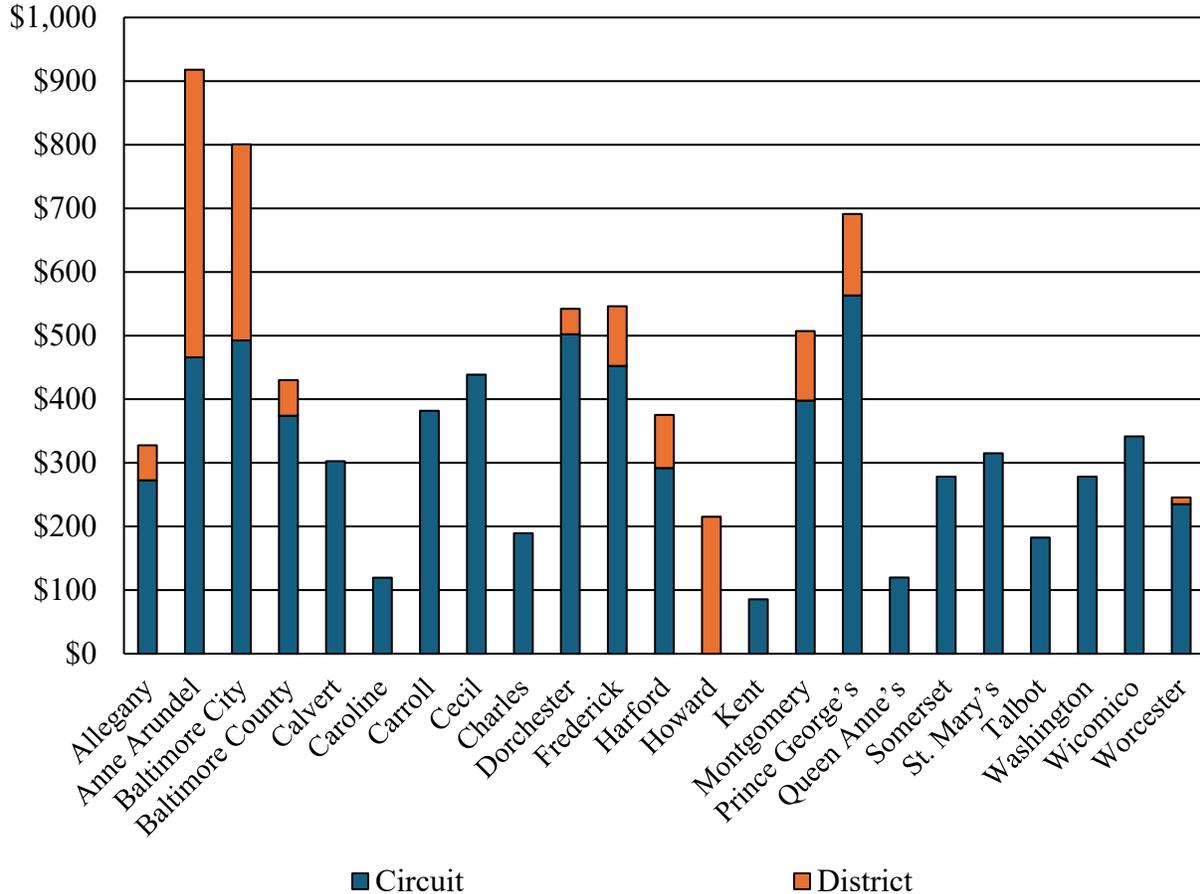
The Judiciary operates different types of courts referred to as PSCs, which are designed to deliver justice for defendants that are facing certain circumstances that necessitate additional attention as a part of a collaborative therapeutic system. The PSCs include:

- Adult Drug Court;
- Mental Health Court;
- Veterans Treatment Court;
- Re-Entry Court;
- Truancy Reduction Court;
- Family Recovery Court;
- Juvenile Drug Court; and
- Back on Track Court.

These courts operate by utilizing partnerships with public and private entities to promote positive outcomes. PSCs maintain specialized dockets that combine a variety of approaches to help an individual leave the justice system and return to being a functioning member of society. Some of the approaches employed by PSCs include therapy or other mental health support, assistance with housing and employment, rehab for drugs or alcohol addiction, and other supports as determined by the court, prosecutor, public defenders, and other involved parties. The Judiciary has created PSCs in 23 of the 24 jurisdictions in the State and monitors outcomes from these courts and evaluates the potential for new PSCs. In calendar 2024, the Office of PSCs published a report detailing a new model regarding Child Support Cases for jurisdictions and the best methods to implement this new court. This concept emerged from discussions and the work of a Child Support Workgroup as a potential new PSC, but to date, no Child Support Court has been developed by the Judiciary. **Appendix 4** provides information on the availability of PSCs by jurisdiction.

Committee narrative in the 2025 *Joint Chairmen's Report* (JCR) requested that the Judiciary submit a report on PSC performance and funding. Judiciary's response indicated that the actual cost to operate all PSCs in fiscal 2025 was \$8.6 million, and the fiscal 2026 working appropriation contains \$8.2 million for PSC operations. The fiscal 2027 allowance increases to \$8.8 million for PSC operations. As shown in **Exhibit 5**, circuit courts accounted for \$7.1 million, or 82.0%, of the funding for PSCs in fiscal 2025. The largest recipients of PSC funding in fiscal 2025 were Anne Arundel County and Baltimore City, which expended 10.6% and 9.3%, respectively, of the program's total expenditures.

**Exhibit 5
Problem-Solving Court Funding by Jurisdiction
Fiscal 2025
(\$ in Thousands)**



Source: Maryland Judiciary

The Judiciary currently operates a total of 74 PSCs in every jurisdiction except for Garrett County. This is an increase from the 68 PSCs that operated in February 2025. The increase in courts includes four new veterans courts, a District Court mental health court, and a truancy reduction court. As shown in **Exhibit 6**, Adult Drug Courts are the most common type of PSC, totaling 28 in the District and circuit courts combined.

Exhibit 6
Problem-Solving Courts by Type

<u>Type of PSC</u>	<u>PSCs</u>
Adult Circuit Drug Court	20
Veterans Court	13
District Court Mental Health Court	9
Adult District Drug Court	8
Truancy Reduction Court	8
Family/Dependency Drug Court	5
DUI/Drug Court	4
Circuit Court Mental Health Court	3
Re-Entry Court	2
Juvenile Drug Court	1
Back on Track	1

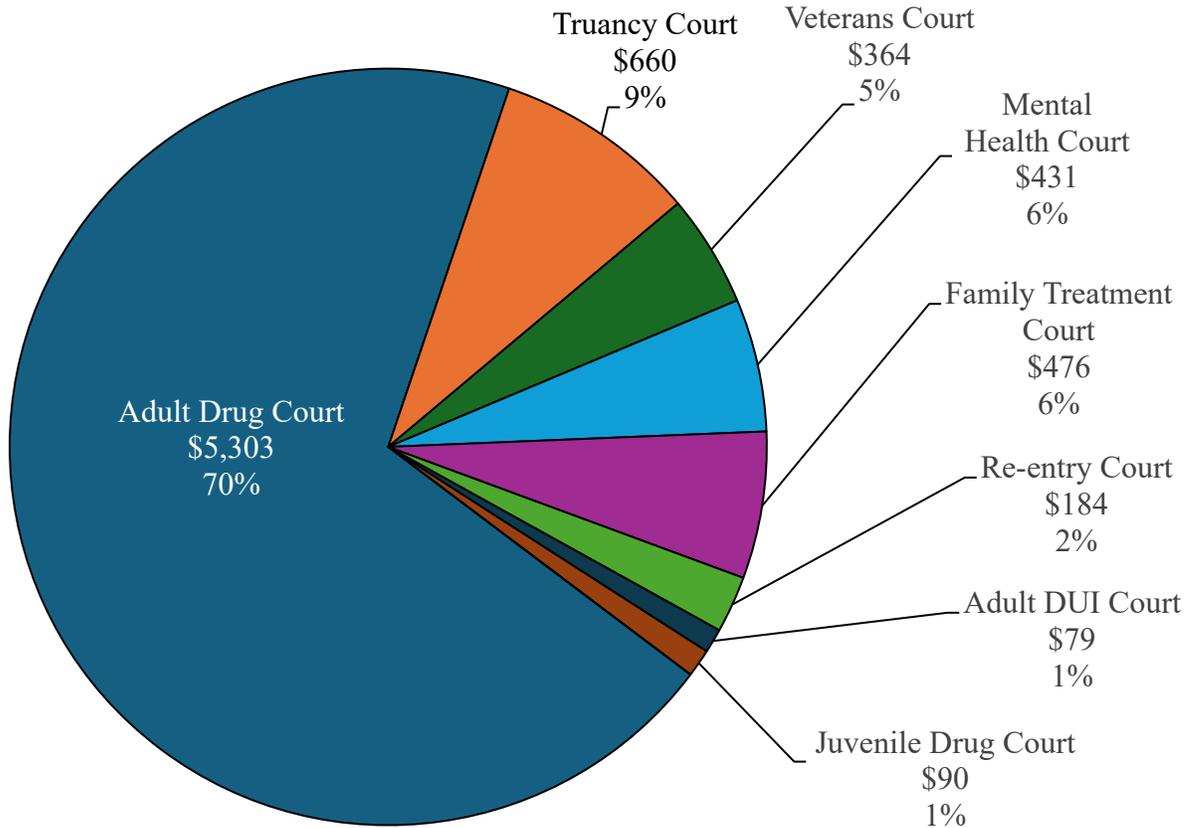
DUI: driving under the influence

PSC: Problem-Solving Court

Source: Maryland Judiciary

As shown in **Exhibit 7**, the Drug Courts received \$5.4 million in fiscal 2025, or about 70%, of the total funding for PSCs. Most of these funds, \$5.2 million, support personnel expenses while the remainder is used for equipment, supplies, training, travel, and consultants or other contracted services. The Truancy Court receives the second most funding, at \$659,893, or 9%, of the fiscal 2025 appropriation.

Exhibit 7
Funding by Type of Problem-Solving Court
Fiscal 2025
(\$ in Thousands)

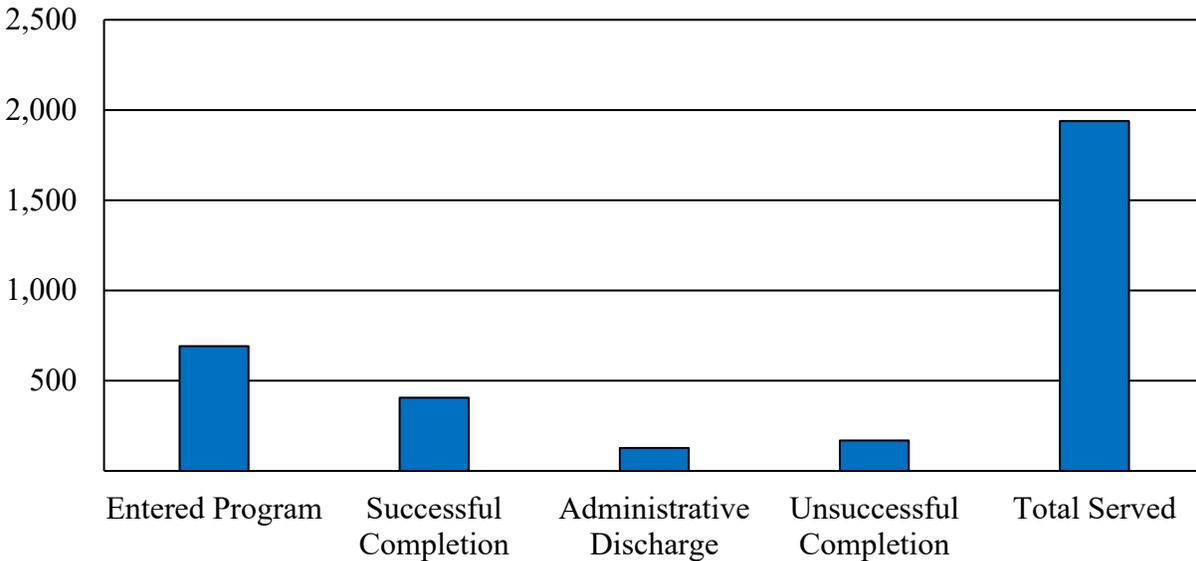


DUI: driving under the influence

Source: Maryland Judiciary

PSC cases have three possible outcomes: (1) successful completion; (2) administrative discharge; and (3) unsuccessful completion. Administrative discharges occur when a defendant dies during the reporting period, their probation expires, or they move out of the jurisdiction. As illustrated in **Exhibit 8**, the number of successful completions totaled 406, or 57.8% of all program outcomes, in fiscal 2025, while unsuccessful completions and administrative discharges comprised 24.1% and 18.1%, respectively. Total served, which include all participants whose cases remained open at the end of the fiscal year, including cases that started in a prior year, totaled 1,939 in fiscal 2025. Drug Court cases generally take longer than one year to complete, resulting in each fiscal year having more new and total served than completions.

Exhibit 8
Drug Court Participants and Outcomes
Fiscal 2025



Source: Maryland Judiciary

The other types of PSCs with reported performance data have had varying rates of successful completions. Mental Health Court saw 89 successful completions and 23 unsuccessful completions with 1,207 total people served. Veterans Courts saw 53 successful completions with only 7 unsuccessful completions in fiscal 2025 out of 161 total people served. Truancy Reduction had 70 successful completions but 52 unsuccessful completions in fiscal 2025 out of 320 people served. **The Judiciary should discuss its annual goals regarding PSC outcomes and efforts being made to achieve them. DLS recommends adopting committee narrative requesting a report on PSC funding and performance in fiscal 2026, as well as anticipated costs by PSC type for fiscal 2027 and 2028.**

Fiscal 2026

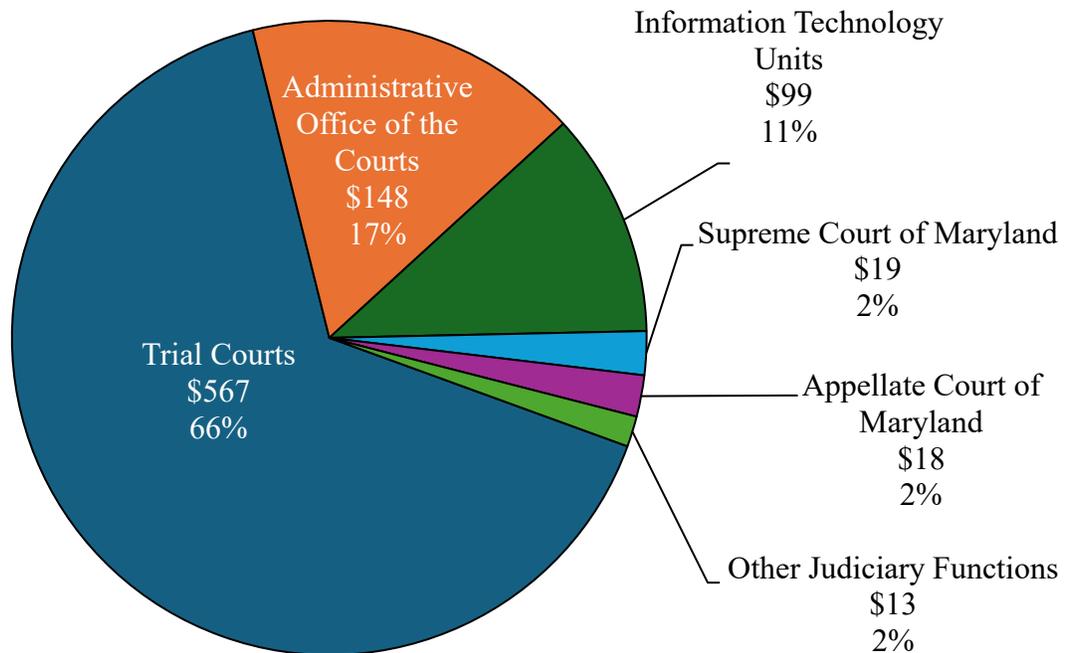
Status of Legislative Additions

Section 21 of the fiscal 2026 Budget Bill added \$250,000 in general funds to the Clerks of the Circuit Court to provide additional staffing for the Baltimore City Circuit Court. The Judiciary reported that these funds were unnecessary as all 280 positions were fully funded in fiscal 2026, and additional staffing was not required. The Judiciary intends to revert the full \$250,000 back to the General Fund at the end of fiscal 2026.

Fiscal 2027 Overview of Agency Spending

As shown in **Exhibit 9**, the Judiciary’s fiscal 2027 allowance totals \$865.3 million, providing funding for 11 programs. These programs include trial courts (District and circuit courts) and the State’s appellate courts (the Appellate Court of Maryland and the Supreme Court of Maryland), in addition to other functions that support the work of the Judiciary. Most funding supports trial courts, which receive 66% of the fiscal 2027 allowance. AOC is the second largest component, comprising 17% of the fiscal 2027 allowance. Judiciary’s major IT projects are included in IT Units, comprising 11% of spending in fiscal 2027. Programs contained in the Other Judiciary Functions include the State Law Library, Pretrial Home Detention, and Judiciary Units programs.

Exhibit 9
Overview of Agency Spending
Fiscal 2027 Allowance
(\$ in Millions)



Note: The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Source: Maryland Judiciary

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Proposed Budget Change

As shown in **Exhibit 10**, the fiscal 2027 allowance for the Judiciary increases by \$67.1 million compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation. Funds for salaries and associated fringe benefits increase by \$40.4 million, with the largest change being employee and retiree health insurance costs increasing by \$22.8 million. The Judiciary’s fiscal 2027 allowance also includes a 1% merit increase for personnel. Outside of personnel related expenditures, the largest increase is a \$5.4 million increase in grants to local circuit courts to ensure that all court proceedings have security officers. Spending on security also increases for the District Court, with a \$2.6 million increase for building renovations and the installation of new security features such as security cameras and bulletproof glass. Funding for contractual-staffing-related services increases by \$6.6 million overall, with the largest single increase being \$2.1 million for staffing costs associated with the Maryland Court Call Center as a new contract was procured. Spending on computer equipment and related software for the Judiciary’s Major Information Technology Development Projects (MITDP) decreases by \$2.3 million primarily due to changes in the project plans and requirements. **DLS recommends adding budget language removing funds for the 1% merit increase.**

**Exhibit 10
Proposed Budget
Judiciary
(\$ in Thousands)**

How Much It Grows:	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Federal Fund</u>	<u>Reimb. Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fiscal 2025 Actual	\$708,328	\$73,160	\$1,238	\$4,754	\$787,480
Fiscal 2026 Working	707,965	83,460	1,028	5,836	798,289
Fiscal 2027 Allowance	771,367	86,374	1,406	6,193	865,340
Fiscal 2026-2027 \$ Change	\$63,402	\$2,914	\$378	\$357	\$67,051
Fiscal 2026-2027 % Change	9.0%	3.5%	36.8%	6.1%	8.4%

Where It Goes:	<u>Change</u>
Personnel Expenses	
Employee and retiree health insurance	\$22,845
Turnover decreases from 6.41% to 5.08%.....	6,685
Salary and fringe benefits for 51 new regular positions	6,159
Salary increases and associated fringe benefits	4,326
Workers’ compensation premium assessment.....	224
Overtime earnings.....	199

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Where It Goes:	<u>Change</u>
Renovation and Security Expenses	
Funding to assist circuit courts in having security officers for all court proceedings	5,371
Planned statewide projects to renovate and install physical security enhancements for District Court buildings	2,648
Office Equipment	
Replacement costs for office furniture and technology equipment	1,742
New network equipment to support digital recording and network redesign projects	1,368
District Court computer replacement expenses	416
Funding to purchase updated Maryland Annotated Codes	230
Adjustments for technology-related supplies	104
Contractual Staffing	
Staffing cost adjustments for the Maryland Court Call Center due to new contract	2,115
Salary increases for contractual personnel	1,818
Salaries for senior judges	901
Grant funded personnel costs and salary increases for the circuit court	580
Funding to support salary increases for grant-funded positions in the Circuit Court PSCs	548
Court interpreter costs to match actual expenditures	291
Increased contractual costs for janitorial services	210
IT Related Expenditures	
Expenditures to fulfill MOU with the Maryland State Archives to support its public retrieval system for statewide recorded land records	1,254
Enhancements to make digital content more accessible to people with disabilities	1,135
Funding for enterprise maintenance agreements	717
Additional funds to support the integration of the back-up data center and cloud infrastructure	600
Adjustments for hardware maintenance	467
Adjustments to MITDP computer equipment and required software to changes in project plans	-2,272
Other Changes	
Postage costs adjust to handle an increase in garnishment filings	1,895
Consultant expenses to complete the Master Plan for the District Court by August 2026	1,601
Routine in-state and out-of-state travel adjustments to align with actual expenditures	964

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Where It Goes:	<u>Change</u>
Funding needs for programs managed by nongovernmental organizations affiliated with the Judiciary such as community-based mediations or the CASA program.....	745
Contracted amount for subscriptions such as Survey Monkey Apply and e-Filing Software	465
Fees associated with equipment and medical services for bailiffs	429
Funding to implement Chapter 415 of 2024 to remove protected information for Judiciary personnel from the internet	364
Adjusted telephone funding to match increased costs.....	358
Pretrial home detention.....	350
Utility costs to match actual expenditures	323
Postage meter replacements that are required due to compliance concerns	272
Additional PSC programs in District Courts	250
New training initiatives for personnel	197
Funding for four new District Court vehicles.....	123
Child support enforcement efforts	100
Banking fees for new types of payment options.....	81
Adjusted funds for drug testing to match actual expenditures	54
Changes to District Court need for printed forms	-312
Installation of new audio recording replaces maintenance needs.....	-900
Cost allocations.....	-1,431
Other adjustments	439
Total	\$67,051

CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocate
 MITDP: Major Information Technology Development Project
 MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
 PSC: Problem-Solving Court

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding. The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

2025 Judicial Compensation Commission Recommendations for Compensation for Judges

Every four years, the Judicial Compensation Commission (JCC) makes recommendations for potential increases to judicial compensation with the goal being to provide adequate compensation levels to attract highly qualified individuals to serve as State judges. The JCC recommendations must be introduced as a joint resolution in each house of the General Assembly by no later than the fifteenth day of the legislative session. Additionally, the General Assembly must act upon these recommendations within 50 days of its introduction. Under statute, the General

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Assembly is allowed to amend the joint resolution to decrease the salary recommendations; however, the salary recommendations may not be increased above the joint resolution level. The General Assembly also may not decrease the salaries below the current levels. If the General Assembly fails to adopt or amend the joint resolution within 50 days of it being introduced, the recommendations of JCC are applied. Additionally, during any fiscal year in which judicial salaries are increased in accordance with the JCC joint resolution, judges in the State may not receive any general salary increases that are awarded to State employees.

The commission met three times between December 2025 and January 2026, ultimately adopting the recommendation shown in **Exhibit 11**. The recommendation increases judicial salaries by \$23,600 over the next four fiscal years, or \$5,900 per fiscal year, while also proposing an additional \$7,500 annual stipend for the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court of Maryland, circuit court administrative judges, and District Court administrative judges. Currently, SJ 2/HJ 6 of 2026 are the filed resolutions adjusting the judicial salaries, while SB 313/HB 608 of 2026 would authorize the stipend.

Exhibit 11
Judicial Compensation Commission Recommendation
Fiscal 2027-2030

	Total Judgeships in Fiscal 2027 Allowance	Current Salary	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>	% Change
Supreme Court of Maryland							
Chief Justice	1	\$255,433	\$261,333	\$267,233	\$273,133	\$279,033	9.24%
Justice	6	236,433	242,333	248,233	254,133	260,033	9.98%
Appellate Court of Maryland							
Chief Judge	1	226,633	232,533	238,433	244,333	250,233	10.41%
Associate Judge	14	223,633	229,533	235,433	241,333	247,233	10.55%
Circuit Court							
Magistrate	70	214,433	220,333	226,233	232,133	238,033	11.01%
District Court							
Chief Judge	1	223,633	229,533	235,433	241,333	247,233	10.55%
Associate Judge	124	201,333	207,233	213,133	219,033	224,933	11.72%
Stipend	37		277,500	277,500	277,500	277,500	

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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Due to the timing of the Judiciary’s budget submission before the commission adopted its final recommendations, the fiscal 2027 allowance includes a placeholder amount that kept salary increases at the level previously recommended by JCC. The placeholder in the Judiciary’s fiscal 2027 allowance includes a \$10,000 salary increase for judges, \$9,000 salary increase for magistrates, and \$901,439 for senior judges, totaling approximately \$6.6 million. After accounting for the stipends and fringe benefits for the JCC recommendation, the current JCC recommendation requires approximately \$4.4 million for salary increases. **DLS recommends adding budget language to reduce the general fund appropriation by \$2.2 million to align with the JCC recommendation.**

Personnel Data

	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26-27
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Allowance</u>	<u>Change</u>
Regular Positions	4,165.00	4,173.00	4,224.00	51.00
Contractual FTEs	<u>363.00</u>	<u>363.00</u>	<u>327.00</u>	<u>-36.00</u>
Total Personnel	4,528.00	4,536.00	4551.00	15.00

Vacancy Data: Regular Positions

Turnover and Necessary Vacancies, Excluding New Positions	214.43	5.08%
Positions and Percentage Vacant as of 12/31/2025	246.30	5.90%

Vacancies Above Turnover 31.87

- Of the 51 new positions, 3 are specific to St. Mary’s County, including a circuit court judge along with a law clerk and a courtroom clerk. An additional 2 positions are specific to the District Court in Washington County, including a judge and a courtroom clerk. The need for these judgeships and the accompanying clerk positions was certified in the report on judgeship needs for fiscal 2027 submitted by the Judiciary in December 2025. In the report, the Judiciary certified that the St. Mary’s County Circuit Court has 216,910 minutes of work for judges per year based on the averages for fiscal 2023, 2024, and 2025. St. Mary’s County Circuit Court currently has the 3 judges that the Judiciary believes is required, meaning the 3 existing judgeships should be able to adequately complete the amount of work for the court. The Judiciary also certified that the Washington County District Court has 167,276 minutes of work for judges, which requires 3 judges compared to the 2 that currently exist. **DLS recommends the abolishment of the new circuit court judge position and the new law clerk and courtroom clerk positions for St. Mary’s County. DLS also recommends adoption of committee narrative requesting a report on judgeships needed for fiscal 2028.**

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- The fiscal 2027 allowance’s 8 remaining new regular positions support various activities including:
 - 3 data quality analysts for the circuit court to continuously monitor the Judiciary’s data and detect any discrepancies for local court jurisdictions;
 - 1 paralegal and 1 assistant executive counsel for the Commission on Judicial Disabilities to provide legal and administrative support as the commission has experienced a significant increase in complaints;
 - 1 data integrity and compliance analyst as part of a multi-year initiative to improve the Judiciary’s data quality and to standardize data reporting;
 - 1 behavioral health mapping and strategy lead for the Office of PSCs to provide technical assistance for jurisdictions implementing the Sequential Intercept Model, which analyzes how individuals with certain disorders may interact with the justice system; and
 - 1 behavioral health education program coordinator to expand behavioral health education for the Judicial College and the Office of PSCs.
- The fiscal 2027 allowance also includes 38 contractual conversions of bailiffs in the District Court. These 38 positions are all at managerial level and are not temporary, with these positions being responsible for the safety of courthouse staff and the public. Overall, contractual positions decrease from 363 in the fiscal 2026 working appropriation to 327 in the fiscal 2027 allowance, of which 321 are in the District Court. Despite the decrease in contractual personnel overall, salaries for contractual personnel and associated fringe benefits increase by \$1.8 million compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation. Most of this change is driven by costs for contractual employees in the District Court, which are increasing by \$2.0 million in fiscal 2027 compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation, despite a net loss of 36 contractual positions. The fiscal 2025 actual spending overall contained 363 contractual positions, with the Judiciary spending approximately \$1.3 million less than the budgeted amount in the fiscal 2027 allowance. **DLS recommends reducing District Court contractual employee salaries by \$2.5 million to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenditures.**
- As of December 31, 2025, the Judiciary reported 246.3 vacant positions, which is approximately 32 positions above the number of necessary vacancies to meet budgeted turnover in fiscal 2027. These vacancies include 2 circuit court judges, 12 District Court judges, 93.5 judiciary clerks, and 21 courtroom clerks. **The Judiciary should discuss which positions have been vacant for over a year and efforts made to fill these positions. DLS recommends adoption of committee narrative requesting a report explaining the status of long-term vacant positions.**

Issues

1. Funding for Private Home Detention Increases

Chapter 597 of 2021 established the private home detention monitoring program, which allows an indigent defendant to remain in a private home as a condition of pretrial release. Defendants are not required to pay a monitoring fee, with the State providing payments to private home detention monitoring agencies (PHDMA). The program first went into operation in fiscal 2022 when \$5.0 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was provided to the Judiciary for the program. **Exhibit 12** shows that despite the \$5.0 million becoming available in fiscal 2022, only \$25,000 was expended that fiscal year. The ARPA funds were used primarily in fiscal 2023 and 2024. The program was not fully funded by the State until fiscal 2025, when the program received \$3.6 million in general funds. The fiscal 2025 closeout revealed that \$175,787 of the program’s appropriation remained unspent. Currently, the fiscal 2026 working appropriation includes \$3.2 million, and the Judiciary expects this amount to be adequate to cover program expenditures.

Exhibit 12
Private Home Detention Appropriation versus Actual
Fiscal 2022-2026 Working Appropriation
(\$ in Thousands)

	Federal Fund Working	General Fund Working	Total Working	Federal Fund Actual	General Fund Actual	Actual Total
2026	\$0	\$3,200	\$3,200			
2025	0	3,600	3,600	\$0	\$3,424	\$3,424
2024	0	1,700	1,700	2,939	1,167	4,106
2023	0	0	0	2,036	0	2,036
2022	5,000	0	5,000	25	0	25

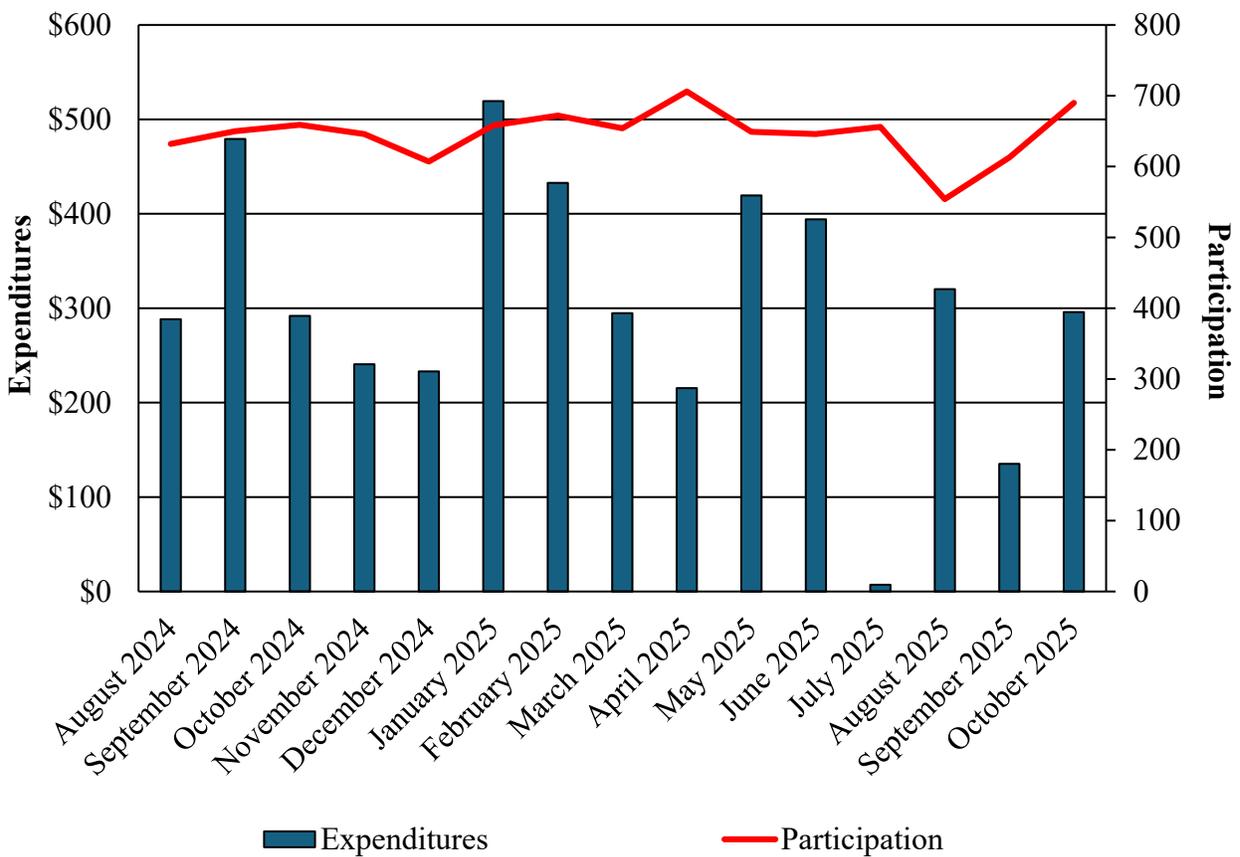
Source: Maryland Judiciary

As the program no longer relies on federal funds, the 2025 JCR requested that quarterly reports be submitted tracking the number of defendants enrolled in the program, total program costs, and anticipated costs for the remainder of the fiscal year. **Exhibit 13** shows the program’s participation has remained between 607 and 706 participants. Despite the consistent number of

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participants, program expenditures have varied greatly between months ranging from \$479,239 in September 2024 to \$7,197 in July 2025. This is largely due to the Judiciary’s internal processes to verify the invoices received from PHDMAs as the AOC must verify the defendant’s information with the Office of the Public Defender. Additionally, the timing of when PHDMAs submit their invoices impacts the timing of when expenses are paid by the Judiciary.

Exhibit 13
Private Home Detention Spending
August 2024 to October 2025
(\$ in Thousands)



Source: Maryland Judiciary

The Judiciary has found the management of the program to be challenging as the duties and responsibilities associated with the program are not typically managed by the Judiciary. For example, the 7 PHDMAs under the program were selected by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and are monitored by the department rather than the Judiciary. Some stability has been achieved as the Judiciary implemented funding guidelines requiring PHDMAs to submit

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invoices within 60 days of the first monitoring, but invoices are still being provided months after the service was provided. The Judiciary cites the continued inconsistent nature of invoice delivery as a reason why it is difficult to accurately make projections for program expenditures. **The Judiciary should comment on what actions are being taken to improve the operations of the private home detention monitoring program.**

DLS recommends adopting committee narrative requesting the Judiciary to submit a report regarding the status of the program. The report should include the number of defendants in the program and funding information.

2. Major IT Projects Continue to Be Overfunded

The Judiciary’s MITDPs are funded by the Circuit Court Real Property Records Improvement Fund, which is commonly known as LRIF. This fund also provides funding for circuit court offices, eFiling operations and maintenance, MDLandRec, and Electronic Land Records Online Imagery Operations and Maintenance.

The 2025 JCR requested a report regarding the Judiciary’s MITDPs, which was submitted by AOC in December 2025. The report provides information on the status of the Judiciary’s MITDPs in various stages of development from planning to nearing completion. **Exhibit 14** provides information included in the report on planned spending through fiscal 2030. The total spending on MITDPs in fiscal 2027 is expected to be approximately \$18.4 million, a decrease from the \$21.4 million that was projected in the previous forecast submitted in December 2024. This decrease is due to lower than expected expenditures for projects such as Case Management Optimization, Infrastructure Modernization, and Enterprise Financial/Human Resources (HR) System. However, the amount of the decrease is somewhat offset by increases to the Information Security Enhancements and Enterprise Content/Records Management projects.

Exhibit 14
Major Information Technology Project Expenditure Forecast
Fiscal 2026 Est.-2030 Est.
(\$ in Thousands)

<u>Project</u>	<u>2026 Est.</u>	<u>2027 Est.</u>	<u>2028 Est.</u>	<u>2029 Est.</u>	<u>2030 Est.</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Case Management Optimization	\$4,170	\$3,820	\$4,820	\$4,820	\$4,820	\$23,464
Enterprise Content/Records Management	3,200	4,000	3,450	3,450	3,450	18,651
Infrastructure Modernization	3,000	2,500	2,500	2,700	2,700	14,750

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<u>Project</u>	<u>2026 Est.</u>	<u>2027 Est.</u>	<u>2028 Est.</u>	<u>2029 Est.</u>	<u>2030 Est.</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Mobile Information	1,500	800	800	800	800	5,666
Enterprise Financial/HR System	1,500	1,000	900	0	0	3,706
Digital Evidence Information Security Enhancements	1,400	1,000	1,200	1,200	1,200	6,000
Data Analytics	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	6,984
Network Redesign	1,000	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	7,505
Guardianship	1,000	1,500	2,000	1,000	1,000	7,687
Case Notification SMART System Replacement	750	250	0	0	0	1,000
Artificial Intelligence	500	600	600	600	600	3,490
	300	200	0	0	0	500
	0	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
						0
Totals	\$19,620	\$18,370	\$19,970	\$18,270	\$18,270	\$102,401

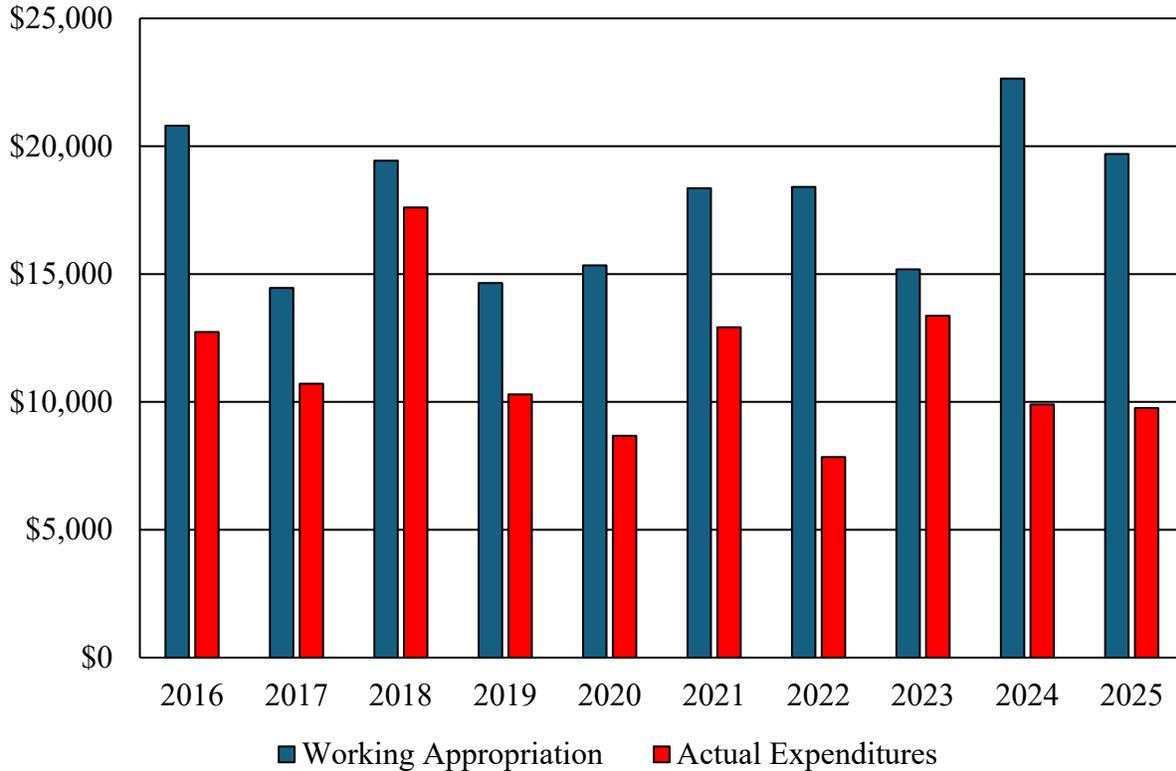
HR: human resources

SMART: State of Maryland Automated Record Tracking

Source: Maryland Judiciary

Just as the estimate in the forecast submitted in December 2024 overestimated the fiscal 2027 spending, the Judiciary’s MITDPs have had a history of overestimating required appropriations. As shown in **Exhibit 15**, the fiscal 2025 actual expenditures were \$9.9 million lower than the \$19.7 million working appropriation. The Judiciary has cited factors such as project timing, resource availability, and sequencing dependencies as reasons for the difference between the fiscal 2025 working appropriation and actual expenditures. Specific factors in fiscal 2025 included the deferral of contract awards, adjustments to professional services, vendor supported technology challenges, and technical and operational requirements. The impacts of these factors in fiscal 2025 are also credited for creating conditions that continued into the future, helping to explain the difference between the estimate and the allowance for fiscal 2027. However, despite the factors that occurred in fiscal 2025, between fiscal 2016 and 2025, the Judiciary’s MITDPs have spent on average \$6.5 million less than the working appropriation. **The Judiciary should discuss the factors that have resulted in MITDP overfunding since fiscal 2016 and efforts being made to better project anticipated funding.**

Exhibit 15
Judiciary’s MITDP Expenditures versus Appropriation
Fiscal 2016-2025
(\$ in Thousands)

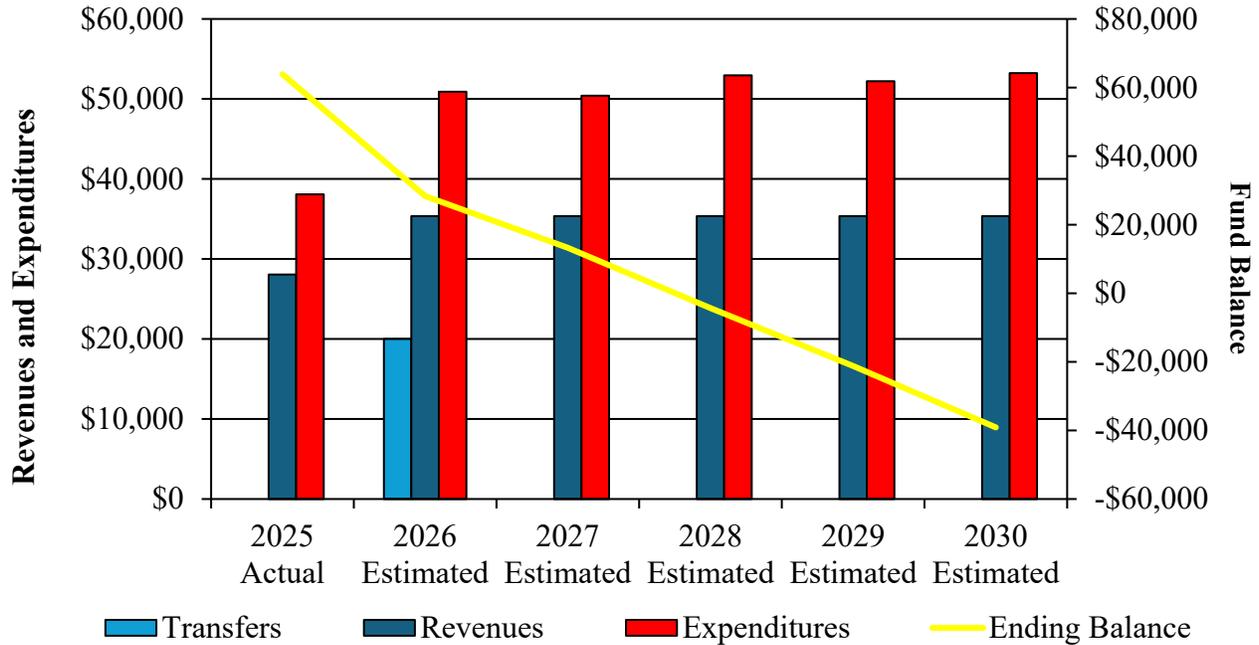


MITDP: Major Information Technology Development Project

Source: Maryland Judiciary

Chapter 2 of 2007 expanded the use of the LRIF to include the Judiciary’s MITDPs in both fiscal 2009 and 2010. Chapter 484 of 2010, the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA), required that the LRIF be the permanent fund for all of the Judiciary’s MITDPs. At the beginning of fiscal 2025, the LRIF contained \$73.9 million. The BRFA of 2025 (Chapter 604) included a \$20 million transfer from the LRIF to the General Fund in fiscal 2026. As shown in **Exhibit 16**, the fund is projected to have a balance of \$28.3 million at the end of fiscal 2026, after accounting for the transfer. According to the Judiciary, the fund balance is expected to decrease to a negative balance of \$4.3 million by the end of fiscal 2028. Revenues are not projected to exceed \$35.3 million between fiscal 2027 and 2030, while expenditures are projected to vary between \$50.4 million and \$53.3 million during the same period.

Exhibit 16
Land Records Improvement Fund Balance
Fiscal 2025-2030 Est.
(\$ in Thousands)



Source: Maryland Judiciary

The Judiciary has no MITDPs that are anticipated to be started or completed in fiscal 2026. A description of all active MITDPs that the Judiciary is currently facilitating can be found in **Appendix 2**.

DLS recommends adopting committee narrative requesting a report on the Judiciary’s MITDPs, including the actual costs for fiscal 2026 and anticipated costs of MITDPs through fiscal 2031. Also, DLS recommends reducing the fiscal 2027 allowance for the Judiciary’s MITDPs by \$7.0 million. Additionally, DLS recommends adopting committee narrative requesting a report on the LRIF balance for fiscal 2026 through 2030.

3. Appointed Attorney Program Expenditures Decrease

In calendar 2014, the Appointed Attorney Program began to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court of Maryland’s decision in *DeWolfe v. Richmond*. The program provides attorneys to represent indigent defendants at initial appearances before District Court commissioners. Private

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attorneys are used for this program and are compensated by the State at a rate of \$60 per hour. Since the program’s creation, the budget committees have required the Judiciary to report on the cost of the program. Data from fiscal 2025 shows that the full appropriation of \$8.8 million was not fully expended, with \$552,068 remaining unspent. **Exhibit 17** shows a breakdown of the spending by judicial district, including a comparison with the amounts that the Judiciary originally budgeted for each district.

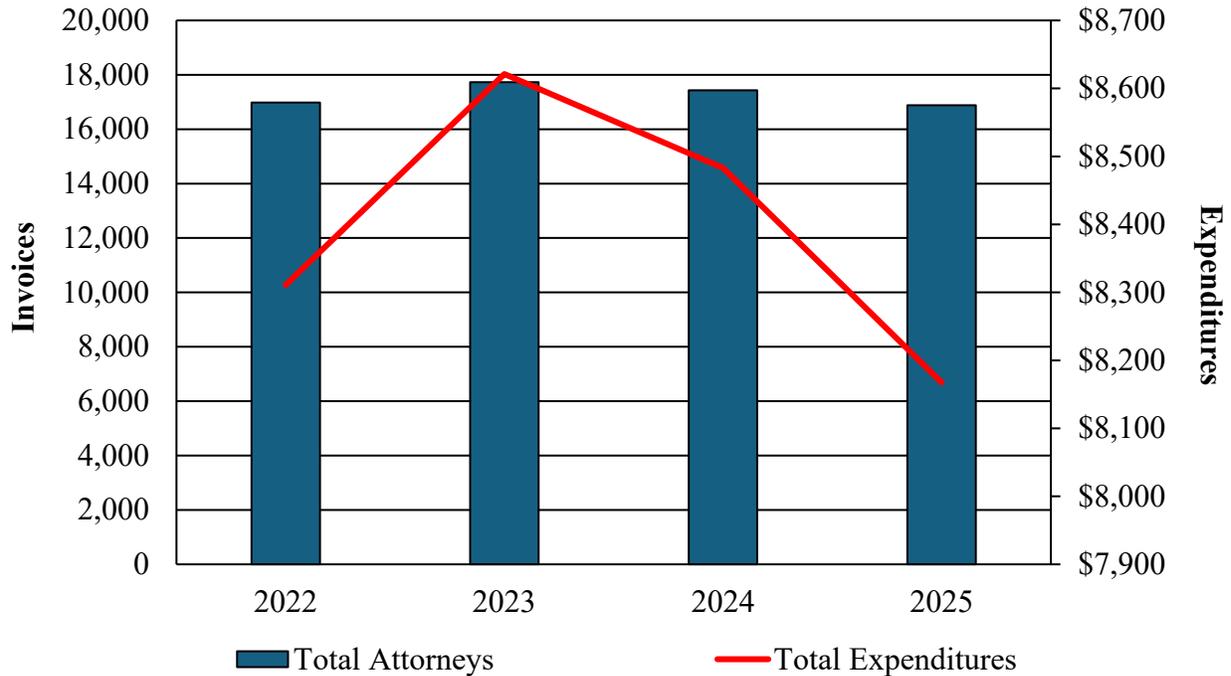
Exhibit 17
Appointed Attorney Program Costs
Fiscal 2025
(\$ in Thousands)

<u>District</u>	<u>Original</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Net</u> <u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Expenditures</u> <u>Beyond</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Net</u> <u>Invoices</u>
District 1 – Baltimore City	\$1,750	\$1,742	-\$8	3,648
District 2 – Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester	550	519	-31	1,069
District 3 – Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Talbot	350	349	-1	729
District 4 – Calvert, Charles, St. Mary’s	350	342	-8	609
District 5 – Prince George’s	1,400	1,224	-176	2,552
District 6 – Montgomery	1,200	1,041	-159	2,173
District 7 – Anne Arundel	1,000	864	-136	1,772
District 8 – Baltimore County	1,050	1,047	-3	2,188
District 9/10 – Carroll, Howard, Harford	550	520	-30	1,054
District 11/12 – Frederick, Washington, Allegany, Garrett	550	521	-29	1,087
Total	\$8,750	\$8,168	-\$582	16,881

Source: Maryland Judiciary

As shown in **Exhibit 18**, with the decrease in program spending, program participation has also decreased from 17,429 in fiscal 2024 to 16,881 in fiscal 2025. **The Judiciary should comment on the factors impacting program participation.**

Exhibit 18
Total Funding and Invoices Paid for the Appointed Attorney Program
Fiscal 2022-2025
(\$ in Thousands)



Source: Maryland Judiciary

Prior to fiscal 2024, the Judiciary only provided data that contained the number of cases in which representation was provided by the program. Additional data regarding the results of appearances by defendants was previously requested twice but was never provided. The fiscal 2026 Budget Bill included language restricting funds pending the submission of a report on the costs and utilization of the Appointed Attorney Program. **DLS determined the report to be in compliance with the language and recommends the release of \$250,000 in withheld general funds. DLS will process a letter to this effect if no objections are raised by the committees.**

DLS recommends adopting committee narrative requesting a report on the costs and utilization of the Appointed Attorney Program, including the results of initial appearances and the total number of defendants provided with representation by the program. Also, DLS recommends reducing funding for the program by \$400,000 to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenditures. Additionally, DLS recommends restricting \$8.2 million in general funds to be used for the implementation of the Appointed Attorney Program in accordance with *DeWolfe v. Richmond*.

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Operating Budget Recommended Actions

		<u>Amount Change</u>	<u>Position Change</u>
1.	Reduce \$250,000 in general funds for postage to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenses. The Chief Justice is authorized to allocate this reduction across the Judiciary.	-\$250,000	GF
2.	Reduce \$2,500,000 in general funds made for the purpose of District Court contractual employee salary increases to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenses.	-\$2,500,000	GF
3.	Reduce \$200,000 in general funds made for the purpose of telephone expenses to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenses. The Chief Justice is authorized to allocate this reduction across the Judiciary.	-\$200,000	GF
4.	Reduce \$150,000 in general funds made for the purpose of District Court in-state and out-of-state travel to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenses.	-\$150,000	GF
5.	Reduce \$750,000 in general funds made for the purpose of printing expenses to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenses. The Chief Justice is authorized to allocate this reduction across the Judiciary.	-\$750,000	GF
6.	Reduce \$400,000 made for the purpose of providing attorneys for required representation at initial appearances before District Court Commissioners consistent with the holding of the Supreme Court of Maryland in <i>DeWolfe v. Richmond</i> to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenses.	-\$400,000	GF
7.	Reduce \$7,000,000 in special funds made for the Judiciary’s Major Information Technology Development Projects to align with fiscal 2025 actual expenses. The Chief Justice is authorized to allocate this reduction across the Judiciary.	-\$7,000,000	SF

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	<u>Amount Change</u>	<u>Position Change</u>
8. Reduce \$509,671 in general funds to abolish 3.0 new positions (N27049, N27050, and N27051) in the St. Mary’s County Circuit Court.	-\$509,671 GF	-3.0

9. Add the following language to the general fund appropriation:

Provided that \$2,172,300 in general funds made for the purpose of providing judicial compensation enhancements are reduced to bring available funds in line with the recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Commission. The Chief Judge is authorized to allocate this reduction across programs within the Judiciary.

Explanation: This action reduces funds in the fiscal 2027 budget to bring judicial compensation enhancements in line with the Judicial Compensation Commission’s recommendations. This includes a \$5,900 salary increase in fiscal 2027 for all judges and a \$7,500 stipend for the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court of Maryland and administrative judges in the trial courts.

10. Add the following language:

Further provided that \$3,176,185 in general funds, \$164,842 in special funds, and \$37,319 in reimbursable funds of this appropriation made for the purpose of merit increases for personnel are reduced. The Chief Judge is authorized to allocate this reduction across programs within the Judiciary.

Explanation: This reduces the fiscal 2027 budget to remove the 1% merit increase for personnel.

11. Add the following language to the general fund appropriation:

, provided that \$8,200,000 of this appropriation made for the purpose of providing attorneys for required representation at initial appearances before District Court commissioners consistent with the holding of the Supreme Court of Maryland in DeWolfe v. Richmond may be expended only for that purpose. Funds not expended for this restricted purpose may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall revert back to the General Fund.

Explanation: This language restricts the use of \$8.2 million of the Judiciary’s general fund appropriation for the implementation of DeWolfe v. Richmond to that purpose only.

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12. Adopt the following narrative:

Appointed Attorney Program Costs and Utilization Report: The committees request that the Judiciary submit a report, by December 15, 2026, on the Appointed Attorney Program for fiscal 2026 and 2027 year to date. The report should contain the number of initial appearances by district and county, the number of attorney shifts in the program by district and county, the waiver rate of defendants waiving their right to counsel at their initial appearance, the total annual appointed attorney shifts and hours scheduled by district, the total number of attorneys enrolled in the program, the total annual costs of the program by district, and the total number of initial appearances with an appointed attorney, private attorney, or public defender representing the defendant by district and county.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Appointed Attorney Program costs and utilization	Judiciary	December 15, 2026

13. Adopt the following narrative:

Annual Court Performance Measures: The committees request a report on the performance of the circuit and District courts, to be submitted by December 15, 2026, with annual court performance measures data for the circuit and District courts.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Annual court performance measures report	Judiciary	December 15, 2026

14. Adopt the following narrative:

Problem-Solving Court (PSC) Performance and Funding: The committees request a report on the work of the Judiciary’s PSCs, to be submitted by December 15, 2026. The report should show the funding allocated and performance data for all PSC types in fiscal 2026, including the average length of time that a defendant’s case is active in each type of court, the reasons defendants fail to successfully complete a program, and the average cost per defendant in each type of PSC. The report should also include the anticipated costs by PSC type and location for fiscal 2027 and 2028.

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Information Request	Author	Due Date
PSC funding and performance report	Judiciary	December 15, 2026

15. Adopt the following narrative:

Judgeship Need for Fiscal 2028: The committees request a report on judgeship needs at the Judiciary to be submitted by December 15, 2026. The report should include a detailed analysis of the Judiciary’s fiscal 2028 judgeship needs.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Judgeship need for fiscal 2028	Judiciary	December 15, 2026

16. Adopt the following narrative:

Major Information Technology Development Project (MITDP) Status Report: The committees request a report on the Judiciary’s MITDPs to be submitted by December 15, 2026. The report should include actual costs for all projects in fiscal 2026 and anticipated costs for all projects through fiscal 2030, along with status updates for all projects.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
MITDP status report	Judiciary	December 15, 2026

17. Adopt the following narrative:

Land Records Improvement Fund (LRIF) Balance Report: The committees request a report on the status of the LRIF to be submitted by December 15, 2026. The report should include the fiscal 2026 revenues and expenditures for the fund along with forecasted revenues and expenditures for fiscal 2027 through 2030. The report should also include a breakdown of the expenditures for circuit court offices.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
LRIF balance report	Judiciary	December 15, 2026

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18. Adopt the following narrative:

Private Home Detention Monitoring Report: The committees request a report providing data on private home detention funded by the Judiciary to be submitted by December 15, 2026. The report should contain the number of defendants enrolled in private home detention monitoring, total funds spent in fiscal 2026, and anticipated costs for the remainder of fiscal 2027.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Private home detention monitoring report	Judiciary	December 15, 2026

19. Adopt the following narrative:

Efforts to Fill Long-term Vacant Positions: As of December 31, 2025, the Judiciary reported 246.3 vacancies, with 40.3 positions being vacant for more than one year. The committees request that the Judiciary submit a report regarding the 40.3 long-term vacant positions by July 1, 2026, including:

- information on the positions, including job title and identification number;
- the status of the positions, indicating if the positions have been filled as of the submission of the report;
- if applicable, candidates’ actual or anticipated start dates; and
- recruitment strategies used to fill the positions.

Information Request	Author	Due Date
Efforts to fill long-term vacant positions	Judiciary	July 1, 2026
Total Net Change to Fiscal 2027 Allowance		-\$17,183,841
		-3.0

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Appendix 1 2025 Joint Chairmen’s Report Responses from Agency

The 2025 JCR requested that the Judiciary prepare eight reports. Electronic copies of the full JCR responses can be found on the DLS Library website.

- ***Appointed Attorney Program Costs and Utilization:*** Budget language included in the fiscal 2026 Budget Bill restricted funds pending the submission of a report. The report submitted by the Judiciary in September 2025 included the program’s fiscal 2025 appropriation and net expenditures, total number of initial appearances, and attorney shifts. Additional information on this report can be found in Issue 3 of this analysis.
- ***Annual Court Performance Measures:*** The Judiciary submitted the annual report on court performance measures in December 2025. The report showed that the average case processing time was below the standard for all case types in the District Court and six of eight types in the circuit court. Further discussion of this report can be found in the Performance Analysis section of this analysis.
- ***Judgeship Need for Fiscal 2027:*** The Judiciary submitted the requested report certifying its need for additional judgeships in December 2025. The report certified the need for six total additional judgeships; the Judiciary is requesting 1 additional judgeship in St. Mary’s County and 1 in Washington County. Further discussion can be found in the Personnel Data section of this analysis.
- ***MITDP Status Report:*** The Judiciary submitted the requested report on MITDPs in December 2025. The report showed that no new projects are starting or concluding in fiscal 2026. Further discussion of this report can be found in Issue 2 of this analysis.
- ***Landlord Tenant Court Fees and Distributions Report:*** The Judiciary submitted the requested report in September 2025. For cases involving landlords or tenants, such as failure to pay rent, there are associated fees that must be paid by the parties to the District Court; these fees can range from \$66 for filing tenant holding over cases to \$10 for eviction orders. Collected fees are then distributed to the General Fund, the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Fund, Rental Assistance for Community School Families Fund, and to the LRIF. This report provided information on the fees collected from cases in Baltimore City District Court between fiscal 2016 to 2025, showing that total cases filed have decreased from 151,238 in fiscal 2016 to 75,101 in fiscal 2025. Despite the decrease in total cases, the collected fees have increased from \$3.1 million in fiscal 2016 to \$3.8 million in fiscal 2025.
- ***LRIF Balance Report:*** The Judiciary submitted the requested report on the current and projected balance of the LRIF in December 2025. The report provided an itemized listing

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of all revenues that go to the fund and all expenditures covered by the fund. Further discussion can be found in Issue 2 of this analysis.

- ***Private Home Detention Monitoring Quarterly Reports:*** The Judiciary submitted two reports on October 15, 2025, and January 15, 2026. These reports detailed the number of defendants enrolled in the program, total funds spent, and anticipated costs for the remainder of the year. Further discussion can be found in Issue 1 of this analysis.
- ***PSC Performance and Funding:*** The Judiciary submitted the report on PSC funding in December 2025. The report detailed the total amount spent for PSCs in each county and for each different type of PSC. Further discussion of this report can be found in the Performance Analysis section of this analysis.

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**Appendix 2
Audit Findings
Maryland Legal Services Corporation**

Audit Period for Last Audit	August 1, 2021 – March 31, 2025
Issue Date	May 2025
Number of Findings	0
Number of Repeat Findings:	0
% of Repeat Findings:	0%
Rating (if applicable)	N/A

The Office of Legislative Audits did not report any findings.

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Appendix 3 Major Information Technology Development Projects Maryland Judiciary

- ***Artificial Intelligence (AI)***: This project is intended to evaluate how AI can be used to assist in the operations of the Judiciary. A generative chatbot has already been implemented for internal use, and future pilot programs are expected.
- ***Case Management Optimization***: This project is designed to initiate work on projects that were identified during the planning and rollout of the MDEC system. This project will include an Online Dispute Resolution module, AI tools for redaction and automation of workflow processes, and digital evidence projects. A new portal for attorneys, case party, and public access to case records is also anticipated in January 2026.
- ***Case Notification***: This project extends the ability to send text notifications regarding case hearings. Initially, the project was piloted with defendants in criminal cases originating in the District Court. Additional enhancements are being considered such as a public portal allowing individuals to register for notifications.
- ***Data Analytics***: This project will support the Judiciary’s ability to consolidate data from multiple source databases to allow internal users to access, analyze, and report on specific data sets. The project will also examine ways to eliminate the need for individualized data compilations by creating a mechanism for satisfying judicial records bulk data requests.
- ***Digital Evidence***: This project will help the Judiciary integrate digital evidence into the normal flow of court proceedings. In addition, guidelines, policies, and rules governing the submission and chain of custody of digital evidence and the use of electronic devices in courtrooms will be considered.
- ***Enterprise Content/Records Management***: This project will examine and assess the current records management systems and processes in place across all Judiciary locations; establish a statewide records management strategy and policies; and implement key recommendations, including records management software capabilities.
- ***Enterprise Financial/HR System***: This project will ensure that the Judiciary’s financial and HR systems will be capable of providing flexible, reliable, and sustainable solutions for the future. It is being designed to replace the current system, which is almost 10 years old.
- ***Guardianship System***: This project will create a centralized, statewide online accounting system for guardianship of property cases. This will replace the current manual process, eliminating errors and inconsistencies.

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- ***Information Security Enhancements:*** This project encompasses multiple projects that are being initiated to improve the security of the Judiciary’s resources and data. These projects range from enhanced multifactor authentication techniques to conducting a biennial cybersecurity risk assessment.
- ***Infrastructure Modernization:*** This program is designed to continually analyze various parts of the Judiciary’s digital infrastructure including data centers, network equipment, data storage, and servers to identify and resolve deficiencies
- ***Mobile Information:*** This project will support MDEC by providing newer mobile technologies to provide personalized remote interactions with the Judiciary.
- ***Network Redesign:*** The network redesign initiative is focused on modernizing the Judiciary’s wide area network. This project has two goals – increase service availability and enhance inbound and outbound network security.
- ***State of Maryland Automated Record Tracking (SMART) System Replacement:*** The SMART information system supports the work of the Office of PSCs in Maryland. This initiative aims to modernize or replace the current SMART system, which has reached the end of its useful life.

Appendix 4 Problem-Solving Court Types and Locations

<u>County</u>	<u>Adult District Drug Court</u>	<u>Adult Circuit Drug Court</u>	<u>Juvenile Drug Court</u>	<u>Family Treatment Court</u>	<u>District Mental Health Court</u>	<u>Circuit Court Mental Health</u>	<u>Truancy Reduction Court</u>	<u>Re-Entry Court</u>	<u>Veterans Court</u>	<u>Back on Track</u>	<u>DUI Court</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Allegany		•			•							2
Anne Arundel	•	•			•				•		•	5
Baltimore City	•	•		•	•	•			•			6
Baltimore County	•	•		•	•				•			5
Calvert		•										1
Caroline		•										1
Carroll		•							•			2
Cecil		•										1
Charles		•		•								2
Dorchester	•						•		•			3
Frederick		•			•		•		•			4
Garrett												0
Harford	•	•		•	•		•		•			6
Howard	•								•		•	3
Kent							•					1
Montgomery		•			•	•					•	4
Prince George's	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•		8
Queen Anne's		•										1
Somerset		•					•		•			3
St. Mary's		•		•							•	3
Talbot		•						•				2
Washington		•							•			2
Wicomico		•					•		•			3
Worcester	•	•			•	•	•		•			6
Totals	8	20	1	5	9	3	8	2	13	1	4	74

DUI: driving under the influence

**Appendix 5
Object/Fund Difference Report
Judiciary**

<u>Object/Fund</u>	<u>FY 25 Actual</u>	<u>FY 26 Working Appropriation</u>	<u>FY 27 Allowance</u>	<u>FY 26 - 27 \$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Positions					
01 Regular	4,165.00	4,173.00	4,224.00	51.00	1.2%
02 Contractual	363.00	363.00	327.00	-36.00	-9.9%
Total Positions	4,528.00	4,536.00	4,551.00	15.00	0.3%
Objects					
01 Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits	\$530,757,678	\$528,097,002	\$568,534,937	\$40,437,935	7.7%
02 Technical and Special Fees	28,981,035	28,433,380	32,067,806	3,634,426	12.8%
03 Communications	10,001,634	9,534,481	11,784,006	2,249,525	23.6%
04 Travel	2,386,437	1,620,237	2,584,583	964,346	59.5%
06 Fuel and Utilities	1,016,131	793,875	1,116,653	322,778	40.7%
07 Motor Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	184,638	133,436	271,501	138,065	103.5%
08 Contractual Services	93,835,240	103,802,059	110,140,784	6,338,725	6.1%
09 Supplies and Materials	5,000,547	5,653,598	6,757,087	1,103,489	19.5%
10 Equipment – Replacement	4,896,790	4,811,589	6,077,999	1,266,410	26.3%
11 Equipment – Additional	1,626,788	2,969,535	3,731,724	762,189	25.7%
12 Grants, Subsidies, and Contributions	88,389,047	87,906,534	96,143,269	8,236,735	9.4%
13 Fixed Charges	20,404,090	23,433,332	23,529,905	96,573	0.4%
14 Land and Structures	0	1,100,000	2,600,000	1,500,000	136.4%
Total Objects	\$787,480,055	\$798,289,058	\$865,340,254	\$67,051,196	8.4%
Funds					
01 General Funds	\$708,327,889	\$707,964,520	\$771,366,799	\$63,402,279	9.0%
03 Special Funds	73,159,672	83,460,266	86,374,306	2,914,040	3.5%
05 Federal Funds	1,238,188	1,028,179	1,406,386	378,207	36.8%
09 Reimbursable Funds	4,754,306	5,836,093	6,192,763	356,670	6.1%
Total Funds	\$787,480,055	\$798,289,058	\$865,340,254	\$67,051,196	8.4%

Note: The fiscal 2027 allowance does not include statewide salary adjustments budgeted within the Department of Budget and Management.

**Appendix 6
Fiscal Summary
Judiciary**

<u>Program/Unit</u>	<u>FY 25 Actual</u>	<u>FY 26 Working Appropriation</u>	<u>FY 27 Allowance</u>	<u>FY 26 - 27 \$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
01 The Supreme Court of Maryland	\$17,951,227	\$17,944,197	\$19,302,225	\$1,358,028	7.6%
02 Appellate Court of Maryland	17,164,041	16,996,835	18,245,880	1,249,045	7.3%
03 Circuit Court Judges	95,369,876	98,193,755	107,810,323	9,616,568	9.8%
04 District Court	260,897,824	259,893,197	289,977,190	30,083,993	11.6%
06 Administrative Office of the Courts	138,157,331	137,144,243	147,823,022	10,678,779	7.8%
07 Judiciary Units	4,311,750	4,621,104	5,155,272	534,168	11.6%
08 Thurgood Marshall State Law Library	4,636,233	4,554,291	4,775,237	220,946	4.9%
09 Judicial Information Systems	77,005,982	76,875,032	80,777,314	3,902,282	5.1%
10 Clerks of the Circuit Court	158,803,930	159,246,404	169,553,791	10,307,387	6.5%
12 Major information technology	9,757,648	19,620,000	18,370,000	-1,250,000	-6.4%
13 ARP: Pre-Trial Home Detention	3,424,213	3,200,000	3,550,000	350,000	10.9%
Total Expenditures	\$787,480,055	\$798,289,058	\$865,340,254	\$67,051,196	8.4%
General Funds	\$708,327,889	\$707,964,520	\$771,366,799	\$63,402,279	9.0%
Special Funds	73,159,672	83,460,266	86,374,306	2,914,040	3.5%
Federal Funds	1,238,188	1,028,179	1,406,386	378,207	36.8%
Total Appropriations	\$782,725,749	\$792,452,965	\$859,147,491	\$66,694,526	8.4%
Reimbursable Funds	\$4,754,306	\$5,836,093	\$6,192,763	\$356,670	6.1%
Total Funds	\$787,480,055	\$798,289,058	\$865,340,254	\$67,051,196	8.4%

Note: The fiscal 2027 allowance does not include statewide salary adjustments budgeted within the Department of Budget and Management.