

# COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

## DESCRIPTION

The Commonwealth's Attorney is an elected Constitutional Officer responsible for prosecuting criminal offenses that occur in Henrico County, handling some civil matters, and maintaining public safety in the community by way of prevention measures and community outreach. Trials and hearings are held in the Circuit, General District, and Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts. Additionally, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office provides legal advice and training to the Division of Police, State Police, Richmond Airport Police, as well as other law enforcement agencies.

## OBJECTIVES

- To enforce criminal laws in Henrico County.
- To operate the Victim Witness program.
- To cooperate on behalf of Henrico County in operating two investigative multi-jurisdictional grand juries.
- To promote a better understanding of the criminal justice system among citizens.
- To proactively investigate and prosecute drug dealers with increased concentration and focus on the opioid epidemic and human trafficking.
- To prosecute criminal cases and include using diversion programs when appropriate.
- To work with other agencies to strengthen crime prevention and train local law enforcement agencies in criminal law and criminal procedures.
- To reduce firearm crimes in schools and reduce truancy/chronic absenteeism.
- To work to combat increased weapons use and violent crimes County-wide.
- To be part of the creation of and participation in a Behavioral Health Docket.

## FISCAL YEAR 2024 SUMMARY

### Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY22	FY23	FY24	Change 23 to 24
	Actual	Original	Approved	
Personnel	\$ 5,870,714	\$ 6,328,684	\$ 6,518,923	3.0%
Operation	314,933	171,125	277,242	62.0%
Capital	850	5,142	0	(100.0%)
Total	<u>\$ 6,186,497</u>	<u>\$ 6,504,951</u>	<u>\$ 6,796,165</u>	<u>4.5%</u>
Personnel Complement	56	56	56	0

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	<u>Change 23 to 24</u>
<b>Workload Measures</b>				
Circuit Court Defendants	1,125	1,150	1,175	25
Show Cause Hearings	858	875	900	25
Misdemeanor Appeals	342	350	375	25
General District Court Criminal Cases	47,538	47,550	47,575	25
General District Court Traffic Cases	78,521	78,525	78,550	25
Jury Trials	247	318	334	16
Juvenile Court Misdemeanors	1,980	1,990	1,995	5
Juvenile Court Felonies	864	875	900	25
<b>Effectiveness Measure</b>				
Circuit Court Indictments	1,886	1,900	1,925	25

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Commonwealth's Attorney's office budget for FY24 totals \$6,796,165, which is an increase of \$291,214, or 4.5% over FY23. The personnel complement increased by \$190,239, or 3.0% due to changes in compensation and benefits. The operations component increased by \$106,117, or 62% driven by a \$100,975 adjustment to the budget to fund the annual portion of a ten-year agreement with AXON. This agreement secures 85 professional licenses which enhance the Commonwealth Attorney's ability to review body worn camera footage, and coordinates with a similar agreement for the Division of Police. The capital component decreased by \$5,142, or 100% over FY23 as replacement computer equipment is not expected this fiscal year.

The table below presents a depiction of State funding for the Commonwealth's Attorney's office. While State funding has grown 33.8% since FY13, County's share of funding has increased from 59% to 62%.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>State Funding</b>	<b>County Funding</b>	<b>% County</b>
FY15	2,041,649	2,404,114	54%
FY16	2,092,617	2,360,989	53%
FY17	2,157,727	2,442,270	53%
FY18	2,202,720	2,591,841	54%
FY19	2,207,444	2,988,046	58%
FY20	2,293,347	3,197,057	58%
FY21	2,293,876	3,500,222	60%
FY22	2,431,506	3,754,992	61%
FY23	2,390,000	4,144,951	63%
FY24	2,475,000	4,080,638	62%

\*FY23 and FY24 reflect projections

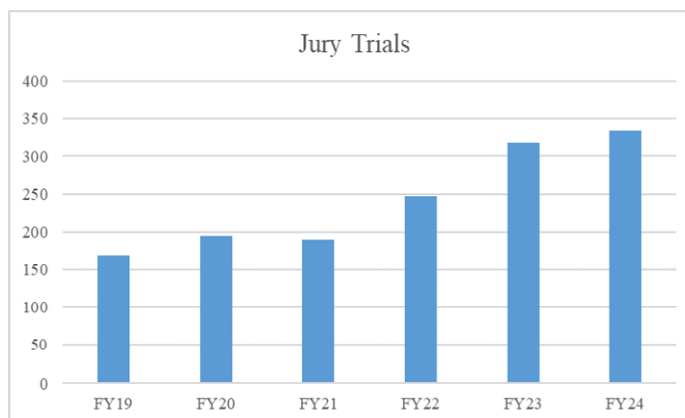
## DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Henrico Commonwealth's Attorney's office, along with all 120 prosecutor offices in the Commonwealth, participated in a time study with the National Center for State Courts from February to May 2022. This was part of an effort to identify a more appropriate staffing formula to be integrated by the Compensation Board and thus reflect a more accurate figure of the State's responsibility for public safety. The goal is to have a final report for the Compensation Board by March 2023, and available for the Legislative presentation.

In FY24, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office will continue to prosecute traffic and criminal cases, both misdemeanors and felonies, in all the Henrico County Courts. Aggressive prosecution of those who commit violent crimes will remain the number one priority. The Office will continue to work closely with the Police Division to reduce crime, not being just reactive to crime that has occurred, but being proactive with our communities to identify areas of concern and working collaboratively on solutions. The Commonwealth's Attorney's Office will continue pursuing narcotic traffickers using two multi-jurisdictional grand juries. Additionally, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office will continue providing legal training to the Police Division in its basic academies and through regular in-service training. The Office will continue to devise alternative resolutions to ensure second chances and rehabilitation. Special efforts will continue to reduce domestic violence, human trafficking, and opioid overdoses.

The Office works with the Sheriff's Office and Judges to find alternative treatment and other diversion opportunities to keep the jail population reserved for those who are serving active sentences or for those whose release may jeopardize public safety. The Office provides necessary resources in working with other agencies to support public safety needs.

The increase of violent crime in both youth and adult populations, and the increase in numbers of jury trials based on change of law, has required changes to the office structure in order to address the increased workload. The Office participated in 170 jury trials in FY19, vs. an estimated 318 jury trials for FY23, which is an 87% increase. All jury trials continued during the COVID pandemic (March 20 through September 20).



Although the legal profession will never be totally paperless, staff is committed to the goal of a digital, fileless system (CATS), and are working with IT toward this goal.