

**City of Alexandria, Virginia
FY 2024 Proposed Operating Budget & CIP
Budget Questions & Answers**

April 17, 2023

Question: What is the long-term strategy for Alexandria Criminal Justice Services?

Response:

While operating under the Sheriff's Office, the Alexandria Criminal Justice Services (ACJS) Pretrial & Local Probation Office had been supported by the Sheriff's Office through staffing assistance. The Sheriff's Office assigned sworn Deputy Sheriff staff to attend DCJS (Department of Criminal Justice Services) Pretrial & Probation Officer training in order for them to have the required certifications to assist with supervising Pretrial & Probation clients. In addition, the Sheriff's Office assisted with taking the primary lead for clients on Global Positioning Monitoring (GPS).

Since becoming a stand-alone department, ACJS officers must respond to after hour duties, such as GPS non-compliance alerts, clients with extensive supervision conditions, and providing Pretrial Investigation back-up for the 3:00 am or 4:00 am shift.

The addition of two Officer positions in FY 2023 will allow for a more even distribution of cases and court assignments and ensures an increased presence of officers in court. The addition of Deputy Director position in FY 2024 will address two key areas: (1) succession planning for the agency; as there is no other official supervisor in the office and (2) program quality assurance, organizational change, team building, and assistance with staff training, mentoring and supervision. The Deputy Director will also be responsible for data collection regarding staff caseloads; case closure outcomes; client violations and mental health cases.

Currently there are two fully trained, three in-training, and one vacant officer positions. It takes roughly 10-12 months to become fully trained to work independently. ACJS will be advertising and interviewing for vacant positions in the upcoming weeks, which will bring the office up to full staffing. The training and mentoring of new staff will begin immediately to prepare them for DCJS state training.

Regarding the long-term staffing, ACJS may require an increase for both Pretrial & Probation Officers to accommodate the increasing demand of the Courts or look at other options. This is due to changes in Pretrial Justice Reform, increases in Diversion cases, GPS monitoring cases and extensive supervision for the Mental Health Initiative Docket. For Probation, it is the complexity/variety of court requirements and individualized nature of supervision and increase in SIS (Suspended Imposition of Sentence) cases, particularly in JDR court. ACJS is currently working on a proposal for technical assistance to do program evaluation based on criteria and standards set by DCJS. The scope-of-work will include program effectiveness, staffing and workload study. The findings will assist ACJS with long-term goals and strategy regarding staffing needs and overall effectiveness of the program.