

## MUNICIPAL COURTS DEPARTMENT

### Department Description and Mission

The mission of the Municipal Courts Department (MCD) is to provide an accessible legal forum for individuals to have their court matters heard in a fair and efficient manner while holding to a high standard of integrity, professionalism and customer service. The Department represents the City of Houston's third branch of government and provides a legal venue for individuals charged with jurisdictional violations of State law and/or City Ordinance. The Houston Municipal Courts is the largest municipal court in Texas with the greatest number of cases filed annually.

There are five divisions within the MCD: Administrative Services, Court Operations, Public Services, Information Technology, and Judicial Operations that work collectively to provide court services to the public. MCD provides magistrate services, executes blood search warrants for law enforcement, and oversees various specialized dockets including: Juvenile, Truancy, Teen Court, Property Disposition, high-volume Impact, and Homeless Outreach. Additionally, the Department oversees budgetary and operational functions of three Special Revenue Funds: Building Court Security Fund (2206), Court Technology Fund (2207), and Juvenile Case Manager Fund (2211).

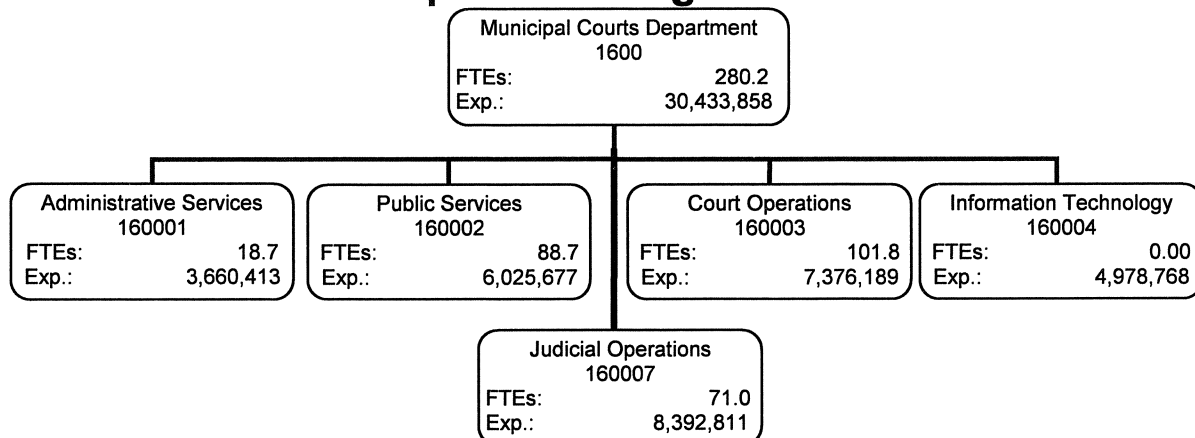
MCD is comprised of twenty-two full-time Judges, including the Presiding Judge, Associate Presiding Judge, and Administrative Judge, forty-six Associate Judges (part-time), and four full-time/nine part-time Adjudication Hearing Officers. MCD is administratively supported by three Deputy Directors, one serving as the Clerk of Court, one serving as Chief Operating Officer, and the third as Chief Financial Officer.

Full service courts are located at the Central Herbert W. Gee Courthouse, Southeast Command (Court 13/Court 14), Westside Command (Court 18), and North Command (Court 20). These courts handle arraignments, jury and bench trials, and function as Annex courts for off-docket (walk-in) matters. Jail arraignments and trials are held seven days per week at two court locations (Central/Southeast). There are nine jury courts operating Monday-Friday at the central location and one jury court at the Westside Command Station that holds jury trials two days per week. Fee based initiatives include: wedding service, notary service, printing service, and tobacco awareness classes for minors.

Finally, MCD oversees Annex court operations at two additional satellite locations, Kingwood and Clear Lake, each operating one day per week. The Annex Courts located at the Southeast, Westside, and North Command locations operate Monday-Friday and the Central location, Monday-Saturday.

MCD partners with the Administrative and Regulatory Affairs Department, handling parking citation and boot hearings Monday-Saturday at the central location. MCD also partners with the Department of Neighborhoods handling the civil adjudication hearing process for ordinance violations related to dangerous buildings and building code violations.

### Department Organization

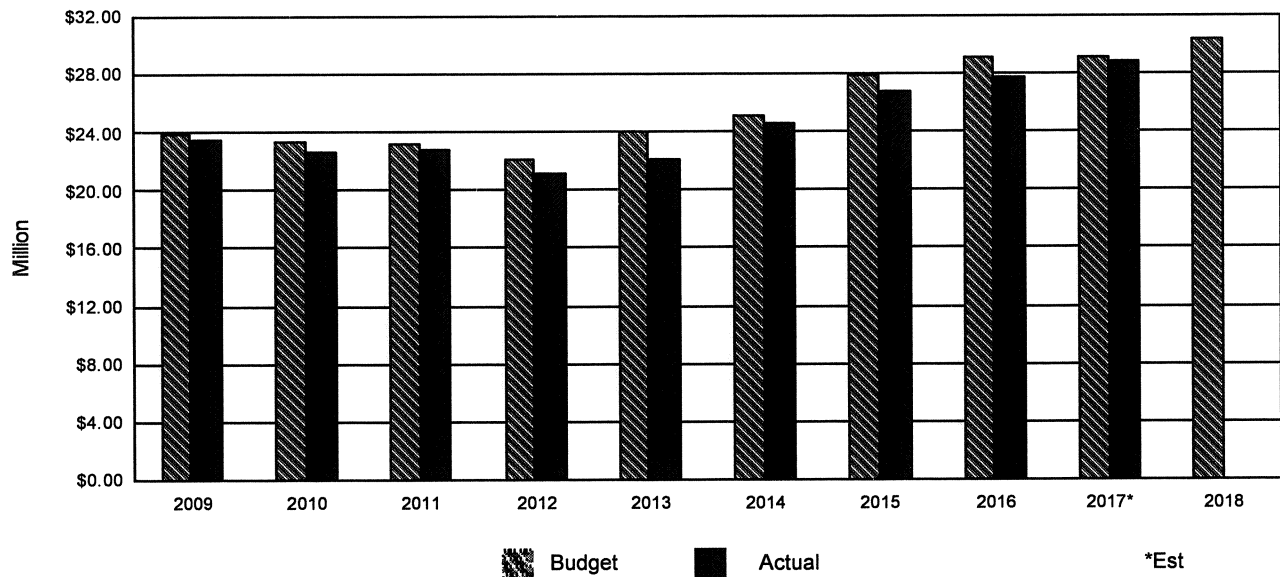


**FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET**

**Business Area Budget Summary**

<b>Fund Name</b> :		<b>General Fund</b>			
<b>Business Area</b> :		<b>Municipal Courts Department</b>			
<b>Fund No. /Bus. Area No.</b> :		<b>1000 / 1600</b>			
		<b>FY2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY2017 Current Budget</b>	<b>FY2017 Estimate</b>	<b>FY2018 Budget</b>
Expenditures	Personnel Services	22,466,048	24,039,299	23,741,707	<b>23,574,105</b>
	Supplies	166,299	200,673	187,462	<b>186,699</b>
	Other Services and Charges	4,937,480	4,769,198	4,719,276	<b>6,522,589</b>
	Non-Capital Equipment	4,764	18,496	18,496	<b>20,000</b>
	Total M & O Expenditures	27,574,591	29,027,666	28,666,941	<b>30,303,393</b>
	Debt Service & Other Uses	130,465	130,465	130,465	<b>130,465</b>
	Total Expenditure	27,705,056	29,158,131	28,797,406	<b>30,433,858</b>
Revenues		25,748,073	23,806,130	22,509,325	<b>22,565,008</b>
Staffing	Full-Time Equivalents - Civilian	280.5	293.1	286.2	<b>280.2</b>
	Full-Time Equivalents - Classified	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
	Full-Time Equivalents - Cadets	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
	Total	280.5	293.1	286.2	<b>280.2</b>
	Full-Time Equivalents - Overtime	0.2	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Significant Budget Changes and Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The FY2018 Budget provides funding for health benefits, pension contribution and municipal employees contractual pay increases.</li> <li>o The FY2018 Budget includes a reduction of \$817,452 for department savings initiatives.</li> <li>o Schedule FY2018 Amnesty Program(s).</li> <li>o Continued efforts to offer various alternative methods of case resolution including community service and payment plans.</li> <li>o Funding to maintain and support the courts case management system, Court System Management and Resource Technology (CSMART).</li> </ul>				

**Municipal Courts Department  
Current Budget vs Actual Expenditures**



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**FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET**

## Business Area Performance Measures

**Fund Name** : General Fund  
**Business Area** : Municipal Courts Department  
**Fund No. /Bus. Area No.** : 1000 / 1600

Performance Measures	FY2016 Actual	FY2017 Budget	FY2017 Estimate	FY2018 Budget
Average Defendant Wait Time: Trial by Judge (minutes)	29	30	32	30
Average Defendant Wait Time: Trial by Jury (hours)	1.2	2.0	1.2	2.0
Average Warrant Verification Time (minutes)	2	8	2	5
Customer Satisfaction Rating	94%	80%	94%	90%
Deferred Payment Program Revenue	\$883,663	\$720,000	\$700,000	\$650,000
In-House Collection Revenue	\$1.8M	\$1.4M	\$1.7M	\$1.7M
Overall Cases Disposed to Cases Filed Ratio	102%	100%	100%	100%
Overall Juror Yield	27%	25%	27%	25%
Quality Control Review of Cases	64%	50%	66%	50%
Quality Control Review of Transactions	388,872	350,000	385,470	350,000
Expenditures Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization	94%	98%	97%	98%
Revenues Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization	88%	100%	95%	100%

**FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET**

<b>Division Summary</b>						
<b>Fund Name : General Fund</b> <b>Business Area : Municipal Courts Department</b> <b>Fund No. /Bus Area No. : 1000 / 1600</b>						
<b>Division Description</b>	<b>FY2016 Actual</b>		<b>FY2017 Estimate</b>		<b>FY2018 Budget</b>	
	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>
<b>Administrative Services 160001</b> Provides oversight of facilities, building security, and employee safety. Oversight of budgeting/financial reporting and contracts/compliance. Oversight of the Collections Master Agreement with multiple vendors. Public Information Office services including clearance letters, council, and legislative liaison, dissemination of information to the public, community outreach, social media, and website. Indirect oversight of HITS and HR departments.	18.9	3,639,506	19.0	3,703,323	18.7	3,660,413
<b>Public Services 160002</b> Provides oversight of the collection of fines/fees and processing of court actions. Prepares/processes court noticing. Oversight of the Deferred Payment Compliance Program and in-house collections through the One Call Solution Center for court orders that are delinquent through the 90th day. Quality control review of monetary transactions. Cashier support of parking adjudication.	86.1	5,561,840	88.8	6,026,892	88.7	6,025,677
<b>Court Operations 160003</b> Provides oversight of courtroom support staff including dockets, processing of judicial orders and coordinates alternative sentencing. Provides warrant verification service to law enforcement, support for the jail booking process, processing of bond forfeitures, appeals, bankruptcies, and expunctions. Maintains oversight of record retention. Prepares complaints/subpoenas. Provides data entry service for paper citations. Quality review of cases.	104.3	7,142,109	106.0	7,485,133	101.8	7,376,189
<b>IT 160004</b> Provides funding for interdepartmentally billed HITS chargeback costs, Scofflaw initiative costs, and system maintenance costs related to CSMART.	0.0	3,331,637	0.0	3,175,186	0.0	4,978,768
<b>Judicial Operations 160007</b> Provides judicial oversight of daily dockets (arraignment/trials/jail), parking adjudication, and specialized dockets including Impact, Homeless, Juvenile, and Civil Adjudication. Oversight of jury administration and Juvenile Case Manager Program/Teen Court. Provides magistrate services for law enforcement. Provides mandated court services (language, counsel, reporters) and fee-based wedding services.	71.2	8,029,964	72.4	8,406,872	71.0	8,392,811
<b>Total</b>	<b>280.5</b>	<b>27,705,056</b>	<b>286.2</b>	<b>28,797,406</b>	<b>280.2</b>	<b>30,433,858</b>

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**FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET**

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**Business Area Revenues Summary**

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**Fund Name** : General Fund  
**Business Area** : Municipal Courts Department  
**Fund No./Bus. Area No.** : 1000 / 1600

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<b>Category</b>	<b>FY2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY2017 Current Budget</b>	<b>FY2017 Estimate</b>	<b>FY2018 Budget</b>
Charges for Services	150	250	250	150
Direct Interfund Services	0	386,023	386,023	386,023
Municipal Courts Fines and Forfeits	24,960,347	22,812,017	21,371,058	21,371,058
Other Fines and Forfeits	3,810	3,696	3,696	3,456
Miscellaneous/Other	783,766	604,144	748,298	804,321
<b>Grand Total Revenues</b>	<b>25,748,073</b>	<b>23,806,130</b>	<b>22,509,325</b>	<b>22,565,008</b>