

## 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 six divisions within MCD: Administrative Services, Court Operations, Public Services, Information Technology, Collections and Compliance, and Judicial Operations that work collectively to provide court services to the public. MCD also provides magistrate and blood search warrant services for law enforcement, and oversees various specialized dockets including: Juvenile, Truancy, Teen Court, Property Disposition, Impact, Diversionary, 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).

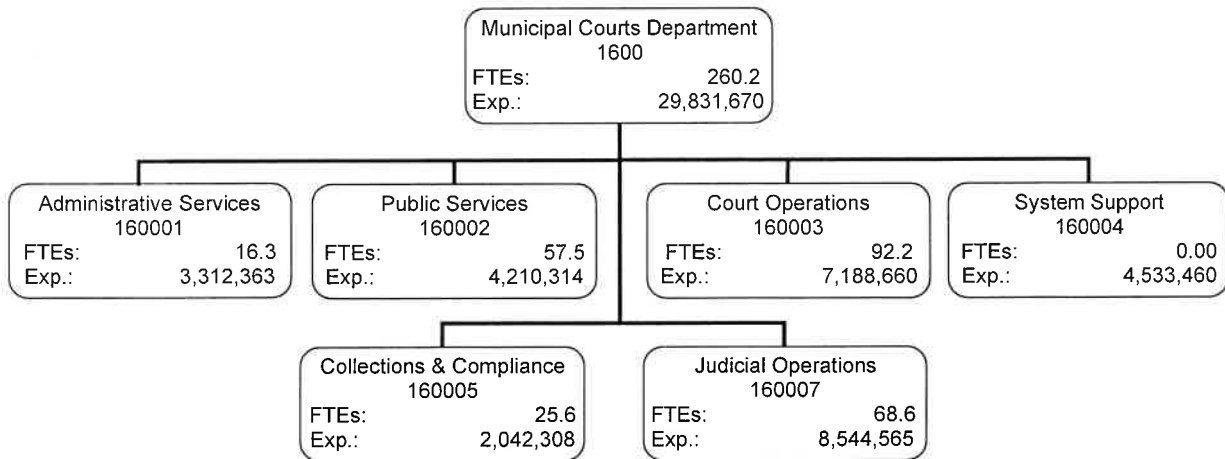
Organizationally, MCD is comprised of full-time Judges, including the Presiding Judge, the Associate Presiding Judge, and the Administrative Judge, four Deputy Directors, two Assistant Directors, and Associate Judges (part-time), full-time and part-time Adjudication Hearing Officers, and supporting court and administrative staff.

Full service courts are located at the Central Herbert W. Gee Courthouse, Southeast Command, Westside Command, and North Command. These Courts handle arraignments, jury and bench trials, and function as Annex courts for off-docket (walk-in) matters. MCD has implemented various fee-based initiatives including wedding service, notary service, and driving record printing service.

MCD oversees Annex court operations one day per week at their Kingwood and Clear Lake satellite locations. The Annex Courts at the Southeast, Westside, and North Command locations operate Monday-Friday, and the Central location, Monday-Saturday. The Joint Processing Center is operational, and all jail dockets have been moved to that location including the magistrate services to law enforcement.

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 2020 BUDGET**

**Business Area Budget Summary**

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

		FY2018 Actual	FY2019 Current Budget	FY2019 Estimate	FY2020 Budget
Expenditures	Personnel Services	22,725,133	23,702,383	22,843,862	23,342,617
	Supplies	104,868	184,173	175,871	179,812
	Other Services and Charges	6,358,593	6,202,827	6,273,496	6,169,026
	Non-Capital Equipment	29,861	1,300	1,300	9,750
	Total M & O Expenditures	<u>29,218,455</u>	<u>30,090,683</u>	<u>29,294,529</u>	<u>29,701,205</u>
	Debt Service & Other Uses	<u>130,465</u>	<u>130,465</u>	<u>130,465</u>	<u>130,465</u>
	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>29,348,920</b>	<b>30,221,148</b>	<b>29,424,994</b>	<b>29,831,670</b>

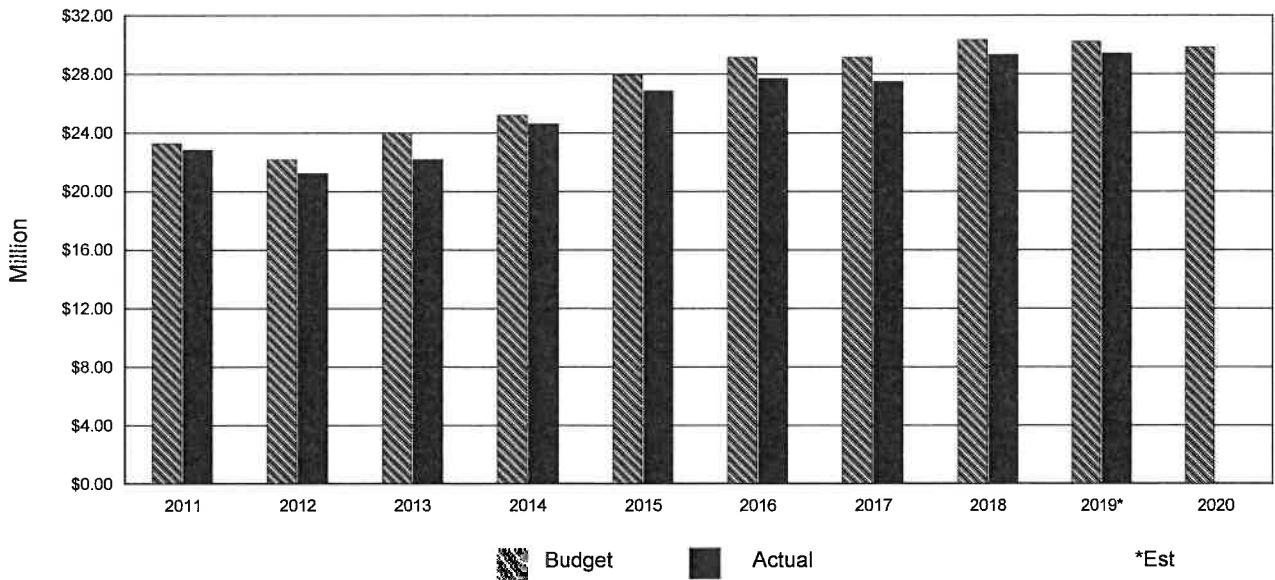
Revenues	21,840,037	22,789,830	22,926,683	23,426,683
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Staffing		FY2018 Actual	FY2019 Current Budget	FY2019 Estimate	FY2020 Budget
Staffing	Full-Time Equivalents - Civilian	268.4	271.6	259.1	260.2
	Full-Time Equivalents - Classified	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Full-Time Equivalents - Cadets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	<u>268.4</u>	<u>271.6</u>	<u>259.1</u>	<u>260.2</u>
	Full-Time Equivalents - Overtime	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**Significant Budget Changes and Highlights**

- o The FY2020 Budget provides funding for health benefits, pension contribution, and municipal employees contractual pay increases.
- o FY2020 Budget includes a reduction of \$1,029,021 for department savings initiatives.
- o FY2020 Budget includes the continuation of Amnesty Programs to assist the public in resolving delinquent cases and ensuring compliance with Court Orders

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



**FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET**

**Business Area Performance Measures**

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

Performance Measures	FY2018 Actual	FY2019 Target	FY2019 Estimate	FY2020 Target
Average Defendant Wait Time: Trial by Judge (minutes)	30	30	29	30
Average Defendant Wait Time: Trial by Jury (hours)	1.2	2.0	1.1	2.0
Average Warrant Verification Time (minutes)	2	5	1.65	5
Customer Satisfaction Rating	94%	90%	90%	90%
Deferred Payment Compliance	N/A	60%	60%	60%
Deferred Payment Program Revenue	\$720,933	\$450,000	\$611,200	\$450,000
In-House Collection Revenue	\$1.8M	\$1.7M	\$1.6M	\$1.7M
Overall Cases Disposed to Cases Filed Ratio	99%	100%	89%	100%
Overall Juror Yield	26%	25%	27%	25%
Quality Control Review of Cases	62%	50%	90%	50%
Quality Control Review of Transactions	412,967	350,000	350,000	350,000
Expenditures Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization	96%	98%	98%	98%
Revenues Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization	97%	100%	101%	100%

**FISCAL YEAR 2020 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>FY2018 Actual</b>		<b>FY2019 Estimate</b>		<b>FY2020 Budget</b>		
	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	
<b>MCD - Administrative Services 160001</b> Provides oversight of facilities, building security, and employee safety. Oversight of budgeting/financial reporting and contracts. Public Information Office services including clearance letters, council/legislative liaison, dissemination of information to the public, community outreach, social media, and website. Indirect oversight of HITS and HR departments.	16.8	3,648,101	15.7	3,189,986	<b>16.3</b>	<b>3,312,363</b>	
<b>MCD - Public Services Group 160002</b> Provides oversight of the collection of fines/fees and processing of court actions. Prepares/processes court noticing. Quality control review of monetary transactions. Cashier support of court matters, parking adjudication and jail bonding services at multiple court locations. Processing court actions and payments received by mail/email.	86.0	5,727,108	56.9	4,082,822	<b>57.5</b>	<b>4,210,314</b>	
<b>MCD - Court Operations 160003</b> Provides oversight of courtroom support staff including dockets, processing of judicial orders and coordinates alternative sentencing. Warrant verification service for law enforcement, supports jail booking process, processes bond forfeitures, appeals, bankruptcies, and expunction requests. Oversight of record retention. Prepares complaints/subpoenas. Provides data entry for paper citations and quality review of cases.	94.8	7,020,843	92.2	7,020,151	<b>92.2</b>	<b>7,188,660</b>	
<b>MCD - System Support Group 160004</b> Provides funding for interdepartmentally billed HITS chargeback costs, Scofflaw initiative costs, and system maintenance costs related to CSMART.	0.0	4,602,851	0.0	4,688,157	<b>0.0</b>	<b>4,533,460</b>	
<b>MCD - Collections and Compliance 160005</b> Oversight of in-house collections up to the 90th day (One Call Solution Center). Oversight of the Deferred Payment Compliance Program. Oversight of Department compliance with local, state and Federal mandates and internal policies/procedures, including CJIS for contractors/employees. Oversight of the Collections Master Agreement with external collection vendors.	0.0	0	24.7	1,915,264	<b>25.6</b>	<b>2,042,308</b>	

**FISCAL YEAR 2020 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>FY2018 Actual</b>		<b>FY2019 Estimate</b>		<b>FY2020 Budget</b>		
	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	<b>FTEs</b>	<b>Costs \$</b>	
<b>MCD - Judicial Operations Group 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.	70.8	8,350,017	69.6	8,528,614	68.6	8,544,565	
<b>Total</b>	<u>268.4</u>	<u>29,348,920</u>	<u>259.1</u>	<u>29,424,994</u>	<u>260.2</u>	<u>29,831,670</u>	

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**FISCAL YEAR 2020 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>FY2018 Actual</b>	<b>FY2019 Current Budget</b>	<b>FY2019 Estimate</b>	<b>FY2020 Budget</b>
Charges for Services	25	150	150	150
Direct Interfund Services	386,023	386,023	386,023	<b>386,023</b>
Municipal Courts Fines and Forfeits	20,980,467	21,591,068	22,072,450	<b>22,572,450</b>
Other Fines and Forfeits	3,800	3,460	3,900	<b>3,900</b>
Miscellaneous/Other	469,722	809,129	464,160	<b>464,160</b>
<b>Grand Total Revenues</b>	<u><u>21,840,037</u></u>	<u><u>22,789,830</u></u>	<u><u>22,926,683</u></u>	<u><u>23,426,683</u></u>