

## 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).

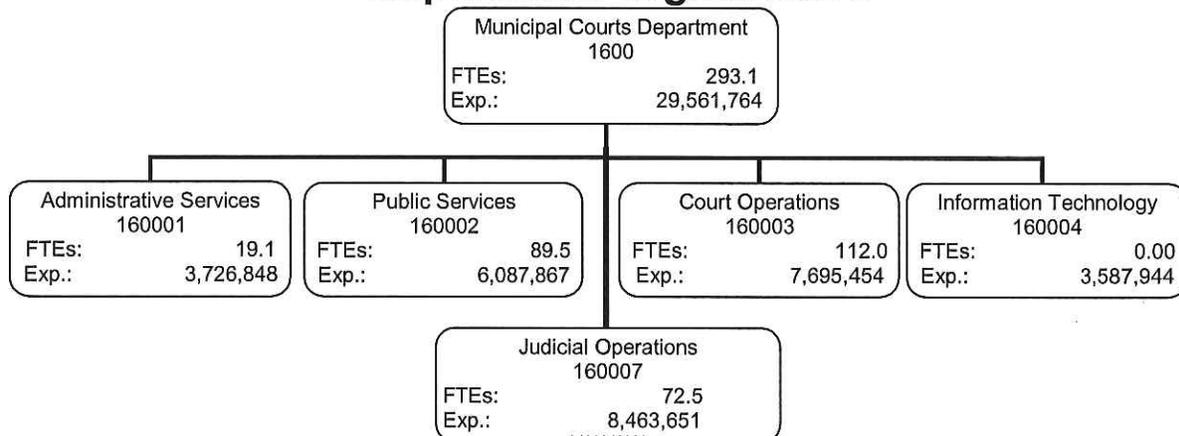
MCD is comprised of twenty-two full-time Judges, including the Presiding Judge, Associate Presiding Judge, and Administrative Judge, forty-six Associate Judges (part-time), and four full-time/seven part-time Adjudication Hearing Officers. MCD is administratively supported by three Deputy Directors, one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

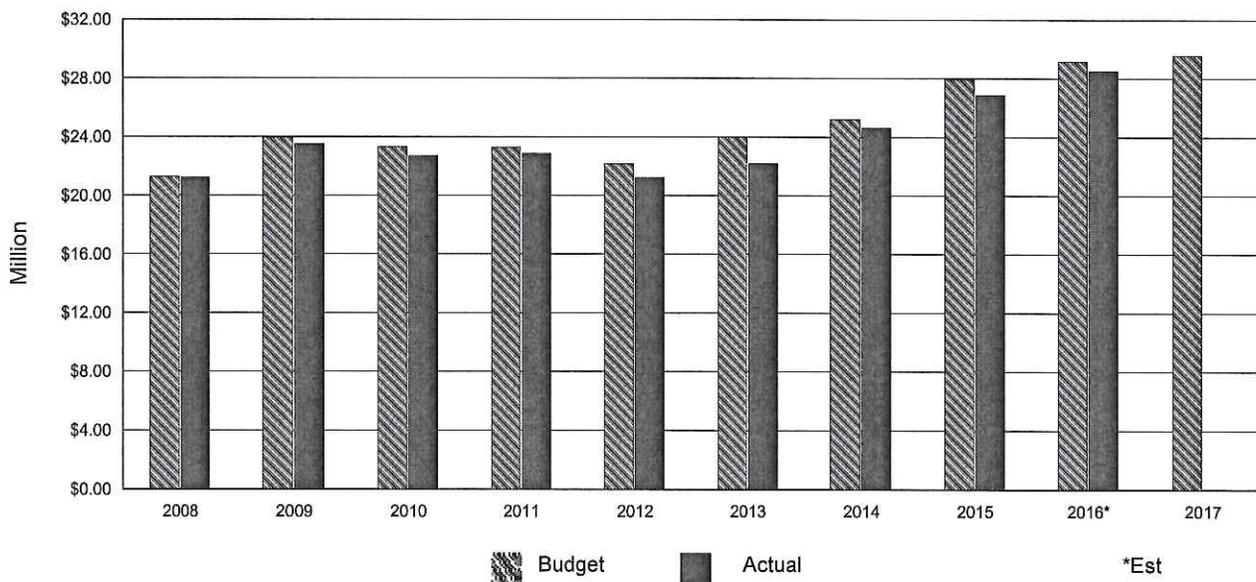


**FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET**

**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>FY2015 Actual</b>	<b>FY2016 Current Budget</b>	<b>FY2016 Estimate</b>	<b>FY2017 Budget</b>
Expenditures	Personnel Services	22,132,115	22,889,015	22,709,016	24,039,299
	Supplies	192,841	244,998	214,498	204,254
	Other Services and Charges	4,400,251	5,855,658	5,455,299	5,180,746
	Non-Capital Equipment	7,063	26,400	5,000	7,000
	Total M & O Expenditures	26,732,270	29,016,071	28,383,813	29,431,299
	Debt Service & Other Uses	130,465	130,465	130,465	130,465
	Total Expenditure	26,862,735	29,146,536	28,514,278	29,561,764
Revenues		26,021,784	29,264,745	23,418,712	23,806,130
Staffing	Full-Time Equivalents - Civilian	298.5	297.5	288.9	293.1
	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	298.5	297.5	288.9	293.1
	Full-Time Equivalents - Overtime	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.0
Significant Budget Changes and Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The FY2017 Budget provides funding for health benefits, pension contribution and municipal employees contractual pay increases.</li> <li>o The FY2017 Budget includes a reduction of \$763,068 for department savings initiatives.</li> <li>o Continued funding to maintain and support the Court System Management and Resource Technology (CSMART).</li> <li>o The continuation of fee-based initiatives such as: weddings, alcohol and tobacco classes, notary service, Driving Record printing service, and Deferred Payment Compliance Program.</li> <li>o Continued efforts to offer various alternative methods of case resolution including community service and payment plans.</li> </ul>				

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



**FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET**

<b>Business Area Performance Measures</b>				
<b>Fund Name : General Fund</b>				
<b>Business Area : Municipal Courts Department</b>				
<b>Fund No. /Bus. Area No. : 1000 / 1600</b>				
<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY2015 Actual</b>	<b>FY2016 Budget</b>	<b>FY2016 Estimate</b>	<b>FY2017 Budget</b>
Average Defendant Wait Time: Trial by Judge (minutes)	26	30	26	30
Average Defendant Wait Time: Trial by Jury (hours)	2.03	2.30	1.45	2.00
Average Warrant Verification Time (minutes)	3	8	3	8
Customer Satisfaction Rating	87%	75%	89%	80%
Deferred Payment Program Revenue	N/A	\$600,000	\$670,619	\$720,000
In-House Collection Revenue	\$1.7M	\$1.6M	\$1.3M	\$1.4M
Overall Cases Disposed to Cases Filed Ratio	125%	100%	102.6%	100%
Overall Juror Yield	26%	25%	28%	25%
Quality Control Review of Cases	63%	50%	64%	50%
Quality Control Review of Transactions	498,110	400,000	347,388	350,000
Expenditures Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization	96%	98%	97%	98%
Revenues Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization	82%	100%	80%	100%

**FISCAL YEAR 2017 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>FY2015 Actual</b>		<b>FY2016 Estimate</b>		<b>FY2017 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> Oversight of facilities, building security, and employee safety. Oversight of budgeting/financial reporting and contracts/compliance. Oversight of the MCD Collections Master Agreement/Letters of Engagement with multiple vendors. Public Information Office provides clearance letters, serves as council, and legislative liaison, disseminates information to the public, social media, and website. Indirect oversight of HITS and HR departments.	18.0	3,162,941	19.0	3,645,843	19.1	3,726,848	
<b>Public Services 160002</b> Oversight of collection of fines/fees and processing of court actions. Preparation of court noticing. Oversight of 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 transactions. Cashier support of parking adjudication.	89.2	5,305,136	89.6	5,587,036	89.5	6,087,867	
<b>Court Operations 160003</b> Oversight of courtroom support including dockets, processing of judicial orders and coordinating alternative sentencing. Warrant verification service to law enforcement, support for the jail booking process, processes bond forfeitures, appeals, bankruptcies, and expunctions. Retention of court records. Preparation of complaints/subpoenas and data entry of paper citations. Quality review of cases.	117.9	7,474,118	109.5	7,275,776	112.0	7,695,454	
<b>IT 160004</b> Oversight of Houston Information Technology Services related costs, equipment maintenance costs, and system maintenance costs for CSMART, and limited licensing costs for legacy Courtview case management system.	0.0	2,925,231	0.0	3,834,134	0.0	3,587,944	
<b>Judicial Operations 160007</b> Judicial oversight of court and jail dockets (arraignment/trials), parking adjudication, and specialized dockets including Impact, Homeless, Juvenile and Civil Adjudication. Oversight of jury administration and Juvenile Case Manager Program/Teen Court. Provide magistrate services for law enforcement, mandated court services (language, counsel, reporters), and fee-based wedding services.	73.4	7,995,309	70.8	8,171,489	72.5	8,463,651	
<b>Total</b>	<b>298.5</b>	<b>26,862,735</b>	<b>288.9</b>	<b>28,514,278</b>	<b>293.1</b>	<b>29,561,764</b>	

**FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET**

**Business Area Revenues Summary**

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

<b>Category</b>	<b>FY2015 Actual</b>	<b>FY2016 Current Budget</b>	<b>FY2016 Estimate</b>	<b>FY2017 Budget</b>
Charges for Services	100,475	115,000	250	250
Direct Interfund Services	0	0	0	386,023
Municipal Courts Fines and Forfeits	25,440,084	28,698,175	22,812,017	22,812,017
Other Fines and Forfeits	3,676	6,570	3,696	3,696
Miscellaneous/Other	477,549	445,000	602,749	604,144
<b>Grand Total Revenues</b>	<b>26,021,784</b>	<b>29,264,745</b>	<b>23,418,712</b>	<b>23,806,130</b>