

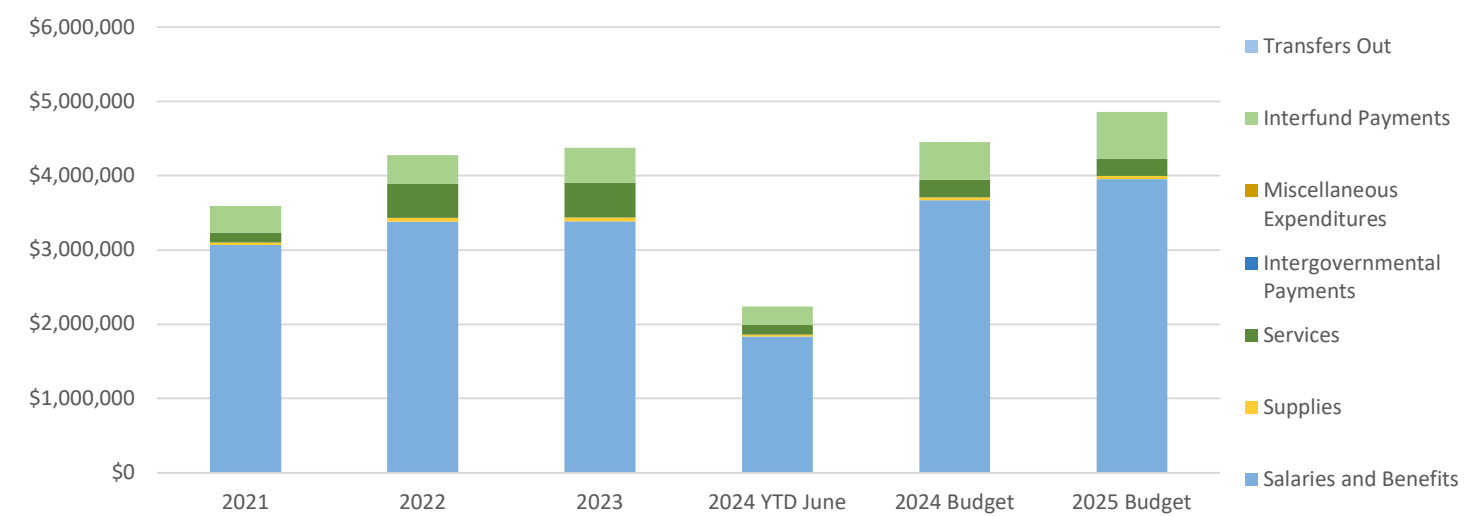
Clerk

Elected Official: David Lewis

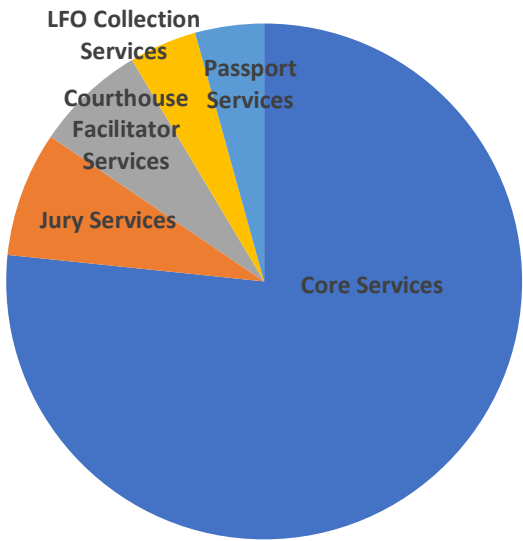
Mission: It is our mission to serve the courts and the citizens of Kitsap County in a manner best suited to provide quality, efficient, and effective service. We believe the public has a right to employees who embody the highest standards of excellence, integrity, and fairness.

Total Revenue	\$1.27 M
Total Expense	\$4.86 M
Total Budget Change	\$0.41 M
Total FTE	39.20

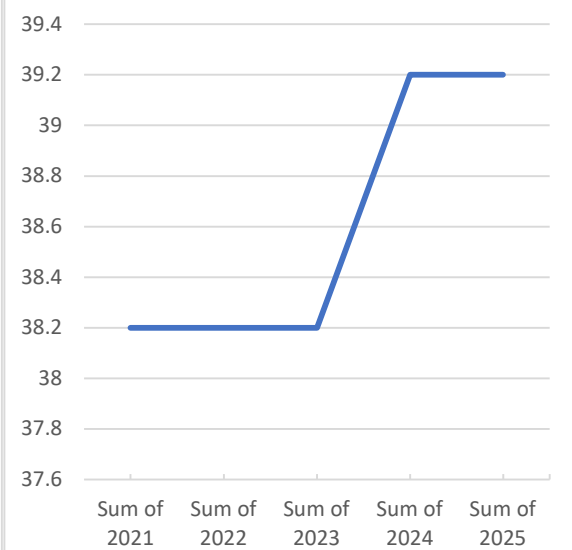
Summary of Expenses



Programs



Total FTE



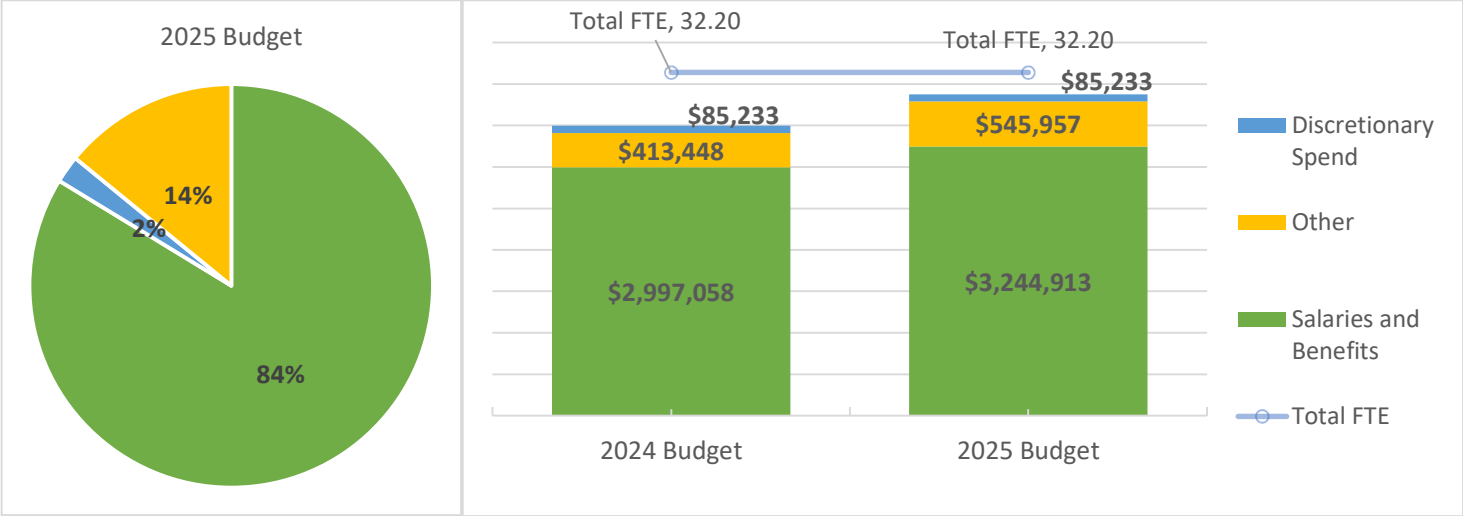
	2021	2022	2023	2024 YTD June	2024 Budget	2025 Budget	Change
Salaries and Benefits	\$3,065,551	\$3,378,199	\$3,382,331	\$1,833,987	\$3,665,314	\$3,953,350	\$288,036
Discretionary Spend	\$168,315	\$509,951	\$522,986	\$155,218	\$276,711	\$276,711	\$0
Other	\$355,627	\$388,631	\$472,460	\$249,963	\$508,055	\$629,093	\$121,038

Clerk - Budget Request

Summary	Type	2024 Budget	Change	2025 Budget	Description
Salaries and Benefits	Salaries and Benefits	\$3,665,314			
			\$288,036		Status Quo Salaries & Benefits
				\$3,953,350	
Discretionary Spend	Supplies	\$44,150			
			-\$1,400		Move capacity to supplies for Status Quo budget
				\$42,750	
Discretionary Spend	Services	\$232,561			
			\$1,400		Move capacity to supplies for Status Quo budget
				\$233,961	
Discretionary Spend	Intergovernmental Payments	\$0			
				\$0	
Discretionary Spend	Miscellaneous Expenditures	\$0			
				\$0	
Other	Interfund Payments	\$508,055			
			\$10,584		Fleet Recovery & Insurance
			\$110,454		Facilities Maintenance
				\$629,093	
Other	Transfers Out	\$0			
				\$0	
Grand Total		\$4,450,080	\$409,074	\$4,859,154	

Clerk
Core Services

Fund Type: General Fund **\$3.88 M**
Budget Change: \$380,364



Purpose

The Clerk's Office's core function and responsibility, as set forth in State law, is to act as the Superior Court's recordkeeper and financial agent. We receive all documents for filing in the Court's files. We accept payment for various court fines and fees. We scan and docket all court documents, create and maintain all Superior Court files. We retrieve and certify copies of documents from our files as needed. We write and track judgments pursuant to court order. We staff all Superior Court hearings, keep brief notes of the proceedings and operate the recording equipment. We receive, mark, and track all exhibits entered at trials or hearings. At our public counter, we assist the public, attorneys, and members of other county agencies. And, lastly, we perform the same kind of administrative functions as other County departments.

Strategy

This program is how the State and the citizens of Kitsap County access the services of the Superior Court. The citizens of Kitsap County are well-served by the County Clerk's staff. We are mandated by law and the State Constitution to perform our services, and we try very hard to always go the extra mile. This year we focused on access to our office. We launched an e-filing platform. With the help of IS we also transformed four public computers to self-serve kiosks where citizens can make payments, view their case history, order records, and file protection orders. We are very cognizant that we work for the citizens and that we owe them courtesy and hard work.

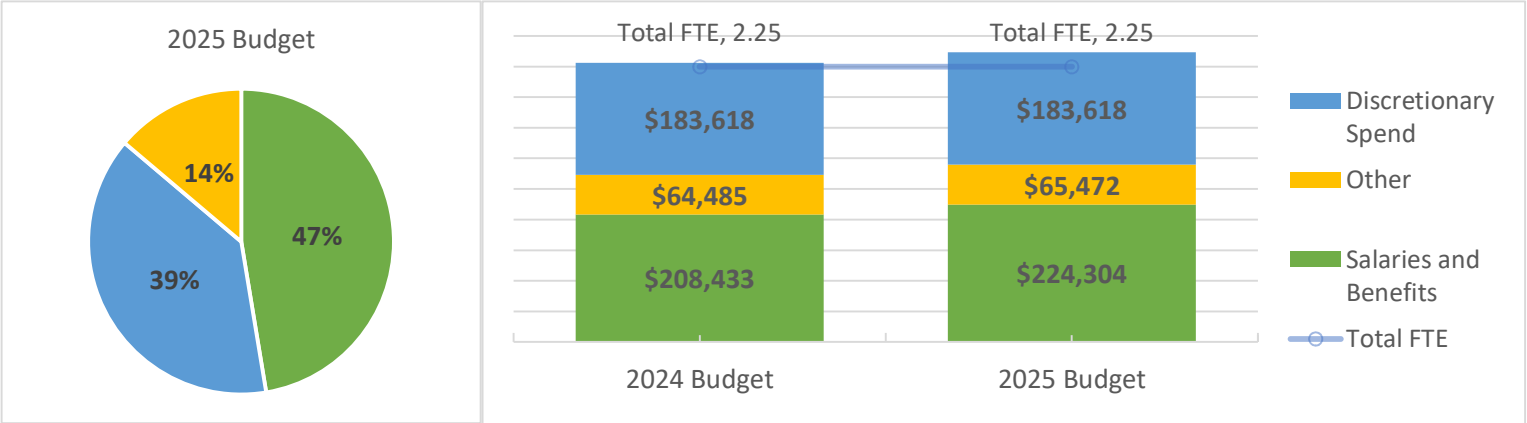
Results

Every day of the year we perform our responsibilities and deliver our services in the most efficient way possible, innovating whenever possible. Imaging court documents has resulted in much better access to court records. Electronic court records are available to the general public, for a fee, through Digital Archives. Subscription service to electronic records has been made available to attorneys and other law and justice entities. The public has been requesting the e-filing service for quite some time. We were part of a group of pilot offices to launch a state platform in April. Our office works to continue improving and adjusting the system to work best for our local court however there has been an overwhelming warm response to this platform. The public kiosks have been a been quite beneficial in that there is easier access to other languages on these sites. Our office has been leaning into technology upgrades and utilization to improve services to the public.

	2021	2022	2023	2024 YTD June	2024 Budget	2025 Budget
Revenue	\$836,130	\$814,577	\$853,390	\$434,848	\$823,650	\$823,600
Expense	\$2,998,535	\$3,227,562	\$3,212,847	\$1,736,403	\$3,495,739	\$3,876,103
Total FTE	31.70	31.70	31.20		32.20	32.20

Clerk
Jury Services

Fund Type: General Fund **\$0.47 M**
Budget Change: \$16,858



Purpose

The summoning of prospective jurors for jury service is a responsibility placed upon the Superior Court. In Kitsap County the County Clerk has voluntarily taken on the responsibility to summon and provide prospective jurors for all courts (Superior, District, and Municipal) within Kitsap County. The County Clerk’s jury staff summon prospective jurors for a week at a time, although jurors serve for only one trial. When jurors are needed for a trial, jury staff call in the requested number of jurors, process the jurors when they arrive, and prepare the materials to go into court. Jury staff keep track of jurors who attend and send notice to those who do not respond or do not appear after responding. Staff track attendance for L&I purposes, pay for juror meals during deliberation, and pay jurors for attendance and mileage expense. This year has seen an increase in the number of panels used because of COVID restrictions have been lifted and several high-profile cases have been scheduled and have not appeared to have slowed down.

Strategy

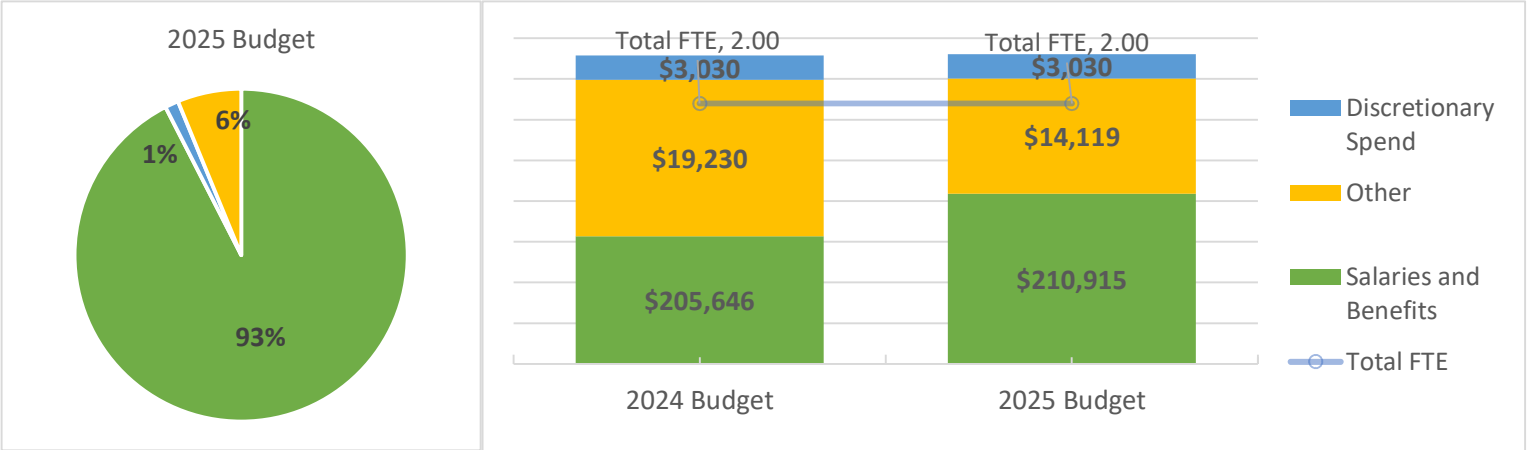
The citizens of Kitsap County, like all other citizens of the United States, have an undeniable right to a trial by jury. For that to work, citizens are required to serve as jurors as part of a fair and effective law and justice system. We strive to provide an optimal daily supply of eligible jurors allowing efficient court operations while minimizing service time spent by citizens and cost to Kitsap County and to maintain accurate and complete records of jury service for the court, jurors, and jurors’ employers.

Results

Our jury system software allows summoned jurors to respond by U.S. Mail, as well as respond and check their schedules online. We can text or email jurors to let them know if they are no longer required to report after previously being called. This has resulted in less inconvenience for prospective jurors and a cost savings for the program. We monitor trials closely to ensure we schedule an appropriate number of jurors to report. Address corrections are kept up automatically. Extracting information for statistics and reports is easily accomplished.

We summon prospective jurors for the four Municipal Courts in Kitsap County for a \$650 (effective January 2024) administrative fee plus actual costs. Providing this service assists the cities from having to maintain their own juror summoning programs. Knowing that jury service is not always convenient, our jury staff provides excellent customer service and pays close attention to the needs of the jurors and courts.

	2021	2022	2023	2024 YTD June	2024 Budget	2025 Budget
Revenue	\$816	\$2,713	\$5,052	\$5,741	\$5,000	\$7,000
Expense	\$227,179	\$419,196	\$488,545	\$254,100	\$456,536	\$473,394
Total FTE	2.25	2.25	2.25		2.25	2.25



Purpose

The courthouse facilitators provide inexpensive, paid assistance to pro se litigants (those representing themselves) in the area of family law; and to lay guardians. Lay guardians are non-professionals put in the position of becoming a guardian to a friend or loved one who can no longer care for themselves. The facilitators work directly with the litigants and lay guardians to make sure all paperwork is correctly filled out before going before a judge and also assist the court as requested. The facilitators also create instructions to be sold in kits, along with mandatory forms, as a revenue stream. When the mandatory court forms are changed, all changes are incorporated into the kits by the facilitators. During the pandemic the facilitators began offering services remotely through Zoom conferences. This has proven a very popular and effective way to deliver services to those facing challenges traveling to the courthouse.

Strategy

This program is of greatest importance to pro se litigants and lay guardians who often find themselves quite unable to navigate the complexities of court proceedings. Helping citizens through the system means less time lost in court and less time spent at the County Clerk's counter where deputy clerks are limited in assistance they can provide.

Results

Many efficiencies and innovations have been introduced over the years. The facilitators are always looking for ways to make changes to better serve the public and the court. The Superior Court is pleased with the amount and high level of service provided by our courthouse facilitators. The state (AOC) has also been impressed with our program and have invited our facilitators to speak at conferences and podcasts this last year. As a result, pro se litigants and lay guardians are better prepared for their court proceedings and the process runs more smoothly and quickly.

	2021	2022	2023	2024 YTD June	2024 Budget	2025 Budget
Revenue	\$156,048	\$163,260	\$210,251	\$120,628	\$170,750	\$199,000
Expense	\$136,532	\$160,097	\$222,559	\$115,395	\$227,906	\$228,064
Total FTE	1.50	1.50	2.00		2.00	2.00

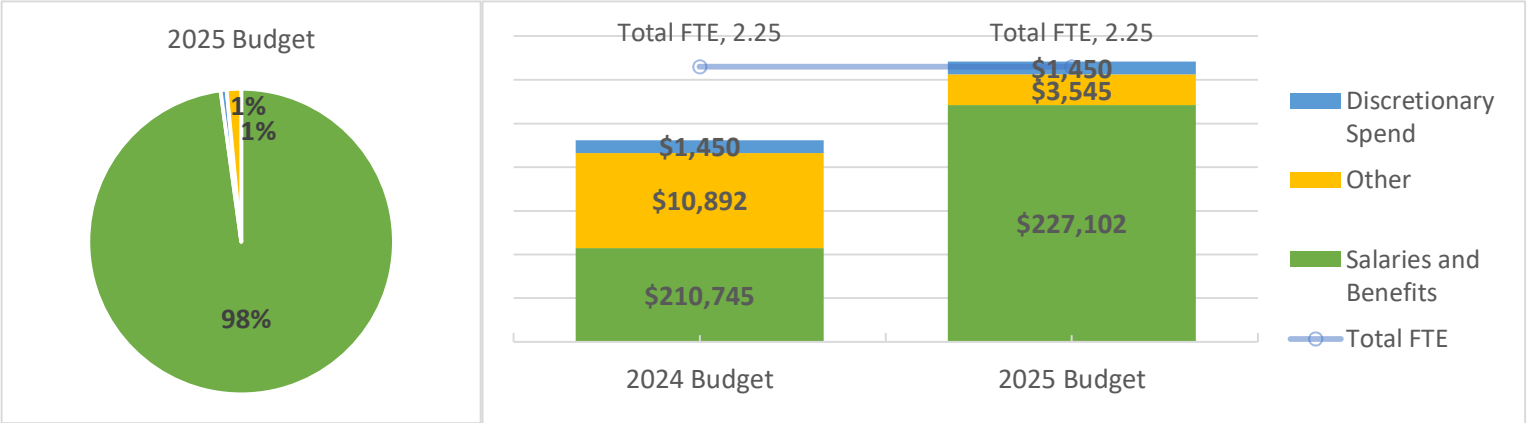
Clerk

LFO Collection Services

Fund Type: General Fund

\$0.23 M

Budget Change: \$9,010



Purpose

In October 2003, the Kitsap County Clerk’s Office (along with all other County Clerks in the State) voluntarily took over responsibility from the State Department of Corrections (DOC) to collect Legal Financial Obligations (LFOs) from those individuals convicted of felony offenses in the Superior Court. Two full-time and one part time staff maintain the accounts receivables and facilitate the collection of LFOs by setting up and reviewing payment plans, sending reminder notices, reviewing employment history for possible wage assignments, and making accommodations when needed to assist those offenders who are struggling to make their payments. Once a person has fulfilled their financial obligation, staff will review court records to determine whether they are eligible to request a Certificate and Order of Discharge, indicating all requirements of the sentence have been satisfied.

Strategy

The main focus of this program has evolved during the past few years, due to increasing support for criminal reform and changes made by legislation. The State and the Courts have greatly reduced the amount of monetary fines offenders are ordered to pay, and are granting motions to waive fines previously imposed. LFO staff now spend a large portion of their time adjusting down accounts receivables, assisting offenders when inquiring about how to request a reduction in fines, obtaining orders of discharge, and vacating criminal records.

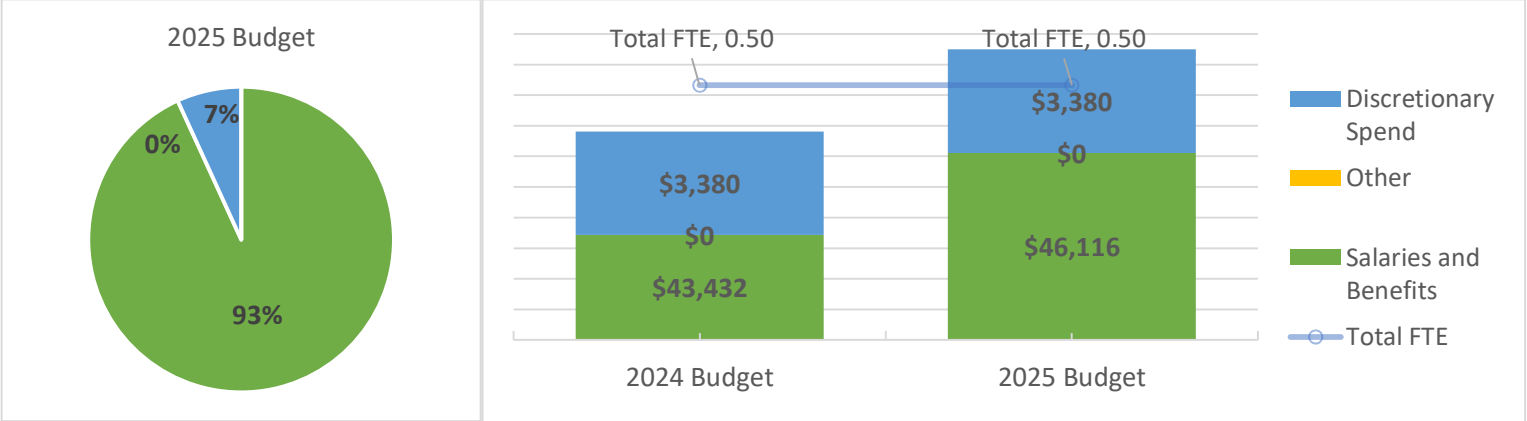
Results

Though these changes to the LFO program have significantly increased the amount of time staff spend on processing orders and adjusting accounts receivables, it has benefited offenders greatly; they are better able to fulfill their obligations and satisfy the requirements of their sentences, which offers them better opportunities to improve their lives, benefiting the community as a result. Due to the reduction of the amount of fines an offender is assessed and the new law limiting the jurisdiction to collect, the number of accounts requiring collection efforts is significantly decreasing. This decrease allows LFO staff the ability to focus more of their collection efforts on the accounts where restitution is owed to the victims of crime.

	2021	2022	2023	2024 YTD June	2024 Budget	2025 Budget
Revenue	\$191,181	\$360,142	\$295,214	\$7,156	\$29,127	\$27,992
Expense	\$190,352	\$430,327	\$410,474	\$113,050	\$223,087	\$232,097
Total FTE	2.25	2.25	2.25		2.25	2.25

Clerk
Passport Services

Fund Type: General Fund
\$0.05 M
Budget Change: \$2,684



Purpose

The Clerk's Office voluntarily acts as a sub-agency for the U.S. Department of State by receiving and processing applications for U.S. Passports. We receive and review the applications, receive and review attendant material, collect fees, and, in about half the cases, take Passport Photos for a fee of \$15. We receive \$35 for each passport processed.

Strategy

This program serves the citizens by allowing them a place in Kitsap County to process their passport applications, including getting photographs taken, Monday through Friday. Many of the locations that used to offer this service no longer do so. This program provides a valuable service to citizens and additionally brings a great deal of needed revenue to County government.

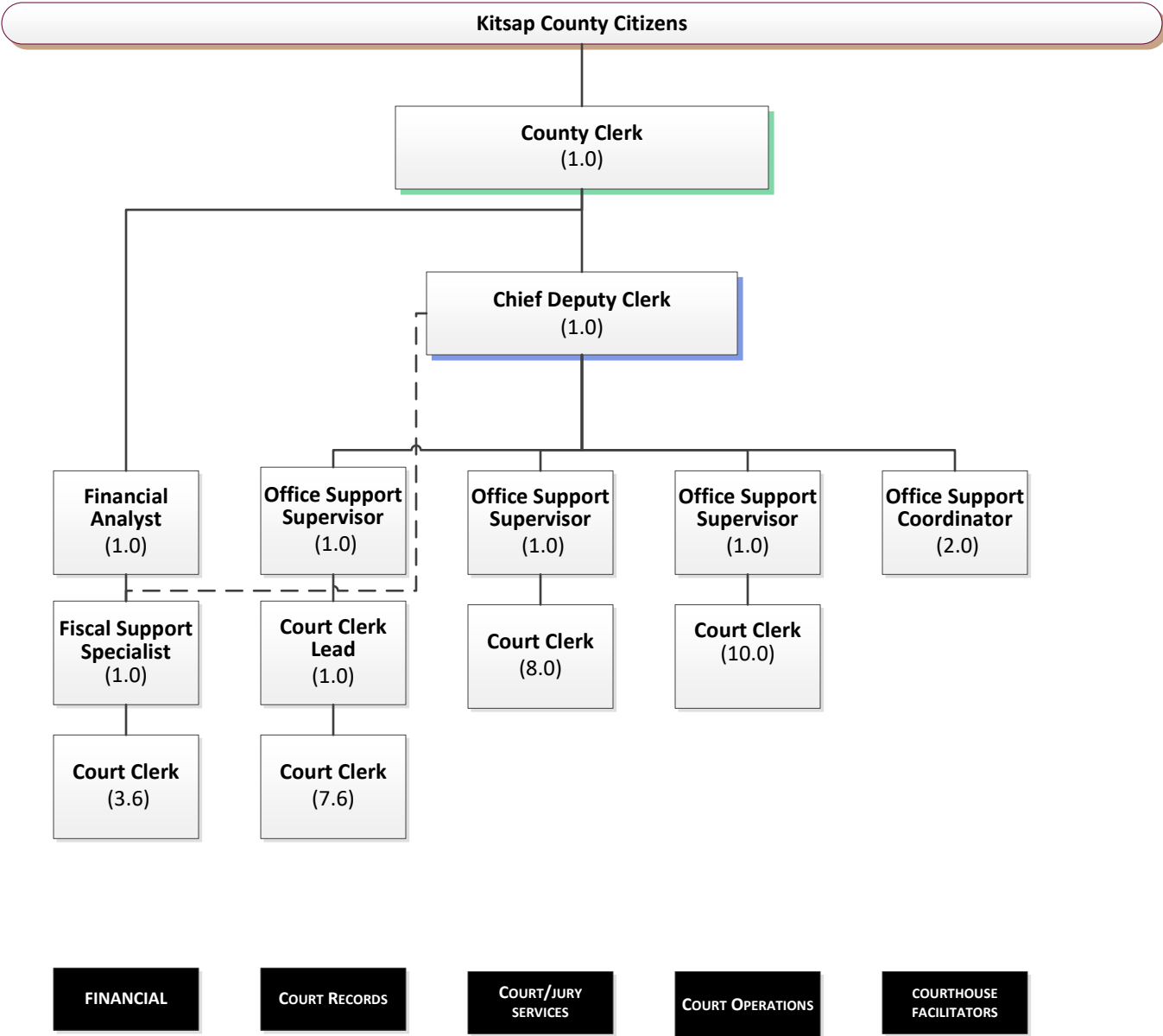
Results

This program offers a convenient location and hours for citizens to apply for a passport. Occasional outreach activities provide additional convenience to citizens and ensures awareness of the resource. As one of the few places in the area that accepts walk-in appointments daily, the volume of applications has greatly increased. Approximately 1.50 of an FTE is needed to process passports and take photos, though the program is only budgeted for .50 FTE. Revenues significantly exceed the cost of operations. We are currently using our term limited employee for this position.

	2021	2022	2023	2024 YTD June	2024 Budget	2025 Budget
Revenue	\$85,582	\$207,331	\$233,770	\$125,935	\$215,000	\$215,000
Expense	\$36,895	\$39,599	\$43,352	\$20,219	\$46,812	\$49,496
Total FTE	0.50	0.50	0.50		0.50	0.50



Clerk's Office - 2025





Office of the
KITSAP COUNTY CLERK

David T. Lewis III, Clerk

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2025 Supplemental Budget Questions

1. How does your department/office measure its performance toward the County's Mission, Vision, and Values?

The Clerk's office continually strives to provide easier **access to justice** for citizens. The Clerk's office has been **responsive** to citizens' needs by making multiple services available electronically including court records, the ability to download and purchase forms and kits online, as well as request recordings of court hearings. We recently began an E-filing service to expand accessibility and **efficiency** to other law and justice entities as well as our office. Our office has also installed the public self-service kiosks where citizens can access some of our services electronically such as a protection order form filler that provides language translation services. The facilitator program offers services to people representing themselves (pro se litigants) in family law and guardianship matters to assist them with navigating their way through the court system.

The Clerk's office provides services for victims of domestic violence and others seeking protection orders, promoting a **safe and healthy community**. The office also demonstrates professionalism through services such as passport processing and jury administration to serve community members. Our office is continually **engaged with the community**; our community outreach program for civil protection orders coordinates training with law enforcement, advocate groups, schools and other agencies, and we recently held a highly successful offsite passport event on a Saturday to accommodate working families.

2. To help the Commissioners plan for out years, what specific services would hypothetically be impacted or eliminated for your office/department in order to meet budget reductions of 6% in 2026, and how would that impact the community? Are there any potential revenue enhancements or process improvements which could make up all or a portion of the 6% target? Please indicate the dollar amount and specific number of FTEs and/or programmatic reductions which would be necessary to meet that 6% goal.

At our present budgeted rate, the Clerk's office would have to cut approximately \$270,000 to meet a 6% cut. We have programs that the Clerk's office is not mandated by law to perform, such as the facilitator program and passports, however both generate revenue and provide an invaluable service to our community. The only way we would be able to meet such a drastic cut would be to eliminate the equivalent of 3.5 FTE's.

There are some revenue enhancements we could implement such as raising the price of facilitator services and do-it-yourself kits, however those increases would be minimal and have little impact on revenue. Most other fees and revenues we collect are set by statute. We consistently try to streamline services, such as in jury, with the implementation of text notification which has reduced the number of stand-by jurors who travel to the courthouse when no longer needed (thus lowering juror paid expenses).

The county was faced with a financial crisis 15 years ago, and at that time the Clerk's office was successfully able to avoid lay-offs by implementing voluntary furlough days and freezing of vacant positions. However, to accommodate the reduction in staff hours and positions we were forced to close our doors for half a day each week in order to catch up on processing court documents, returning phone calls, processing mail, and other behind the scenes duties. Staff shifting would occur frequently to cover court and public counter, and staff would become spread thin and stressed out. There may be a need to go to an automated phone system which can be frustrating to our citizens. Less staff at the counter may require us to implement an appointment-only system for passport acceptance, eliminating the only passport acceptance facility in Kitsap County that welcomes walk-ins. This would significantly reduce the number of passports processed, thereby negatively impacting revenue.

3. How has the organization's staffing changed in the last five years and why? Please discuss vacancy, turnover and overtime if applicable.

In September, the clerk's office will have been fully staffed for a year; there has been no turnover during this time. Prior to that, retirements in the beginning of Covid and a hiring freeze left our office stagnant with 2 – 3 vacancies at any given time for approximately 3 years. This period placed a significant strain on supervisors and employees as we were continually shifting staff to accommodate the court and public demand.

Once we were able to hire for open vacancies, we found it difficult to compete with work from home opportunities and higher compensation. Our office has had to adjust hiring preferences to broaden our interviewee selection and raised the wage step placement of new hires.

As a public facing office, Clerk's office employees incur very little overtime. We have offered comp time or overtime pay to volunteers for special project work we are unable to accomplish during a regular workday, and to staff the offsite passport events (5 days total to date).

4. What emerging challenges do you expect your department/office to face in the next three years? Please highlight current demand for services or gaps, what things are not being done, or legislative changes impacting demand for services.

Though fully staffed we are still stretched to meet all needs of the court and public service for multiple reasons. One of our major challenges we are currently experiencing is employee coverage. We have 5 employees on intermittent PFML. This has caused a high demand on our employees who must complete their duties while covering for those who are frequently absent. It has, to some degree, impacted staff morale. We considered pursuing an extra help position; however, these absences are rarely scheduled in advance, making an extra help position difficult to accommodate.

Major legislative changes happened in 2021 regarding Civil Protection Orders which has dramatically increased our workload and supplies costs. Superior Court retained jurisdiction whereas Municipal courts now have no jurisdiction and District courts' jurisdiction became limited. The calendar size has more than doubled as well as the amount of paperwork required to file these cases. Superior Court hired a new part time Commissioner, and we have had to use existing staff for support in the courtroom and we have also had to assign a second staff member to help with increased customer service support and processing of court documents.

Because of this and the high demand for passports, we requested an additional FTE in 2022 to provide needed relief at the public facing counter and was authorized to hire a term-limited position. It will be an extreme detriment to our office if we are unable to retain that position, particularly considering the significant amount of unscheduled employee absences.

The collection of criminal LFO's has also been heavily impacted by multiple legislative changes. This has generated an increase in workload for staff in the LFO program as there are tens of thousands of accounts that need to be reviewed and adjusted accordingly. Each case that is adjusted requires specific documentation to be generated and filed. Staff continue to do collection work, mostly to recoup victim restitution.

Legislation also recategorized third party custody cases to minor guardianships. The Division of Children, Youth and Families also changed their processes which have led to a large increase in minor guardianship cases. This has impacted our facilitator program and pro se litigants now must wait 2 -3 weeks for an appointment. Additionally, minor guardianship cases are very complex, and our current 40-minute appointments slots are proving to be insufficient to meet these needs. Increasing the appointment time will further limit the number of appointments available to the public and will also impact our revenue. Expanding this service by adding an additional facilitator is highly desirable.