

Orphans' Court



MISSION AND SERVICES

The Orphans' Court provides supervision of decedents' estates and children's property to the beneficiaries in order to protect decedents' and children's assets.

CORE SERVICES

- To monitor the property of a deceased resident of the County in order to carry out the wishes of the decedent and to ensure distribution to the beneficiaries
- To provide protection of children's assets until they are legally adults (18 years of age) in order to ensure proper monetary distribution for their short-term and long-term needs

FY 2020 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Maintained an efficient and effective level of service to the public despite an increase of pleadings and an increase of complex cases being heard.
- Held quarterly meetings with Estate and Trusts Section of the Prince George's County Bar Association to discuss new laws, procedures or concerns of the Bar and its clients and any other matter relating to probate.
- Continue to refer estate cases to the Orphans' Court Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program. The program continues to provide residents of Prince George's County the opportunity for mediation, and/or a collaborative process and settlement conferences in resolving probate matters.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AND INITIATIVES FOR FY 2021

The court’s top priorities in FY 2021 are:

- Increase the number of decedents’ assets that are intact through having one sitting judge review caseload and dockets.
- Increase the number of guardianships with assets intact through having one sitting judge review caseload and dockets.
- Provide residents the opportunity for mediation and/or a collaborative process and settlement conferences in resolving probate matters through the Orphans’ Courts ADR program.

FY 2021 BUDGET SUMMARY

The FY 2021 proposed budget for the Orphans’ Court is \$575,400, an increase of \$14,200 or 2.5% over the FY 2020 approved budget.

Expenditures by Fund Type

Fund Types	FY 2019 Actual		FY 2020 Budget		FY 2020 Estimate		FY 2021 Proposed	
	Amount	% Total	Amount	% Total	Amount	% Total	Amount	% Total
General Fund	\$482,954	100.0%	\$561,200	100.0%	\$553,000	100.0%	\$575,400	100.0%
Total	\$482,954	100.0%	\$561,200	100.0%	\$553,000	100.0%	\$575,400	100.0%

Reconciliation from Prior Year

	Expenditures
FY 2020 Approved Budget	\$561,200
Increase Cost: Compensation - Mandated Salary Requirements	\$9,400
Increase Cost: Operating - Technology Cost Allocation — Increase in charges based on the new methodology to support anticipated countywide costs	2,500
Add: Operating — Increase to travel and training budget for ADR coordinator training	1,000
Increase Cost: Fringe Benefits — An increase due to compensation adjustments offset by a decrease in the fringe benefit rate from 28.8% to 28.3% to align with anticipated costs	600
Increase Cost: Operating — Increase in printing expenses	500
Increase Cost: Operating — Increase in membership fees	200
FY 2021 Proposed Budget	\$575,400

STAFF AND BUDGET RESOURCES

Authorized Positions	FY 2019 Budget	FY 2020 Budget	FY 2021 Proposed	Change FY20-FY21
General Fund				
Full Time - Civilian	8	8	8	0
Full Time - Sworn	0	0	0	0
Subtotal - FT	8	8	8	0
Part Time	0	0	0	0
Limited Term	0	0	0	0
TOTAL				
Full Time - Civilian	8	8	8	0
Full Time - Sworn	0	0	0	0
Subtotal - FT	8	8	8	0
Part Time	0	0	0	0
Limited Term	0	0	0	0

Positions By Classification	FY 2021		
	Full Time	Part Time	Limited Term
Administrative Assistant	2	0	0
Community Developer	1	0	0
General Clerk	1	0	0
Judge	3	0	0
Law Clerk	1	0	0
TOTAL	8	0	0

Expenditures by Category - General Fund

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Budget	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2021 Proposed	Change FY20-FY21	
					Amount (\$)	Percent (%)
Compensation	\$362,567	\$407,400	\$399,700	\$416,800	\$9,400	2.3%
Fringe Benefits	88,850	117,300	115,100	117,900	600	0.5%
Operating	31,537	36,500	38,200	40,700	4,200	11.5%
Total	\$482,954	\$561,200	\$553,000	\$575,400	\$14,200	2.5%

In FY 2021, compensation expenditures increase 2.3% over the FY 2020 budget due to anticipated cost of living and merit increases. Compensation costs include funding for eight full time positions. Fringe benefit expenditures increase 0.5% over the FY 2020 budget due to compensation adjustments offset by a decrease in the fringe benefit rate from 28.8% to 28.3% to align with anticipated costs.

Operating expenditures increase 11.5% over the FY 2020 budget due to an increase in the technology cost allocation charge.

SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN AND PERFORMANCE

Goal 1 — To monitor the property of a deceased resident of the County in order to carry out the wishes of the decedent and to ensure distribution to the beneficiaries.

Objective 1.1 — Increase the number of decedents' assets that are intact.

FY 2025 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Estimated	FY 2021 Projected	Trend
2,800	2,219	2,270	2,200	2,400	↑

Trend and Analysis

The Orphans' Court workload and volume are related to estate filings and are not tied to any economic or other traditional workload cycles. However, the number of decedents' assets that are intact is seemingly and steadily increasing. The Orphans' Court continues to have one Judge sit three days a week for hearings and chambers work.

Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Estimated	FY 2021 Projected
Resources (Input)					
Judges	3	3	3	3	3
Workload, Demand and Production (Output)					
Hearings	1,741	1,656	1,766	1,700	2,000
Pleadings	4,848	5,190	5,531	5,000	5,500
Estates open	2,313	2,073	2,134	2,000	2,200
Hearing notices, orders and writs issued	2,653	2,313	2,381	2,500	2,500
Case referred to Alternative Dispute Resolution	0	28	52	50	60
Efficiency					
Hearings per Judge	580.0	552.0	589.0	567.0	667.0
Pleadings per Judge	1,616.0	1,730.0	1,844.0	1,667.0	1,833.0
Quality					
Estate decisions upheld on appeal	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Impact (Outcome)					
Intact estates	2,219	2,219	2,270	2,200	2,400

Goal 2 — To provide protection of children's assets until they are legally adults (18 years of age) in order to ensure proper monetary distribution for their short-term and long-term needs.

Objective 2.1 — Increase the number of guardianships closed successfully with all assets intact.

FY 2025 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Estimated	FY 2021 Projected	Trend
80	42	99	50	60	↑

Trend and Analysis

The Orphans' Court workload and volume are related to estate filings and are not tied to any economic or other traditional workload cycles. However, the number of guardianships closed successfully with all assets intact is seemingly and steadily increasing. The Orphans' Court continues to have one Judge sit three days a week for hearings and chambers work.

Performance Measures

Measure Name	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Estimated	FY 2021 Projected
Resources (Input)					
Judges	3	3	3	3	3
Workload, Demand and Production (Output)					
Hearings	131	96	113	100	100
Pleadings	328	236	374	250	250
Guardianships open	81	55	68	60	60
Orders and writs issued	361	202	262	220	220
Efficiency					
Hearings per Judge	44.0	32.0	38.0	33.0	33.0
Pleadings per Judge	108.0	79.0	125.0	83.0	83.0
Quality					
Appeals	0	0	0	0	0
Impact (Outcome)					
Intact guardianships	29	42	99	50	60

