

Baltimore City State's Attorney Office FY23 Budget Presentation



State's Attorney - Prosecution of Criminals

Pillar: Building Public Safety

Service Number: 115

Fiscal 2023 Recommended Budget: \$39,374,627

Service Description

In conjunction with its partners in law enforcement, this service investigates and prosecutes criminal cases occurring within the City of Baltimore. This responsibility includes the prosecution of tens of thousands of cases annually in District Court, Juvenile Court, and Circuit Court and well as the processing of tens of thousands of expungement petitions filed yearly by, or on behalf of, former defendants. The Circuit Court hears serious criminal jury trials, major civil cases (e.g., family law issues), and appeals from the District Court, Orphans' Court, and lower administrative agencies. The District Court hears traffic, non-jury criminal matters, and limited civil cases (e.g., domestic violence, small claims, and landlord-tenant matters.)

Major Budget Items

- The recommended budget includes promotional increases for 42 Assistant State's Attorneys (ASA). The costs were primarily offset by the elimination of five ASA positions. **This is not a sustainable plan.**
- There is an urgent need to increase salaries for all critical SAO staff, many of whom are leaving the agency at great numbers to attain higher paying positions with better work/life balance post-pandemic in the midst of the "Great Resignation."
- In 2021 DHR determined that ASA salaries were in need of upward adjustment due to numerous vacancies in "hard to fill positions" (ASAs in critical units such as Homicide, Gun Violence Enforcement, etc.) and the SAO's increased attrition rate. **DHR specifically noted that this attrition is being caused by "uncompetitive salaries." Additionally, DHR noted that other legal personnel in the City had received salary increases.**
- DHR initially recommended that all attorneys in the SAO's felony divisions receive salary increases, but the City only provided funding to increase the salaries of the SAO's 17 Homicide attorneys.
- The SAO has continually done its best to provide ASAs with competitive salaries and a strong work/life balance but is not currently in a position to offer sustainable long-term solutions to resolve the agency's attrition challenges without the funding necessary to increase pay for all ASAs.

State's Attorney - Administration

Pillar: Building Public Safety

Service Number: 781

Fiscal 2023 Recommended Budget: \$8,346,672

Service Description

The service is responsible for a wide range of services, including: forecasting, monitoring and managing expenditures; grants management; personnel management; developing, supporting and implementing policy and legislation to more effectively prosecute crime; coordinating intra-agency partnerships, projects and initiatives; maintaining and improving information systems to support all of the office's initiatives, and supporting the personnel and technology needs related to Body Worn Camera video review.

Major Budget Items

- The budget includes \$15,000 to replace phone equipment at the District Court building.
- The budget continues to include \$232,000 for the implementation of the new electronic courts case management system.

State's Attorney - Victim and Witness Services

Pillar: Building Public Safety

Service Number: 786

Fiscal 2023 Recommended Budget: \$4,708,255

Service Description

This service supports full-time personnel who assist victims and witnesses of crime in Baltimore City by providing counseling and guidance, notification of rights and support in court, and overseeing monetary support and reimbursement. For witnesses of crime determined to be at risk of intimidation or retribution, the Division provides relocation assistance (temporary and permanent new housing) and other limited forms of financial support, including vouchers for food and travel expenses.

Major Budget Items

- The recommended budget maintains the current level of service.