

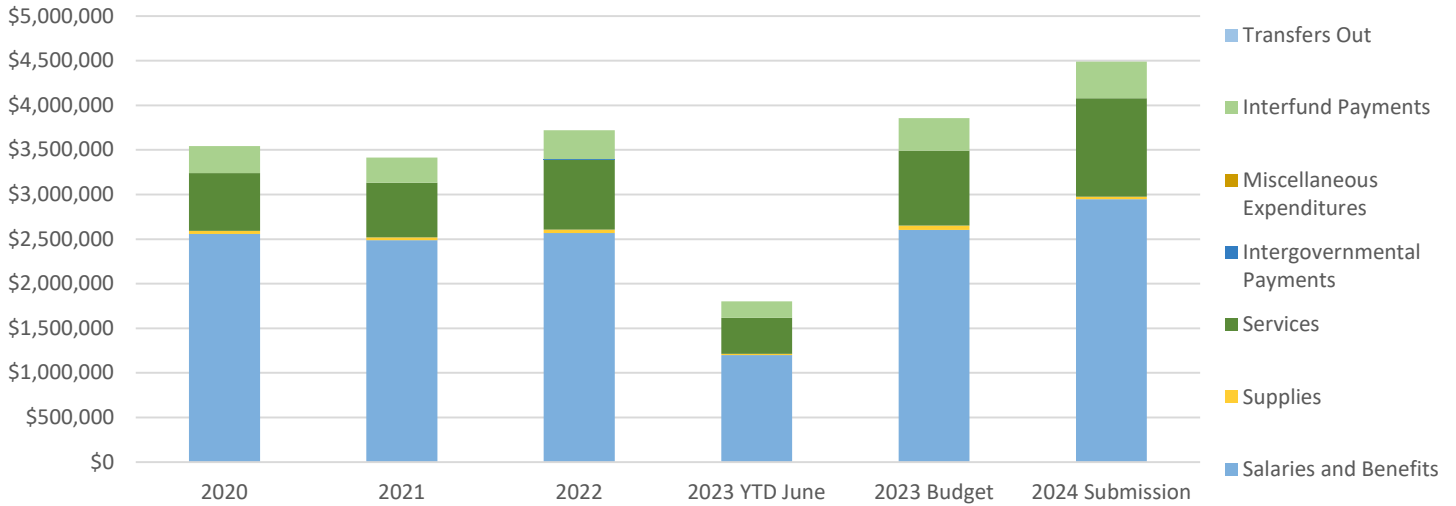
Superior Court

Elected Officials: Superior Court Judges

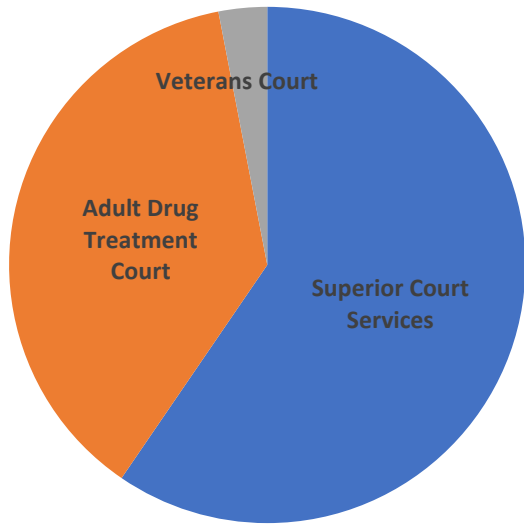
Mission: Superior Court is a court of general jurisdiction having original and appellate jurisdiction authorized by the Constitution and laws of the State of Washington. The Court fulfills its mission both traditionally and through time-tested and evidence-based alternatives including adult, family, and juvenile drug courts; individualized juvenile treatment court; veterans treatment court; mandatory civil arbitration; and, mandatory settlement conferences.

Total Revenue	\$1.20 M
Total Expense	\$4.49 M
Total Budget Change	\$0.63 M
Total FTE	23.50

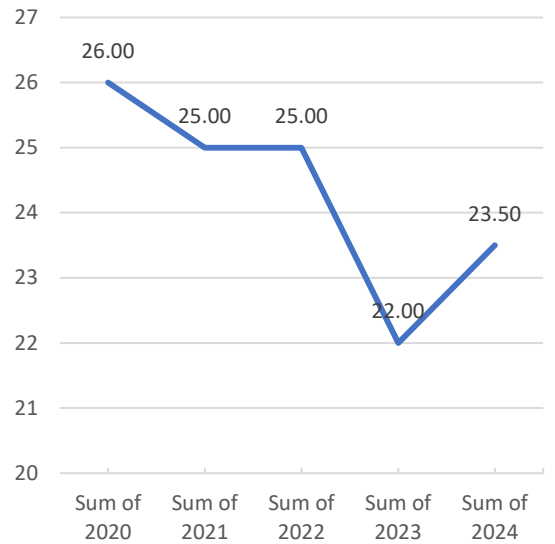
Summary of Expenses



Programs



Total FTE



	2020	2021	2022	2023 YTD June	2023 Budget	2024 Submission	Change
Salaries and Benefits	\$2,559,248	\$2,489,311	\$2,569,542	\$1,199,907	\$2,603,080	\$2,947,230	\$344,150
Discretionary Spend	\$682,168	\$644,192	\$826,067	\$419,474	\$886,336	\$1,131,513	\$245,177
Other	\$299,933	\$279,224	\$323,594	\$182,848	\$365,724	\$410,929	\$45,205

Superior Court - Budget Request

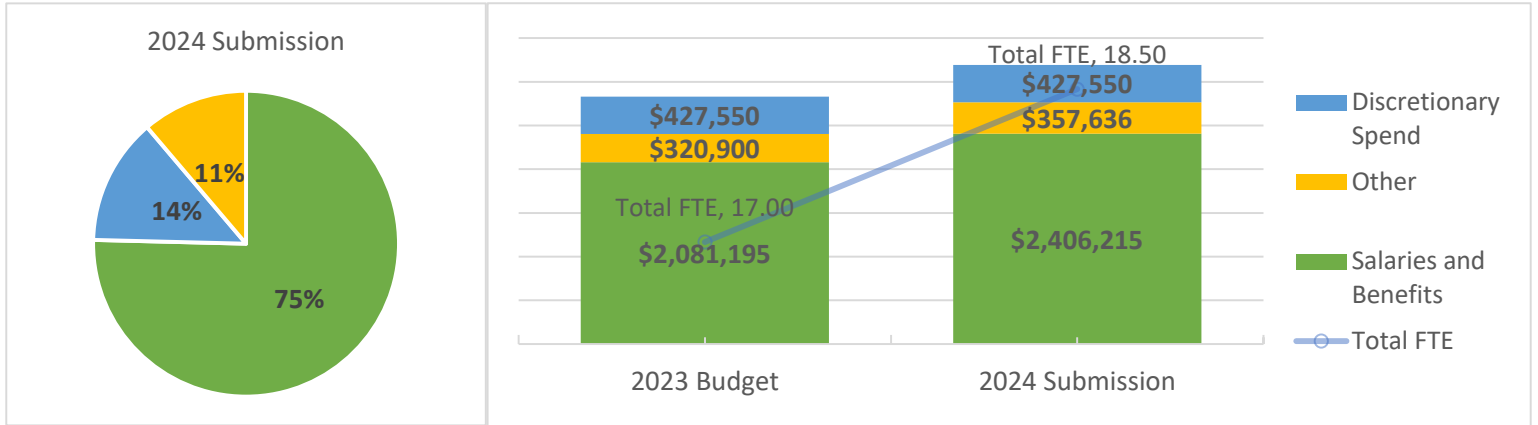
Summary	Type	2023 Budget	Change	2024 Submission	Description
Salaries and Benefits	Salaries and Benefits	\$2,603,080			
			\$113,130		Status Quo Salaries & Benefits
			-\$70,888		Mid-Year Staff Reorganization
			\$301,908		Positions allocated from American Rescue Plan
				\$2,947,230	
Discretionary Spend	Supplies	\$47,367			
			-\$5,500		Office/Operating Supplies Reduction
			-\$1,500		Small Tools and Equipment Reduction
			-\$10,750		Computer Software Reduction
				\$29,617	
Discretionary Spend	Services	\$838,969			
			\$189,177		Grant contract Mental Health Chemical Dependency & Drug Treatment Court
			\$73,750		Grant contract Criminal Justice Treatment Account
				\$1,101,896	
Discretionary Spend	Intergovernmental Payments	\$0			
				\$0	
Discretionary Spend	Miscellaneous Expenditures	\$0			
				\$0	
Other	Interfund Payments	\$365,724			
			\$27,702		IS Rates Increase
			\$12,000		OPD Mental Health Court Request
			\$5,503		Insurance Rate Increase
				\$410,929	
Other	Transfers Out	\$0			
				\$0	
Grand Total		\$3,855,140	\$634,532	\$4,489,672	

Superior Court

Superior Court Services

Fund Type: General Fund **\$3.19 M**

Budget Change: \$361,756



Purpose

Superior Court is the court of general jurisdiction in Kitsap County, having original and appellate jurisdiction as authorized by the Washington State Constitution and the laws of the State of Washington. The Superior Court is created to resolve criminal felony cases, civil cases, juvenile offender and dependency cases, family law cases - including paternity matters and adoptions, probate and guardianship matters, domestic violence cases, mental health cases, and appeals from the District and Municipal Courts in Kitsap County. The Superior Court is a court of record. It is required to always be open except on non-judicial days.

Strategy

Superior Court adjudicates general jurisdiction court matters in Kitsap County as authorized by the Washington State Constitution and laws. Judicial positions are determined by the State Legislature based on an objective workload analysis. Non-judicial positions are created (1) to ensure the judges are supported by research, scheduling, trial, and public service support; and (2) to ensure that the court record is properly captured. The operations budget is based on the demonstrated need for interpreters, appointed counsel, guardians ad litem, arbitration services, and mandatory judicial education.

Results

In 2021, Superior Court held 9 criminal and civil jury trials; 93 criminal, civil, and family law non-jury trials; and over 22,700 non-trial hearings to resolve 7,345 cases. Jury trials were suspended for approx. half of 2021 due to the pandemic, and many hearings were conducted virtually. In 2022, the Superior Court held 16 criminal and civil jury trials; 103 criminal, civil, and family law non-jury trials; and, 21,975 non-trial hearings to resolve 6,297 cases.

	2020	2021	2022	2023 YTD June	2023 Budget	2024 Submission
Revenue	\$ 77,394	\$ 62,604	\$ 150,063	\$ 89,405	\$ 148,412	\$ 194,572
Expense	\$ 2,692,140	\$ 2,595,893	\$ 2,742,290	\$ 1,350,191	\$ 2,829,645	\$ 3,191,401
Total FTE	21.00	20.00	20.00		17.00	18.50

Superior Court

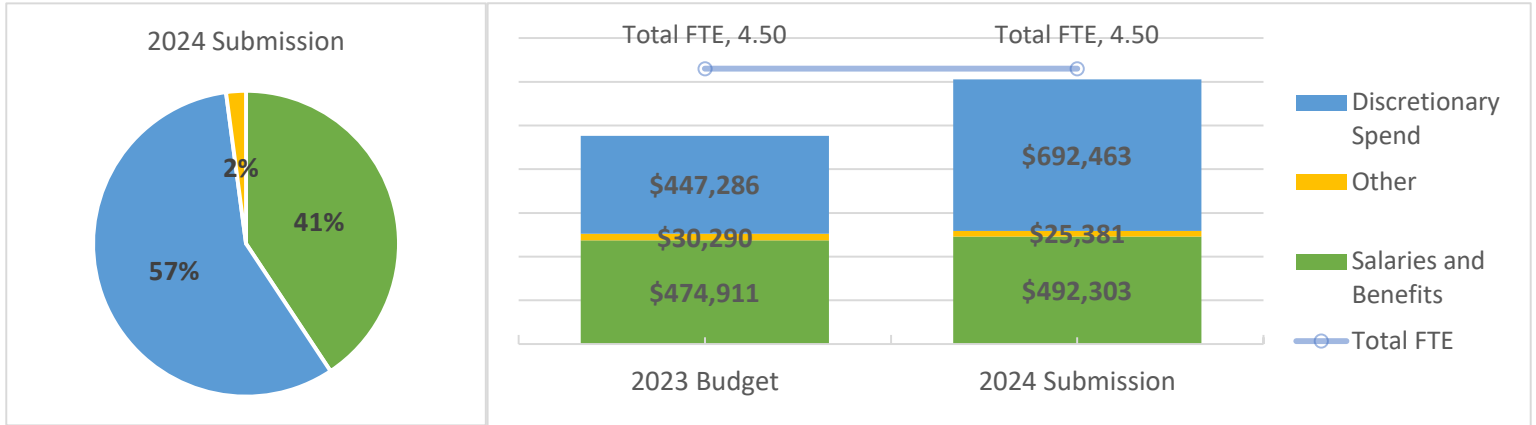
Fund Type: General Fund

\$1.21 M

Adult Drug Treatment Court

Budget Change:

\$257,660



Purpose

The Kitsap County Superior Court/Drug Court is a judicially-supervised, treatment-focused program for adults charged with eligible felonies and facing criminal prosecution. The program offers individual treatment for chemical dependency as an alternative to criminal prosecution. The Drug Court features treatment, intensive supervision, random drug/alcohol testing, weekly court appearances, and life skills educational opportunities. The program is designed to regulate individual substance abuse recovery while reducing, if not eliminating, future criminal conduct of drug-using offenders. The Family Dependency Drug Court (FDDC) endeavors to reunite dependent children with parents following successful drug treatment and substance abuse recovery.

Strategy

The Drug Court program is designed to reduce/eliminate recidivism by providing treatment for individuals who engage in criminal activity to support substance abuse addiction. The program is focused on recovery and uses immediate sanctions (including jail time) to motivate participant compliance with recovery objectives. The Drug Court is supervised by a multidisciplinary team that includes prosecution, criminal defense, chemical dependency and mental health treatment, case management and an assigned judge. The Adult Drug Court is resourced to support a maximum capacity of 150 veterans at one time.

Results

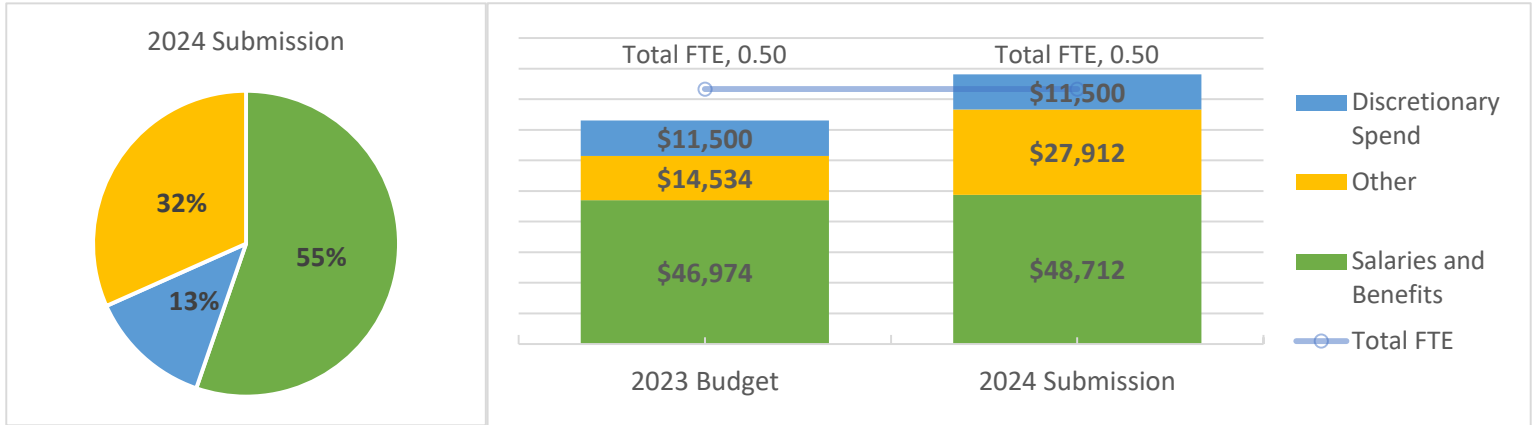
The Drug Court team regularly re-examines the program to ensure it operates according to national best practice standards. From March 2020 through 2021, many program requirements, including weekly compliance check-ins, ongoing treatment sessions, MRT training, and weekly court hearings moved to a virtual delivery setting in direct response to COVID-19. In 2022, with several health and safety measures in place, the Court restored some in-person services.

	2020	2021	2022	2023 YTD June	2023 Budget	2024 Submission
Revenue	\$ 554,795	\$ 576,728	\$ 569,509	\$ 222,117	\$ 669,439	\$ 917,833
Expense	\$ 783,158	\$ 755,126	\$ 871,509	\$ 417,146	\$ 952,487	\$ 1,210,147
Total FTE	4.50	4.50	4.50		4.50	4.50

Superior Court
Veterans Court

Fund Type: General Fund **\$0.09 M**

Budget Change: \$15,116



Purpose

The purpose of the Veterans Treatment Court is to timely identify, assess, and engage military veterans who have entered the criminal justice system; and, to connect them with services necessary to address chemical dependency and mental health issues - thereby decreasing criminal activity and making the community safer. The Veterans Treatment Court team pursues all services for which veterans are eligible - including those available through the Veterans Administration and other various community programs - before accessing grant-funded services.

Strategy

The Veterans Treatment Court incorporates evidence-based practices and procedures, similar to the Adult Drug Court, with added capacity dedicated to military veterans in order to serve their unique needs. Such enhancements include specialized services through one or more clinical therapists who can holistically address co-occurring disorders (e.g., SUD-PTSD), specialized case management, and a full partnership with local veterans’ offices that incorporate programs tailored to veterans. The Veterans Treatment Court is resourced to support a maximum capacity of 25 veterans at one time.

Results

The Veterans Treatment Court is an 18-month program. Operational changes are managed to ensure participants are effectively matched with available resources and services. From March 2020 through 2021, many treatment court requirements, including weekly participant compliance check-ins, ongoing treatment sessions, and weekly court hearings moved to a virtual delivery setting in response to COVID-19. In 2022, with several health and safety measures in place, some in-person services were restored.

	2020	2021	2022	2023 YTD June	2023 Budget	2024 Submission
Revenue	\$ 52,179	\$ 58,625	\$ 71,199	\$ 23,665	\$ 71,947	\$ 84,494
Expense	\$ 66,051	\$ 61,708	\$ 105,404	\$ 34,892	\$ 73,008	\$ 88,124
Total FTE	0.50	0.50	0.50		0.50	0.50

Performance Measures	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total # of Cases Filed	6,328	5,956	6,389	~6,422	~6,455
Total # of Cases Disposed	6,972	7,345	6,297	~6,125	~6,871
Active Pending at Year-End	7,634	5,317	6,001	~6,556	~6,556
Total number criminal/civil jury trials	11/3	5/4	18/3	~21/5	~21/5
Total # of Adult Drug Court graduates	47	43	24	~30	~40
80% of Adult Drug Ct grads crime free 5 years after graduation	90%	91%	88%	N/A	N/A
Total # of Veterans Treatment Ct graduates	11	3	8	~5	~8
80% of Vet Treatment Ct grads crime free 5 years after graduation	91%	95%	97%	N/A	N/A

Performance Measures	Narratives & Data
Additional Adult Treatment Court Performance Measures:	<p>Of 23 Adult Drug Court graduates and 4 Veterans Treatment Court graduates in 2023, none have been convicted of new crimes.</p> <p>Sixty-two (62) adult treatment court participants benefited from medically assisted treatment (MAT) in 2022. Sixty-nine (69) participants are currently benefitting from MAT in 2023.</p> <p>Fifty-four adult treatment court participants were also engaged in mental health treatment in 2022. Forty-nine (49) participants are currently engaged in mental health treatment in 2023.</p> <p>100% of Adult Drug Court and Veterans Treatment Court graduates were in school, employed, or both at the time of graduation.</p>

How does the organization measure its performance toward the County's strategic goals?

The Superior Court continuously reviews its filing, disposition, and pending caseload data in the context of its calendaring system to ensure citizen access to judicial services is optimized. The Court is guided by the Constitution and laws, including “speedy trial” rules to ensure priorities are addressed according to reasonable time standards. Adjustments to calendar structures are made to further efficiencies while effectively providing court services. The Court promotes “Inclusive Government” through routine communications with other Law & Justice departments to improve public access and achieve mutually necessary case processing goals.

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

Three of five court reporters resigned in the Fall of 2019 and the Superior Court has struggled to fill and/or retain employees in these vacancies. Greater use of digital recording of court proceedings, a less-than-ideal alternative, has been employed while the Court continues to search for qualified candidates.

In 2023, two of the court reporter vacancies were converted to a half-time court commissioner position to address the increase in calendar time resulting from changes in legislation (e.g., Civil Protection Orders, Minor & Adult Guardianship cases).

How does the organization monitor remote employee productivity and ensure accountability?

Eight (8) Superior Court employees are currently working remotely one-to-two days per week. Work assignments for five (Treatment Court) include daily contact with assigned participant caseloads and reporting deliverables. Productivity is measured based on participant availability, email reporting, and weekly in-person “staffing” preparation. The remaining three Court Administration employees have daily deliverables (daily calendar preparation and production; information exchanges with the judges, Clerk’s Office, and Kitsap Bar members; daily website updates; WorkDay A/P entries monitored/approved by the Court Administrator). Failure to perform daily assignments remotely by these employees becomes obvious organization wide.

What changes would the organization need to make if it were necessary to implement budget reductions of 10% in 2025?

The Superior Court must remain open on “judicial days” so a reduction in operational hours is not possible. Further, the eight Superior Court judge positions are created by statute, paid 50% by State and 50% by County, so these salaries/benefits cannot be reduced. Consequently, any budget reductions will need to be addressed through non-judicial staff reductions-in-hours.

Please discuss any non-essential functions that the organization provides beyond mandated services?

The Superior Court employs evidence-based alternatives (e.g., treatment courts) to fully achieve the mission for which it is constitutionally and statutorily created. It, otherwise, only provides mandated services.

Are there any initiatives in place to enhance employee engagement and satisfaction, and/or retention strategies to reduce turnover and associated hiring costs?

When adopted by the County Commissioners, the Superior Court has offered employment signing bonuses in an effort to entice court reporter applicants as these are very difficult positions to fill, and the Court is regularly competing with much higher salaries offered by neighboring Pierce County.

What emerging challenges do you expect the organization to face in the next three years?

The pandemic dramatically affected the Superior Court by reducing the number of specialized human resources necessary to perform essential, specialized functions in the Law & Justice system. The lack of court reporters was already noted. Additionally, the system is also lacking sufficiently qualified attorneys (civil and criminal), LEP interpreters, guardian's ad Litem/court visitors, and adult guardians. The lack of qualified professionals entering each of these markets will substantially impede meaningful access to judicial services.

Further, absent completion of new and expanded court facilities, the Superior Court will continue to occupy space that is inefficient-to-function and breeds the potential for spontaneous, ad hoc challenges to citizen and employee safety and security.

Finally, in recent years, the Washington State Legislature has adopted new and/or revised legislation that requires more judicial time on court calendars. Specifically, individual hearings related to civil protection orders, minor and adult guardianship matters, and eviction proceedings require more judicial time than in prior years as a result of legislation change. If this trend continues, the Court will have to explore adding new judicial resources to ensure that public access to fair, timely, impartial and appropriately scheduled hearings is guaranteed.