

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS

<u>FY 2003 Enacted</u>		<u>FY 2004 Enacted</u>		<u>FY 2005 Request</u>		<u>Difference</u> <u>FY 2004/2005</u>	
FTE	Obligations	FTE	Obligations	FTE	Obligations	FTE	Obligations
94	8,551,000	94	8,775,000	94	9,109,000	-	334,000

The District of Columbia Court of Appeals is the highest court of the District of Columbia. The Court consists of a Chief Judge and eight Associate Judges. The Court is assisted by the service of retired judges who have been recommended and approved as Senior Judges. The cases before the Court are determined by randomly selected, three judge divisions, unless a hearing or rehearing before the Court sitting *en banc* is ordered.

As the court of last resort for the District of Columbia, the Court of Appeals is authorized: (1) to review all final orders and judgments, as well as specified interlocutory orders, of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia; (2) to review decisions of administrative agencies, boards, and commissions of the District government; and (3) to answer questions of law certified by the Supreme Court of the United States, a Court of Appeals of the United States, or the highest appellate court of any state. The Court also: (1) is responsible for attorney admissions and discipline; (2) manages the resolution of complaints of unauthorized practice of law; (3) promulgates its own rules and the rules of professional conduct for members of the District of Columbia Bar, and (4) reviews proposed rules of the D.C. Superior Court.

Organizational Structure

The Office of the Clerk of the Court

The Clerk's Office of the Court of Appeals is divided into five components: the public office, case management, the immediate office, the staff of the Committee on Admissions and the Committee on the Unauthorized Practice of Law, and the administrative staff. Functionally, these components are involved in three major activities: case processing, bar admissions and unauthorized practice of law matters, and administration.

- **Public Office** - The public office is responsible for receiving and docketing all incoming papers and pleadings, maintaining the official case files, receiving and answering telephone and in-person inquiries, and providing staff support for the appointment of attorneys and issuance of vouchers under the Criminal Justice Act and Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect Program. This office currently has 12 FTEs.
- **Case Management Division** - The case management division is responsible for processing approximately 5,000 procedural motions and 2,000 substantive motions each year. The division monitors the status of cases to determine actions to be taken by the parties or the Court, reviews all incoming motions and pleadings, and prepares proposed orders, *sua sponte* or in response to motions filed by the parties, for approval by the Clerk, Chief Judge or motions division. Attorneys in the case management division prepare legal

memoranda on matters presented by substantive or procedural motions. This Division currently has 14 FTEs.

- Immediate Office - The immediate office, which includes the Clerk and the Chief Deputy Clerk, is responsible for the general administration of the Clerk's Office; coordination of the processing of appeals after briefing such as calendaring, case screening, and the processing of motions and orders in calendared matters; coordination of the issuance of opinions and mandates, petitions for rehearing and/or rehearing *en banc*; the processing of bar-related disciplinary, admissions, and unauthorized practice of law matters; the processing of vouchers submitted by attorneys appointed under the Criminal Justice Act and the Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect Program; and the preparation of court statistics. This Office currently has 7 FTEs.
- Committee on Admissions and the Committee on the Unauthorized Practice of Law - The staff of the Committee on Admissions and the Committee on Unauthorized Practice of Law administers the Bar examination; processes applications for admission to the Bar by examination and motion, applications for authorization to practice as special legal consultants, applications by law students to practice under D.C. App. R. 48 and motions to appear *pro hac vice*; collects admissions and related fees; provides staff support for the investigation of complaints against unauthorized persons practicing law; and provides support to the two committees, which ensure that local legal needs are met by properly qualified and licensed attorneys. The Office currently has 6 FTEs.
- Administrative Office - The administrative staff is responsible for the provision of personnel, data processing, telecommunications, library, financial, procurement, and facilities management services for the Court. This Office currently has 7 FTEs.

Workload Data

The Court of Appeals tracks its workload and performance for two major categories of activities: (1) cases processing and (2) bar admissions and related activities. Case processing performance indicators include (1) the case clearance rate, or the ratio of cases disposed to cases filed in a given year; and (2) the reduction of cases pending at the end of the year. Factors including the number of case filings, number and types of dispositions, cases pending, time involved in various stages of the case process, and types of cases pending are used in assessing staffing needs.

Table 1
**District of Columbia Court of Appeals
 Caseload and Efficiency Measures
 Case Processing Activity**

Fiscal Year	Cases Filed	Cases Disposed	Case Clearance Rate*	Cases Pending	Motions and Petitions Filed
2001	1,703	1,803	106%	2,469	7,167
2002	1,461	1,782	122%	**2,492	7,591
Difference	-14%	-1.2%	+16%	+1%	+6%

*Ratio of cases disposed to cases filed in a given year. A 100% case clearance rate means one case disposed for each case filed.

**Figure adjusted after caseload audit.

Table 2
**District of Columbia Court of Appeals
 Caseload and Efficiency Measures
 Bar Admissions Activity**

Fiscal Year	Bar Admission Applications Received	Multistate Bar Exam Score Transfer Requests Processed	Certificates of Good Standing Issued	Wall Certificate Orders Processed
2001	3,693	2,484	6,495	1,265
2002	3,422	2,177	6,706	1,593

Case Processing and Operational Efficiency Initiatives

The Court has taken many initiatives to facilitate or expedite case processing, to achieve operational efficiencies, and to enhance service to the public. In Fiscal Year 2002, the following initiatives were undertaken to improve operations and case processing.

- To better serve the public, the Court expanded the hours of operation of its Public Office where pleadings are filed and case files and records can be reviewed. That office is now open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- The Court actively participated in the strategic planning initiative undertaken by the D.C. Courts. This initiative, which included extensive efforts to obtain information from litigants and court employees regarding the strengths and weakness of court operations/processes, resulted in the development of a comprehensive, 5-year strategic plan for enhancing court operations and services to public.

- The Court actively participated in implementation of new financial management software Pegasys to improve its ability to implement and monitor spending.
- The court developed and presented a continuing legal education course on appellate practice for members of the D.C. Bar.

Several of the initiatives implemented during fiscal years 2000 and 2001, and before, follow:

- Initiation of a website (through the District of Columbia Bar) on which the Court places its opinions, the Court's monthly calendar of cases to be argued or submitted, bar admission application forms and information, practice tips, the steps necessary to litigate an appeal in this court, among other things.
- Restructuring the way case management assignments are made in the Clerk's Office so that an inventory of cases is assigned to each individual case manager to monitor and manage through the appeal process.
- Reprogramming of the Court's computerized docketing system (JAMS) to enable that system to print the text of some orders to be issued by the Court, eliminating the need for the orders to be typed twice (once for the docketing system and once for the order to be issued).
- The Court undertook various initiatives to improve the timeliness of the completion and transmission of trial transcripts and agency records necessary for consideration of an appeal, including the imposition of explicit reporting requirements for appellate counsel in adoption, termination of parental rights, and child abuse appeals.
- The *sua sponte* expedition of appeals in cases involving adoption and the termination of parental rights to ensure prompt decisions in cases that affect the stability of the living environment of children who have been subjected to abuse and neglect.
- The Local Area Network that was installed in the spring of 1999, to achieve Y2K compliance has been used to prepare letterhead for orders issued by the Court, thus reducing the need to purchase printed letterhead for court orders.
- Annual training of the Court's Criminal Justice Act and Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect bars, and the provision informational materials to the public on how to prosecute an appeal.

FY 2005 Request

In FY 2005, the Court of Appeals requests \$9,109,000 and 94 FTEs, an increase of \$334,000 or 4% above the FY 2004 enacted level. The requested increase consists of \$312,000 for built-in increases and \$22,000 for a courtwide initiative to enhance employee benefits.

Table 3
COURT OF APPEALS
Budget Authority by Object Class

	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Enacted	FY 2005 Request	Difference FY 2004/2005
11 - Personnel Compensation	\$6,795,000	\$6,954,000	\$7,213,000	\$259,000
12 - Personnel Benefits	969,000	995,000	1,058,000	63,000
21 - Travel, Transp. of Persons	41,000	42,000	43,000	1,000
22 - Transportation of Things	---	---	---	---
23 - Rent, Commun. & Utilities	85,000	86,000	87,000	1,000
24 - Printing & Reproduction	70,000	71,000	72,000	1,000
25 - Other Services	211,000	214,000	217,000	3,000
26 - Supplies & Materials	75,000	76,000	77,000	1,000
31 - Equipment	305,000	337,000	342,000	5,000
TOTAL	\$8,551,000	\$8,775,000	\$9,109,000	\$334,000
FTE	94	94	94	0

Table 4
COURT OF APPEALS
Detail Difference FY 2004/FY 2005

Object Class	Description of Request	FTE	Cost	Difference FY2004/FY2005
11 - Personnel Compensation	Current Positions WIGS	94	23,000	
	Current Positions COLA	94	236,000	
Subtotal				259,000
12 - Personnel Benefits	Current Positions WIGS	94	7,000	
	Current Positions COLA	94	34,000	
	Enhanced Employee Benefits		22,000	
Subtotal				63,000
21 - Travel, Transp. of Persons	Built-in Increase			1,000
22 - Transportation of Things				---
23 - Rent, Commun. & Utilities	Built-in Increase			1,000
24 - Printing & Reproduction	Built-in Increase			1,000
25 - Other Services	Built-in Increase			3,000
26 - Supplies & Materials	Built-in Increase			1,000
31 - Equipment	Built-in Increase			5,000
Total				\$334,000

Table 5
COURT OF APPEALS
Detail of Full-Time Equivalent Employment

	2003 Actual	2004 Enacted	2005 Request
JS-6	2	2	2
JS-7	3	3	3
JS-8	7	7	7
JS-9	3	3	3
JS-10	10	10	10
JS-11	41	41	41
JS-12	5	5	5
JS-13	2	2	2
JS-14	8	8	8
JS-15	2	2	2
JS-16	1	1	1
JS-17	1	1	1
Ungraded	9	9	9
Subtotal	94	94	94
JS salary	\$6,795,000	\$6,954,000	\$7,213,000
Total, end-of-year	94	94	94
Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	94	94	94