



DALLAS COUNTY OFFICE OF BUDGET AND EVALUATION

August 27, 2025

TO: Dr. Ronica Watkins, Budget Officer *rw*
FROM: Nathaniel Dears, Budget and Policy Analyst
SUBJECT: FY2026 Court Cost Miscellaneous Baseline Budget

Background

Each fiscal year, the Budget Office develops a baseline budget for all County departments. The purpose of this briefing is to discuss the proposed baseline budget for department 4080 – Court Cost Miscellaneous. This department is used to supplement operating expenses to the Dallas County courts that exceed their fiscal year operating budgets.

Salaries and Benefits

Account 1060 Salaries-Extra Help was added to the FY2016 Budget. Account 1060 is used to estimate the combined Extra Help budget for all the Courts.

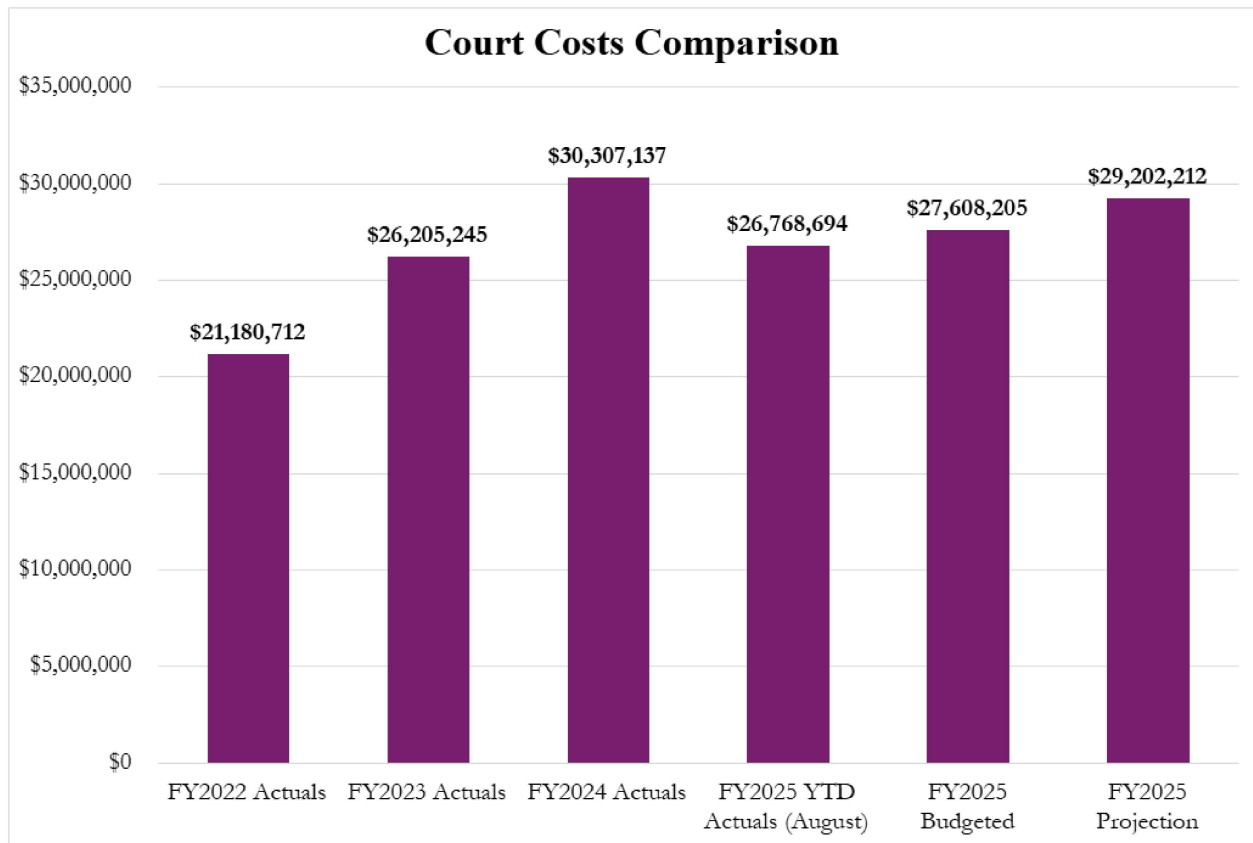
Operating Expenses

The FY2025 Estimates for Court Cost Miscellaneous show that court costs are projected to increase by \$3,100,000 for the FY026 budget. The total cost to operate the miscellaneous court fund and all court funds is budgeted at \$11,100,000 for FY26.

Notable Accounts with Increases:

- 62410 – Substitute Court Reporters
- 62473 – Court Appointed Attorney – Misdemeanor
- 62474 – Court Appointed Attorney – County Court Appeal
- 62475 – Court Appointed Attorney – Felony
- 62476 – Court Appointed Attorney – Capital Murder
- 62477 – Court Appointed Attorney - Writs
- 62478 – Court Appointed Attorney – Investigator
- 62479 – Court Appointed Attorney – Child Welfare

The FY2025 budget for court costs, includes visiting judges, court appointed attorney payments, interpreters, and other expenses, which was approved at \$27.6 million. Through October – August, the expenses for court costs are estimated to be \$26.8 million. Total court costs for FY2025 are projected to be around \$29.2 million, which is approximately a \$1.1 million decrease from FY2024. As of August, approximately 97 percent of the court costs budget has been expended, indicating that a significant portion of the budgeted funds have been utilized at this point in the fiscal year, with the biggest drivers being court appointed attorneys for felony and misdemeanor cases along with parent/child representation for CPS cases. Additional funds has be transferred throughout the fiscal year to address the ongoing court costs for FY2025.



Recommendation

It is recommended that the Court Cost Miscellaneous FY2026 Baseline Budget increases its funding levels by \$3,100,000; total budgeted amount of \$11,100,000.