



---

# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

---

Municipal Court  
City of Austin, Texas

---

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

---

Message	<b>3</b>
Overview	<b>4</b>
Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Goals	<b>6</b>
Key Performance Measures	<b>7</b>
Events	<b>11</b>
Accomplishments	<b>14</b>
Budget - General Fund Revenue	<b>18</b>
Budget	<b>19</b>
Special Fund Revenue	<b>20</b>
Budget - General Fund Expenses	<b>22</b>
Budget - Special Fund Expenses	<b>23</b>
Judiciary	<b>24</b>
Municipal Court Operations	<b>26</b>
Customer Service	<b>27</b>
Communications	<b>28</b>
Caseflow Management	<b>29</b>
Courtroom Support	<b>30</b>
Warrant Processing	<b>31</b>
Civil Administration	<b>32</b>
Central Booking Support	<b>33</b>
Collections Services	<b>34</b>
Quality Assurance	<b>35</b>
Youth Services	<b>36</b>
Support Services	<b>37</b>
Financial Services	<b>38</b>
Human Resources	<b>39</b>
Information Technology Services	<b>40</b>
Downtown Community Court	<b>41</b>
The Future	<b>42</b>

---

## MESSAGE



---

PRESIDING JUDGE  
SHERRY STATMAN

---

The Judiciary of the Austin Municipal Court strives to rigorously preserve, protect, and defend the constitution and laws of the United States, the State of Texas, and the City of Austin.

Our judges are some of the most experienced in the state and are often called upon for knowledge and advice by municipal judges from across Texas.

In FY 2013-2014 the judiciary continued to honorably serve the community as magistrates and many of our accomplishments are detailed in this Annual Report.

Municipal Court's vision is to be the most effective, efficient and impartial municipal court in Texas. It, along with the City's aspiration to be the best-managed city in the country, has created an environment of innovation and continuous improvement.

The outstanding employees of the Court exceed expectations every year and FY 2013-2014 was no exception. Many of our events, improvements, accomplishments and innovations are detailed in this Annual Report. We are proud of our accomplishments and each others' contributions.



---

CLERK OF MUNICIPAL COURT  
REBECCA STARK

---

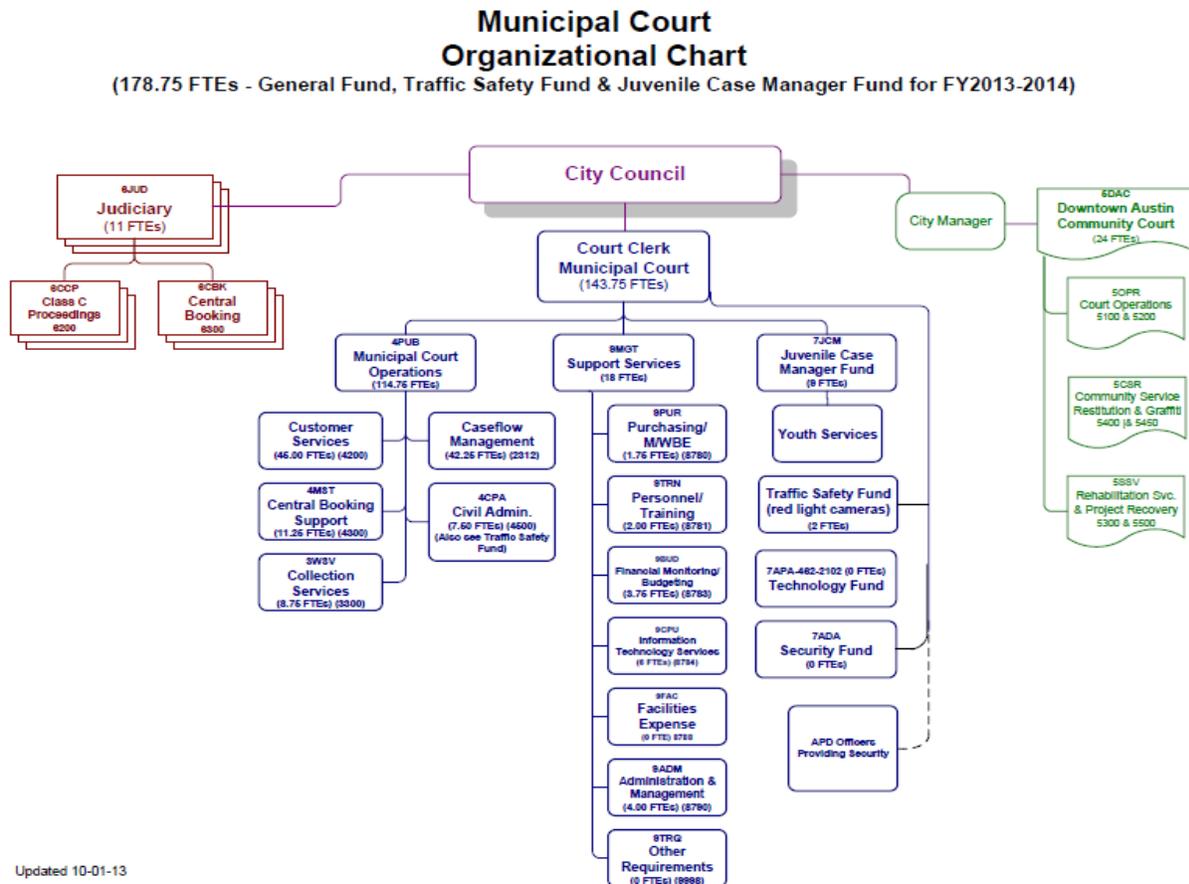
# OVERVIEW

The City of Austin Municipal Court is the Judicial Branch of the local government. Court is organized into five divisions, the Judiciary, Court Operation, Downtown Austin Community Court, Support Services and Special Programs. The Judges and the Clerk of the Municipal Court are appointed by the City Council.

The City Council appointed Presiding Judge Sherry Statman and eight full-time Judges including the Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) judge, and a number of substitute judges for four year terms, from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2017. The Clerk of the Municipal Court, Rebecca Stark, was appointed in 2000 and is responsible for Operations, Support Services and Special Programs.

There is a total of 178.75 employees in the five divisions:

- Judiciary: 11 FTEs (plus 11 Substitute Judges)
- Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC): 24 FTEs
- Municipal Court Operations: 115.75 FTEs
- Support Services: 18 FTEs
- Special Programs: 10 FTEs



## OVERVIEW

The main courthouse is located at 700 E. 7th Street in downtown Austin. There are two sub-stations:

North Substation: 12425 Lamplight Village in the APD Substation

South Substation: 5700 Manchaca Rd. in the Cherry Creek Shopping Center

The main courthouse is open to the public 71 hours per week, 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Friday. The court also has two units working 24 hours per day, 7 days per week: the Warrant Processing unit operates out of the main courthouse and the Central Booking Support unit (including a judge) are located in the Travis County jail.



**Main Courthouse**



**South Substation**



**North Substation**

The Municipal Court also maintains and is continually improving the ability for customers to either handle their cases online or submit documents through the mail, email or fax. The site is [www.austintexas.gov/court](http://www.austintexas.gov/court). Court also has four websites interfaced with its case management system:

Public: [www.austintexas.gov/public](http://www.austintexas.gov/public)

Defendants can see their entire case files (open and closed) including documents. There is also an online listing of all cases docketed for ease in finding the date, time and courtroom.

Attorney: [www.austintexas.gov/attorney](http://www.austintexas.gov/attorney)

Attorneys, with passwords, can see their clients' full case files including documents, list of clients and a schedule of docket dates.

City Officers: [www.austintexas.gov/officer](http://www.austintexas.gov/officer)

City officers, with employee codes, can access all of the cases (open and closed) they have filed in the court including documents. It also has a schedule of the docket dates.

Non-City Officers: [www.austintexas.gov/other](http://www.austintexas.gov/other)

Non-city officers, such as AISD police and attendance officers, can also access the cases they have filed in the court including documents and a docket calendar. The site is password protected.

## VISION STATEMENT, MISSION STATEMENT, AND GOALS

### **Vision**

To be the most effective, efficient and impartial Municipal Court in Texas

### **Mission**

To be fair, efficient, and accountable service to the public by impartially administering justice so that quality of life is enhanced.

### **Goals**

To provide exceptional customer service  
To provide an effective and impartial administration of justice  
To enhance organizational health

## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Measure Name	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Average age of terminated cases (days)	256	229	212
Percentage of Cases Terminated to Filled	110.0 %	101.6%	103.3%
Level of customer satisfaction as indicated by City of Austin Citizen Survey	88.0%	85.0%	n/a
Number of cases set on scheduled documents and appearing at walk-in dockets	115,939	115,545	116,025
Percentage of cases set on a docket within 60 days	96.7%	98.0%	98.0%
Percent of walk-in customers served within 10 minutes	80.5%	90.0%	96.0
Total number of cases filed	<b>323,513</b>	<b>364,930</b>	<b>368,684</b>

### **Average Age of Terminated Cases (days)**

This measure reveals the efficiency of Municipal Court processes and procedures by calculating the average length of time it takes to process cases from initial filing to termination. The cases processed include: traffic, parking, state class 'c' misdemeanors, city ordinance and red light camera violations.

### **Percentage of Cases Terminated to Filled**

This measure discloses how Municipal Court keeps up with its caseload by comparing the total number of cases terminated in a year to the total number of new cases filed.

### **Level of Customer Satisfaction**

This measure is taken from the annual City of Austin Community Survey and reports the total percent of favorable responses received. This survey is prepared and conducted by sources external to the City of Austin. It is a statistically-valid survey that can represent the opinion of Austin's general population with a 95% confidence interval and +/- 3% margin of error. The 2014 results were unavailable at the time of this report.

### **Number of Cases Set on Scheduled Dockets and Appearing at Walk-in Dockets**

This measure reflects the Municipal Court's criminal caseload that requires physical appearances before judges. It affects the amount of judicial resources needed by the court, as well as other court resources including clerical support, jurors, interpreters and courtroom availability. It also indicates the number of prosecutorial resources required of the city's Law Department.

## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### **Percent of Cases Set on a Docket within 60 Days**

This measure shows the Court's ability to place criminal cases on appearance or trial dockets in a timely manner. The goal is to docket cases at least three weeks from date of not guilty pleas, but no more than 60 days. The initial wait of three weeks allows defendants time to prepare their defense.

### **Percent of Customers Served within 10 Minutes**

This measure reflects the percentage of customers that are served within 10 minutes of arrival at the downtown customer service windows.

### **Total Number of Cases Filed**

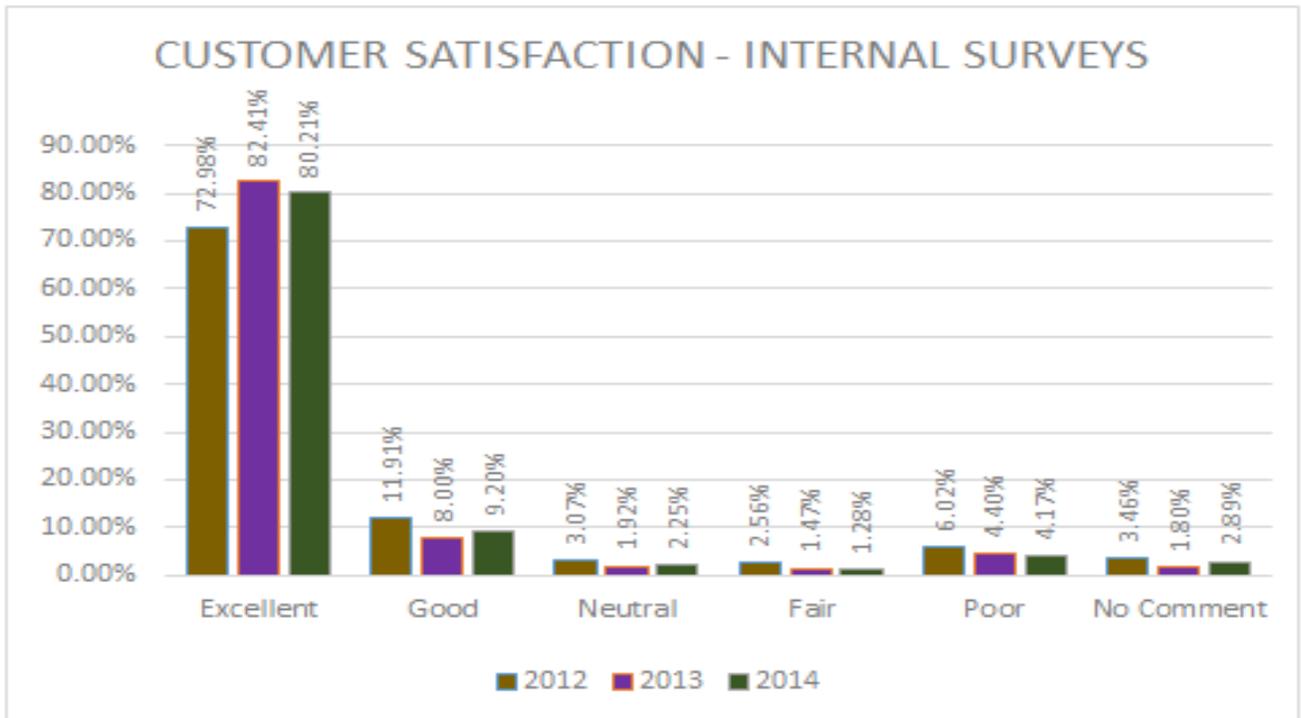
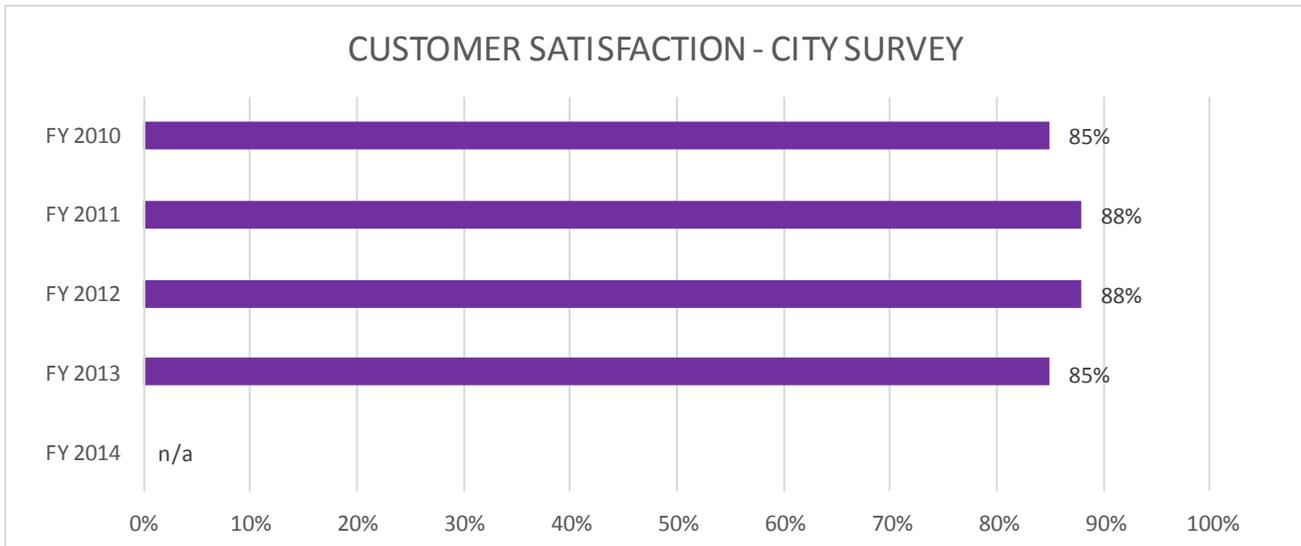
The number of cases filed is a direct result of the number of citations issued by the Austin Police Department (APD) and other departments/agencies that issue citations filed in the Municipal Court. This measure reflects the workload for Municipal Court staff and allows the Department to track resource allocation. The types of cases filed include traffic, city ordinance, state class C misdemeanors, parking, and red light camera violations.



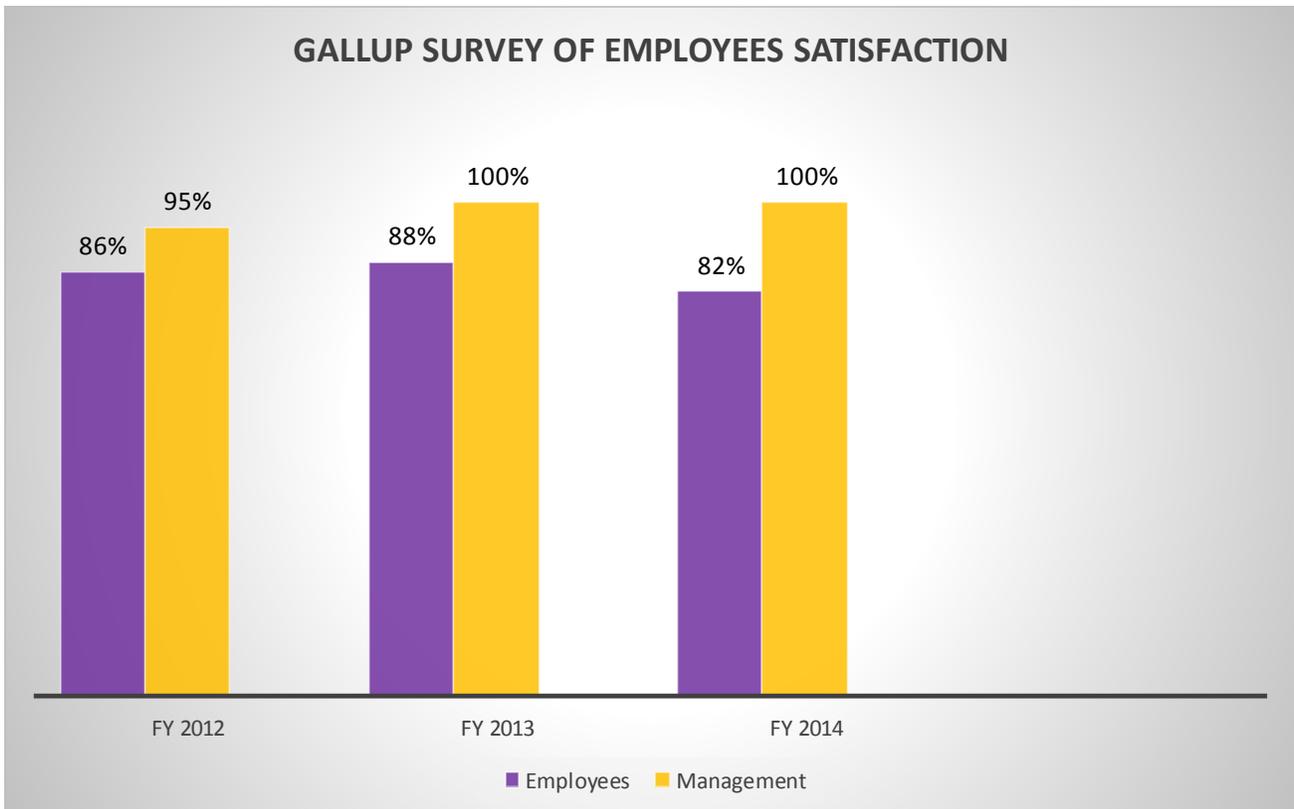
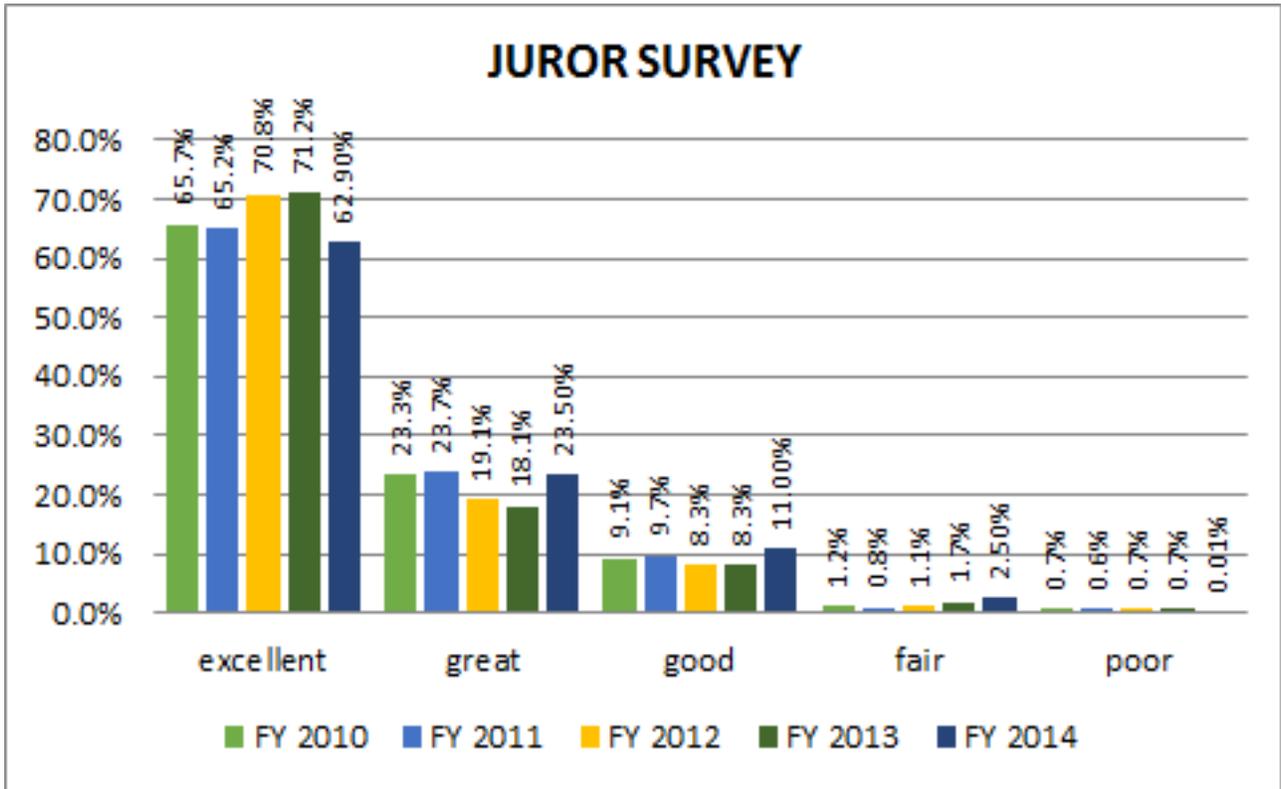
## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### Customer Satisfaction

This measure is taken from the annual City of Austin Community Survey and reports the total percent of favorable responses received. This survey is prepared and conducted by sources external to the City of Austin. It is a statistically valid survey that can represent the opinion of Austin’s general population with a 95% confidence interval and +/- 3% margin of error. The results of the 2014 survey were unavailable at the time of this report.



## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES



## EVENTS

### Awards and Recognition

As part of its Awards and Recognition program, the Municipal Court gives awards for **years of service** “on the 5s” (5<sup>th</sup> anniversary, 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, etc.). During the year, there was one employee who was recognized for having been at the court and/or city for 5 years, 11 employees for 10 years of service, 3 employees with 15 years, 3 employees were here 20 years, and 2 employees have been with the court for 25 years. This is a grant total of 270 years of service to the Court and the city. A sincere thank you to all of them.

The Court also recognizes three **Employees of the Quarter** and a **Friend of the Court** quarterly. The Friend of the Court is someone from a different city department who has provided a great service to the Court. A Recognition Celebration is held quarterly. Also, a supervisor and a unit are recognized annually. For 2013, there were no Supervisor of the Year was nominated and the Unit of the Year was Customer Services.

### Build-A-Backpack

Municipal Court employees participated in the City’s 8th annual Build-A-Backpack program and donated 25 backpacks packed full of school supplies.



### City Works/Austin Corp

The Municipal Court and Downtown Austin Community Court participated in the city’s CityWorks and AustinCorps programs. CityWorks consists of a group of concerned citizens who attend a series of informational meetings with various departments to see how and what the departments do. AustinCorps is a similar series for concerned high school students. Both sessions with Municipal Court have been highly rated.



### COACCC

Municipal Court employees donated time, effort, and money to the City of Austin Combined Charities annual collection time. Court’s Coordinator was Krystal Duran, Research Analyst. A total of \$8,204. was raised.

### Court Appreciation Week

The Texas Legislature declared November 3 – 7, 2014 as Municipal Court Appreciation Week. Communities throughout Texas issued proclamations and planned events in appreciation for the dedicated municipal court judges, clerks, and administrators. Mayor Leffingwell declared Austin Municipal Court week at the November 6<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting in recognition of the court’s 9 judges, 11 substitute judges and 168 court staff members. The Court provided information and treats during the week.

## EVENTS

### **Employee Events**

During the year, employees contribute to make special events special. Some events during the past fiscal year include: Halloween costumes; Thanksgiving luncheon; Holiday gifts and luncheon; Black history month posters and luncheon; Valentine's Day cards and snacks; St. Patrick's Day green snacks; Easter Bunny egg hunt; Parents Day contest and lunch (combination Mother's and Father's Days); and Birthday parties monthly. Not only does this recognize diversity but also provides some much needed breaks from the day-to-day whirlwind in order to recharge our batteries.



### **Ethics Bowl**

Municipal Court participated in the City's second Ethics Bowl. There were three rounds with real-life ethical situations on May 14, 2014. The Court's team consisted of Debbie Cowan, Khendi Williams, Allison Gardner and Sally Howard with Court Operations Manager Kim Chadwick as executive sponsor. They made the Court proud!

### **Executive Academy Graduate**

Gloria Esparza, Court's Financial Manager, was accepted and successfully completed the city's Executive Academy. Following graduation on June 23, 2014, she was taken to lunch by the management team. She has since accepted a promotion into the city's Fleet Services Department. She is a great asset to the City!



### **Job Fair and Career Day**

Court's HR unit set up a booth at the city's Career Expo held on May 20th. They provided information about the Court and current job openings. They collected resumes for the court's Network Systems Administrator position. The Director attended Career Day at Palm Elementary on May 23rd. The children were allowed to visit each booth and ask questions about various positions and what the educational requirements would be to achieve these positions.

### **Library**

A library was established for court employees from books donated by employees. Several hundred books were donated during the year.



### **Mentoring**

Municipal Court had 17 volunteers in the mentoring and tutoring program. This program is where City employees can spend up to 2 hours a week helping AISD students at the local school grounds or in some local libraries.

## EVENTS

### Quarterly Retreats

The management team meets quarterly with supervisors and leads at various city sites to discuss current issues, assess projects and provide training. During the last fiscal year:

- In October, the topic was business planning;
- In January, it was potential enhancements to customer service, employee morale and the budget;
- In May, current court projects were reviewed and training provided on interviewing; and
- In July, the roles of supervisors and leads were discussed along with a critique of the first Annual Report, desired requirements for the new building and ADA training.

### Spring Cleaning

The 11th Annual Spring Cleaning was held on March 21st. A thorough cleaning of closets, drawers, overhead bins, the storage room and other junk collectors is held annually to keep the workplace as clutter free as possible.

### Supervisor Academy Graduates

Gus Rosa, Cheryl Bonhomme, Jackie Deland, Sally Howard, Terry Mahan and Ryan Mooney were recognized at the Supervisor Academy Graduation held on December 2, 2013. Christine de la Cruz graduated in June. Following the ceremonies, all were taken to lunch by the management team.



### Take our Children to Work Day

The Court sponsored numerous events for Take Our Children to Work Day on Friday, June 27th. The day offered parents the opportunity to show their children what they do on the job and what other court jobs entail. The group of 14 children explored two police vehicles and participated in a mock trial coached by Judges Vasquez and Vigorito, Prosecutor Bassil Ally and officers Settles, Cyphers and Sargent Ellsworth. The children were given a snack and souvenir posters. It was a hit!



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Each operational unit prepared its purpose and duties, major performance measures and accomplishments for FY 2014. Many accomplishments are listed on unit pages later in this document with additional context. Following is a summary of the Court's major work projects and accomplishments.

### **83<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Session**

A new court cost mandated by the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Session became effective on January 1, 2014. It provides funding for juvenile diversion programs. With that funding and the Juvenile Case Manger fee, the Court established the Austin Youth Diversion program.

### **Austin Youth Diversion Program Created**

The last legislative session indicated a desire to remove juveniles from the criminal justice system and into rehabilitative yet accountable programs. In anticipation of this move, the Court had begun developing the Austin Youth Diversion program in cooperation with the Prosecutors in the city Law Department. The program was officially implemented in April 2014.

### **E-Citation Program**

Phase 1 of APD's e-citation program was completed in FY 2014 and phase 2 well underway. Court staff has been involved since the requirements stage in 2010 so that sufficient information is collected to prosecute cases. Court was also responsible for developing an interface with Court's case management system to get the data downloaded in a timely manner.

### **Court Case Management Computer System Design**

Significant time and effort was spent weekly to develop requirements for a major upgrade to the court's case management system (software). The project went through the city's IT Governance process last fiscal year.

### **Court's Website Redesign**

The Court's website was revised and enhanced to make it much more user friendly. There are new and re-named navigation buttons, clearer instructions and options, and considerably more information. Thanks to the city's PIO office for their assistance.

### **Record Court Proceedings**

A pilot project to record court proceedings instead of using court reporters was successfully completed and approval obtained from the City Council. The change was implemented in January 2014. In addition to operating the recording equipment, unit staff were also trained to label and store exhibits, which included setting up a new evidence room.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Statewide Warrant Round-Up**

Austin Municipal Court coordinated cities across Texas to serve outstanding arrest warrants annually in the Great Texas Warrant Round Up. Austin began its program regionally in 2001, went statewide nine years ago, and continues to coordinate it annually. While warrants are regularly served by each jurisdiction, this combined effort provides much greater opportunities for warrant service and is unique in the country. In FY 2014, 316 entities joined this effort. Austin Municipal Court collected \$1,106,815 while cancelling 10,688 warrants and 4,920 parking and red light camera cases. 203 entities reported their results at the end of the round up period. These entities cancelled 132,326 warrants and collected a total of \$20,272,522.



### **Delinquent Parking Initiative**

Postcards were mailed to persons with thousands of delinquent parking and red light camera cases. By the end of the initiative which was October 21st, the court received 2,612 payments totaling for \$110,359.00.

### **Home for the Holidays Initiative**

In conjunction with the Austin Police Department's Home for the Holidays campaign, the Court initiates a compliance effort with the same name. On November 20th, notices were mailed to defendants advising of their cases on which warrants of arrest have been issued and encouraging them to address the cases so as to avoid arrest during the holidays. During the following three week period, 681 payments were made for a total of \$131,762 and \$96,374 was applied to 368 cases with non-monetary credits such as community service or time served.

### **Employees with Warrants Initiative**

Semi-annually, the Municipal Court checks its warrant records against the city's HR database to ensure that employees are being responsible for citations received in the city. In February 2014, there were 30 employees with a total of 37 warrants. In July 2014, there were 42 employees with a total of 69 warrants. The Department Directors are contacted and asked to have these employees contact the court within a couple of weeks. If the employees fail to do so, the APD Court Officers make arrests. The Court has arranged with the city's Payroll Office to allow payroll deductions should this prove most convenient for these employees.

### **City Training Achieved**

100% compliance with the city's annual Ethics and Cyber Security training was achieved.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Civil Service**

Phase 1 of Austin's new Municipal Civil Service became effective in July, 2014. It addressed disciplinary actions and failure to promote. The program was fully implemented on October 27, 2014. Prior to implementation, all Court employees were trained on the new rules and new employees receive training during the Court's New Employee Orientation.

### **Defense Attorney Access to Courthouse**

Processes and procedures were developed to provide defense attorneys access to the courthouse using proximity cards at the employee's entrance. Attorneys must complete an application and successfully complete a criminal history check. They also sign an agreement that they will not enter the courthouse when it is closed to the public. The access must be renewed annually.

### **Moving DACC to JEMS**

Detailed analysis was started in 2014 to move the Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) from its case management system to the Municipal Court's case management system called JEMS. This included mapping data between the two court systems to find and resolve issues where a direct 1 to 1 translation was not possible. A translation program was created to transfer the data from the DACC system to JEMS. Also, the Municipal Court's system was altered to allow for direct linkage into an Intensive Case Management module to be used by DACC after the transition and the Court's Austin Youth Diversion program.

### **City-Owned Magistration Facility Planning**

Municipal Court assisted the Austin Police Department (APD) to develop a proposal for a city-owned magistration facility. Currently, Municipal Court provides 24/7 magistration services at the Travis County Jail Booking Facility. Actual booking services are performed by county staff. The city has a contract with the county to operate the facility and APD's proposal indicates that a city-owned facility will be less expensive and more efficient. The proposal has been presented to the City Council.

### **Open Data Portal Expanded**

Information about all cases in the court's case management system can be found in the city's Open Data Portal. The information includes case type, offense date and time, violation description, the agency that filed the case, violation location(s), current status and issuing officer i.d. During the last year, all parking and red light camera cases were included while only criminal cases were previously listed.

### **Communications Unit Taking Payments**

A major improvement to customer service was that the court's Communications staff began processing credit card payments. Prior to this, when a customer called court to make a payment, the call was transferred to Collection Services, causing a service delay depending on the number of calls. By training existing staff and reassigning an employee from another operational unit, full payments and planned payments are taken immediately by the answering employee. For additional customer service, all callers are advised of the ability to pay online.

### **Scripts to Answer Emails**

The Communication unit analyzed emails to determine the most commonly asked questions. Scripts were prepared so that the Court's responses are consistent and professional.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Streamlined Appeal Process

Defendants found guilty following trial may appeal to the county court. The appeal process was updated to facilitate defendant input and the instructions and forms were updated for clarity. The information and forms were also put online.

### Parking in Transit Lane

When an ordinance creating transit lane parking violations was initiated, it was somewhat vague making these violations criminal while there is another city ordinance that states that all city parking violations be civil. The Municipal Court initiated another ordinance clarifying the situation but, in the meantime, processes and procedures were set up to handle these cases in a criminal manner and then set up new processes and procedures to handle them in a civil manner.

### Deferred disposition changes

The recording of pre-deferred disposition and driving safety balances in the Court's case management software was changed to improve accuracy by staff and allow customers to pay online.

### Probable Cause Affidavit Updates

A large number of violations in the Court's case management software set-up tables were missing probable cause affidavit language. This required Police Officers to prepare them, which delayed case processing. Language was obtained and the affidavit templates updated. The backlog of cases on which warrants needed to be prepared was eliminated.

### New IT Equipment

The Court's **case management software server** was more than 8 years old and was hitting full 100% utilization which slowed down court processing to unacceptable levels across the board. The system was updated on May 3rd by replacing the IBM AS400. This significantly reduced problems and increased performance. A new **credit card server** was brought online to separate the external web functionality from the Court's case management system credit card payment processing. The court started its roll out of **miniature "green" PC's** to replaced dated equipment and to create a more sustainable future. The Court took over the lobby video security from APD and installed a **DVR system for video surveillance**. The court brought online **virtual server** hosting to migrate physical servers to a more reliable and easier to maintain virtual server.

### Stand Up Desks

The need to replaced broken or worn desks was accomplished by purchasing "stand up desks". These desks can be hydraulically raised and lowered. Most Municipal Court employees sit at their desks working on computer all day. This change assisted ergonomically enhancing employee health and morale.

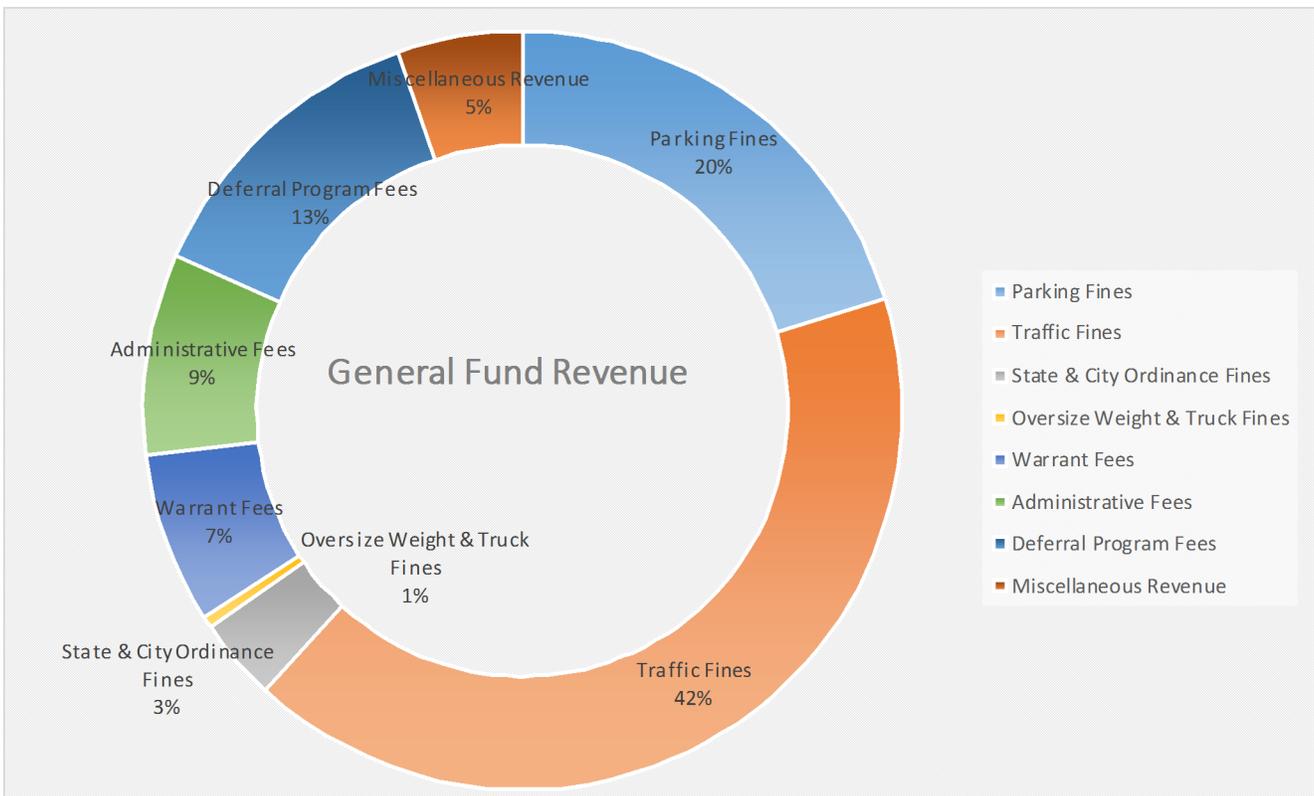
### Continuous Improvement

Court continues its continuous improvement environment making numerous minor changes to forms, processes, procedures and the website in order to provide exceptional customer service and fast and efficient administration of justice.

## BUDGET — GENERAL FUND REVENUE

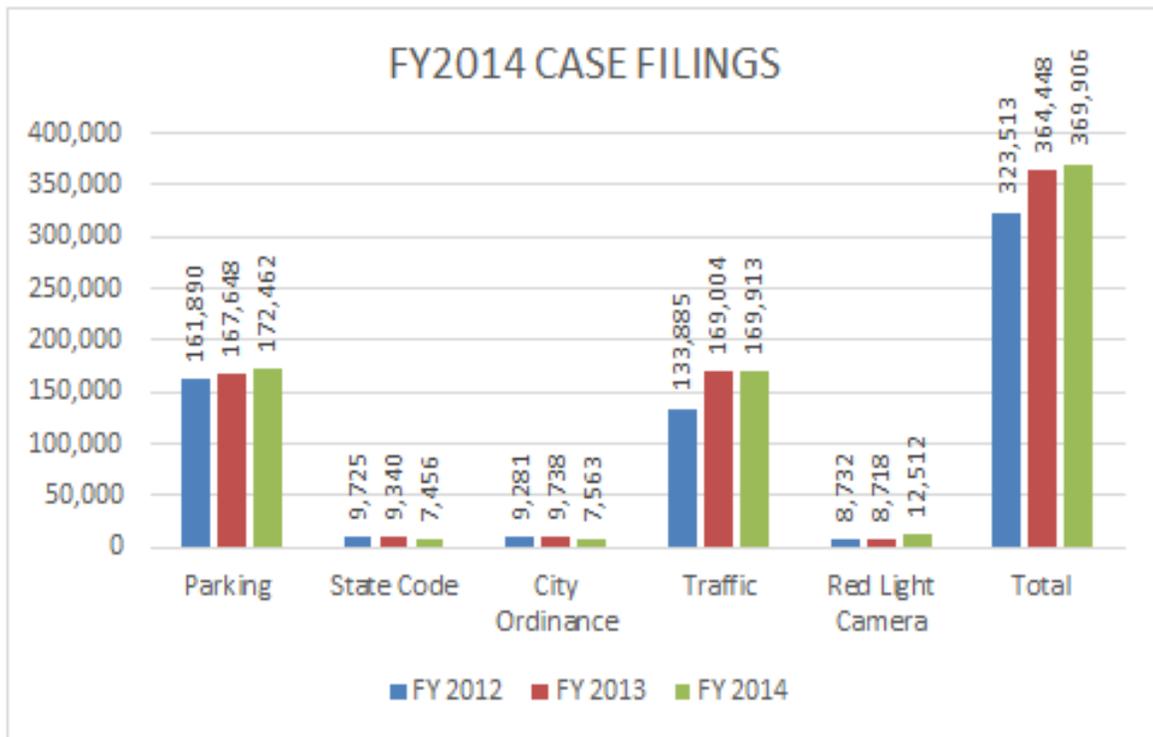
The Municipal Court had higher than anticipated revenue collections. The FY 2014 General Fund revenue budget was \$15,967,744 and the net to General Fund revenue collected (unaudited) totaled \$16,533,596. The increase in number of cases filed in previous years has affected revenue. See the case filing chart on next page.

General Fund Revenue	2012	2013	2014
Parking Fines	\$3,098,778	\$3,255,861	\$3,343,485
Traffic Fines	\$6,126,280	\$6,763,641	\$6,880,693
State & City Ordinance Fines	\$ 793,750	\$ 730,508	\$574,326
Oversize Weight & Truck Fines	\$ 72,193	\$ 84,117	\$80,805
Warrant Fees	\$1,405,371	\$1,223,094	\$1,205,003
Administrative Fees	\$1,293,632	\$1,409,432	\$1,426,327
Deferral Program Fees	\$1,692,713	\$1,963,960	\$2,139,868
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 740,292	\$ 870,845	\$883,089
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,223,009</b>	<b>\$16,301,458</b>	<b>\$16,533,596</b>



## BUDGET — CASE FILINGS

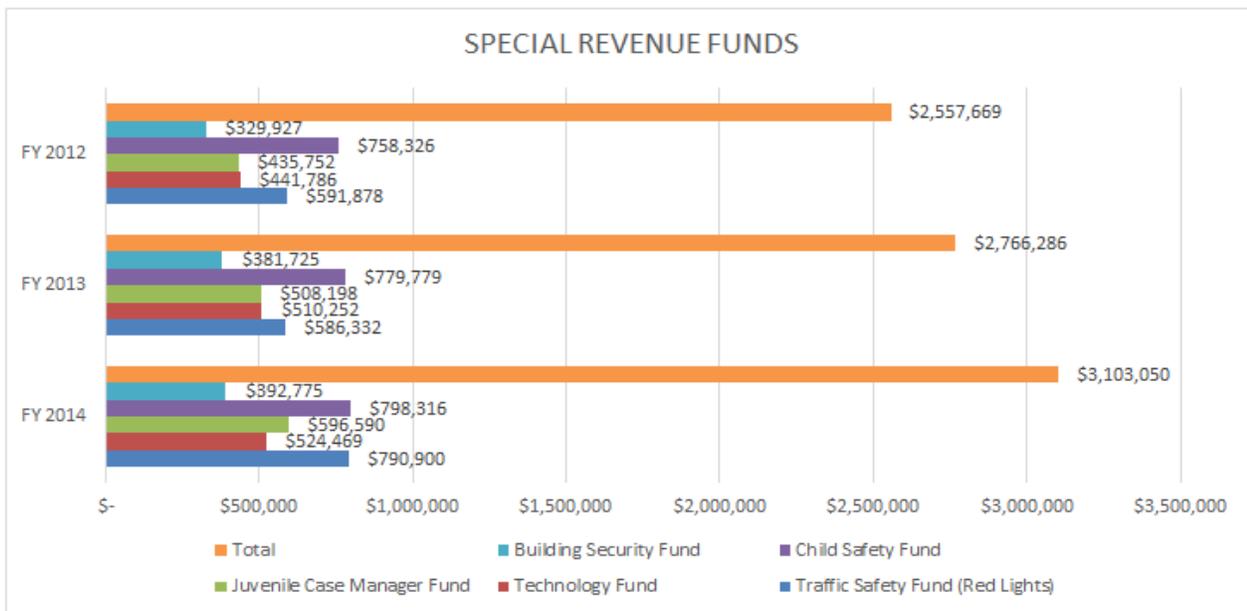
Case Filings						
Year	Parking	State Code	City Ordinance	Traffic	Red Light Camera	Total
FY 2012	161,890	9,725	9,281	133,885	8,732	323,513
FY 2013	167,648	9,340	9,738	169,004	8,718	364,448
FY 2014	172,462	7,456	7,563	169,913	12,512	369,906



## BUDGET — SPECIAL FUND REVENUE

The Municipal Court has multiple revenue streams. Revenue is derived from fines, court costs and fees collected on cases filed in our court by several entities including the Austin Police Department, AISD, Alcoholic Beverage Commission, and several City departments. The revenue is distributed into the General Fund, Building Security Fund, Court Technology Fund, Juvenile Case Manager Fund, Traffic Safety Fund and Child Safety Fund.

The Municipal Court also remits a portion of every traffic and misdemeanor amount paid (mostly court costs and some fees) to the State Comptroller and other agencies as required by law or contractual obligation. In FY2014, Court collected \$30,253,156 and submitted \$11,440,896 or 37.8% to the state and other agencies.



### **Building Security Fund**

The Municipal Court Building Security Fund is a special revenue fund created by the Legislature and adopted by the City Council in 1995 to enhance courthouse security. Revenue is derived from a \$3 security fee paid by each defendant receiving a deferred disposition or convicted of a criminal offense. The number of citations filed and paid directly relates to revenue collected. FY 2014, the revenue collected for this fund totaled \$392,775. The FY 2014 expenditure from this fund was \$370,877 (unaudited). Uses of the funds are limited by law and the majority of the expense was for security guards and APD Court Officers providing security at the downtown courthouse and south substation.

### **Child Safety Fund**

Revenue is derived from a \$5 child safety fee created by the Legislature and paid by a defendant liable for parking citations and convictions of specific criminal violations committed in school zones. The number of citations filed and paid is directly related to the revenue collected. FY 2014 Child Safety Fund revenue collected totaled \$798,316. Uses of the funds are limited by law and all of the funds are budgeted by Public Works for their school safety program, including school crossing guards.

## BUDGET — SPECIAL FUND REVENUE

### **Juvenile Case Manager Fund**

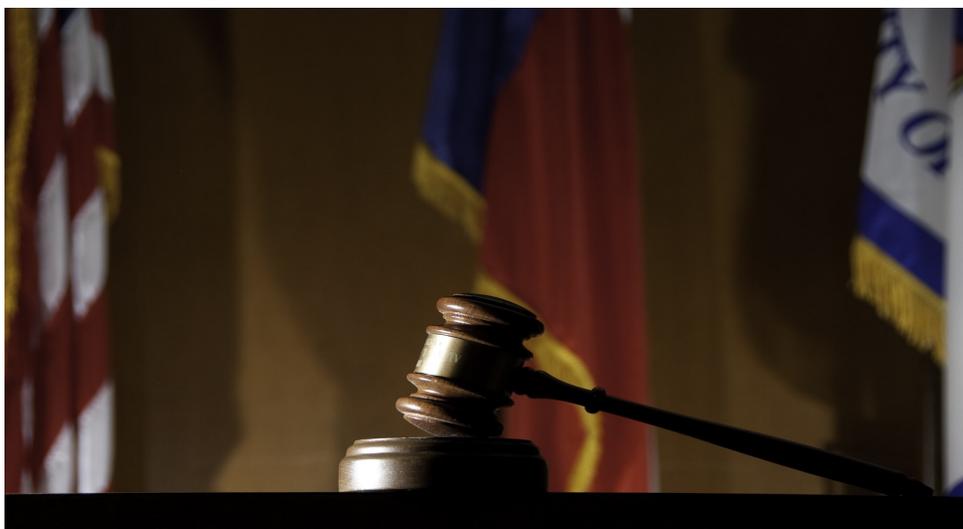
The Municipal Court Juvenile Case Manager Fund is a special revenue fund created by the Legislature and adopted by the City Council in FY 2005 to provide administration of juvenile cases and to assist with the provisions of alternative sentencing for youth. Revenue is derived from a \$4 juvenile case manager fee paid by each defendant convicted or receiving a deferred disposition of a criminal offense. In January 2014, an additional \$1 from the new legislatively mandated Diversion Fee is also included in this Fund. The number of citations filed and paid directly relates to revenue collected. FY 2014, a total of \$596,590 was collected for this fund. The expenses of this fund totaled \$698,955 (unaudited). Uses of the funds are limited by law and the majority of the expense was for the salaries, benefits and supplies for juvenile case managers.

### **Technology Fund**

The Municipal Court Technology Fund is a special revenue fund. Created in FY 1999 by the Legislature and adopted by the City Council, the purpose of the fund is to enhance court technology. Revenue is derived from a \$4 technology fee paid by each defendant convicted or receiving a deferred disposition of a criminal offense. The number of citations filed and paid is directly related to the revenue collected. FY2014, revenue collected for this fund totaled \$524,469. Actual expenditures (unaudited) totaled \$503,065. Uses of the funds are limited by law to purchasing and maintaining technological enhancements for the court. Court continues to save for a new case management system that will be needed in 2016.

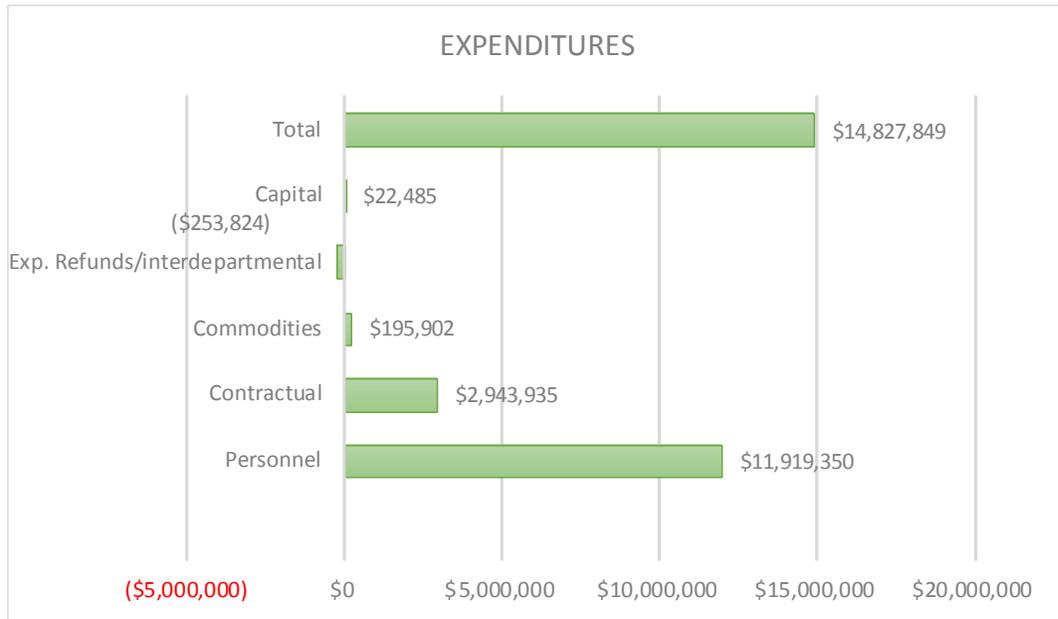
### **Traffic Safety Fund**

The Municipal Court Traffic Safety Fund is a special revenue fund created in FY 2007 to provide traffic safety programs from fees paid from Red Light Camera cases. The City's portion of the revenue from the \$75 penalty for each violation (as well as a \$25 late fee for cases not paid within 30 days) will go toward funding traffic safety programs. State law requires half of the net revenue to be sent to a state trauma care fund. The City must deposit its share of net revenue into a special account used only to fund traffic safety programs mentioned above. In FY 2014, Traffic Safety Fund revenue collected totaled \$790,900. Actual expenditures (unaudited) totaled \$724,964. Funding was included for the salaries and benefits of court staff and contractual services for operating and maintenance of red light cameras.

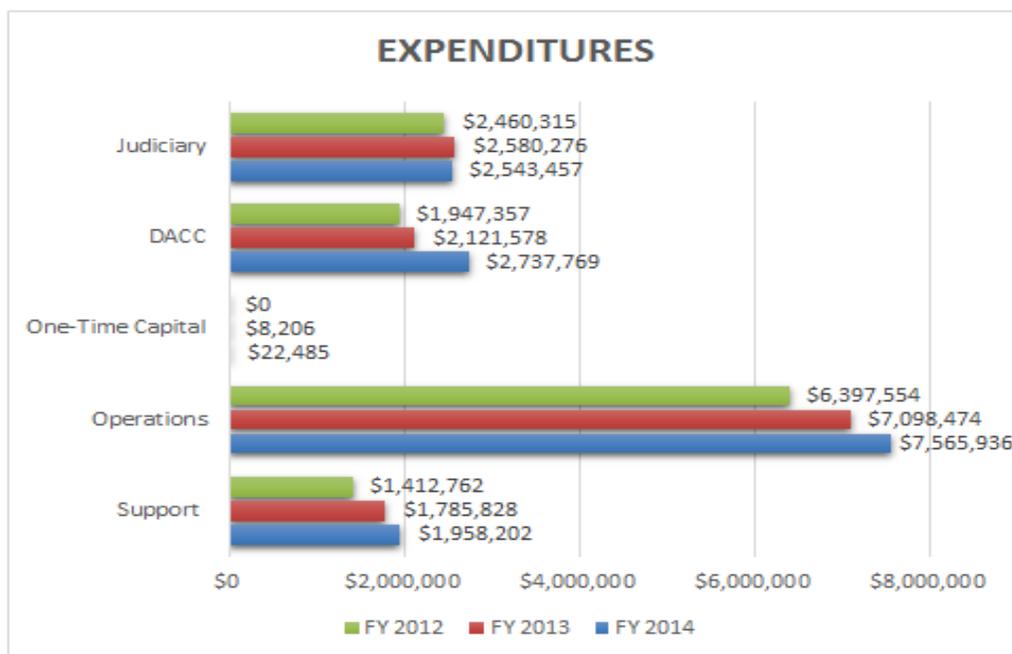


## BUDGET — GENERAL FUND EXPENSES

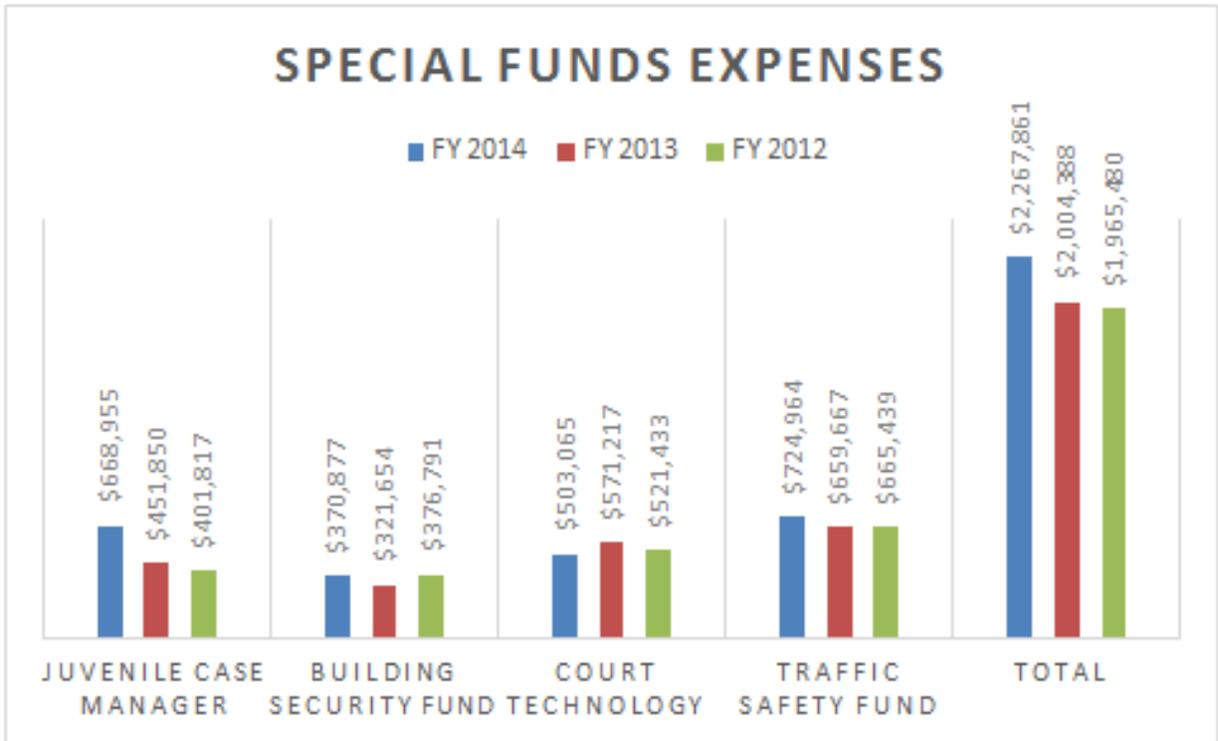
The FY 2014 General Fund expenditure budget totaled \$15,012,043. Actual expenditures (unaudited) totaled \$14,827,849, with an ending balance returned to the General Fund of \$184,194. The principal expenditure savings occurred in personnel through vacancy savings.



The Court’s General Fund personnel budget included funding 178.75 FTEs. The Court’s contractual budget included funding for contractual professional services such as language interpretation and translation, court reporting, jurors, rehabilitative services and collection initiatives



# BUDGET — SPECIAL FUND EXPENSES



## JUDICIARY



### **Presiding Judge**

Sherry Statman

### **Associate Judges**

Michael Coffey (Community Court)

Erik Cary

Barbara Garcia

Alfred D. Jenkins, III

Ronald Meyerson

Mitchell Solomon

John Vasquez

Stephen Vigorito

### **Substitute Judges**

Ferdinand Clervi

Kelly Evans

Belinda Herrera (Juvenile)

Stanley Kerr

Beverly Landers

F. Witcher McCullough, III

Evelyn P. McKee (Presiding judge Emeritus)

Olivia Ruiz

George Thomas

Celeste Villarreal

Kenneth Vitucci

## JUDICIARY



The City of Austin Municipal Court has jurisdiction over class c-misdemeanors occurring within city limits of Austin, Texas. These offenses include state and city offenses such as traffic citations, public intoxication, misdemeanor theft and assault and city code violations.

The court has highly qualified and experienced judges, many of whom have served longer than 15 years. The judiciary consists of one presiding judge, eight full-time judges, and eleven substitute judges. The Municipal Court judges are appointed by the City Council for four-year terms. Austin Municipal Court's judges must be attorneys licensed in good standing by the State Bar of Texas and have practiced law in Austin for at least two years. Judges must also live within the Austin city limits at least two years prior to appointment.

The presiding judge is responsible for the creation and scheduling of courtroom dockets. The Austin Municipal Court has multiple dockets Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. In addition, the court provides a walk-in docket Monday through Thursday. Dockets include environmental, juvenile, bench trials, jury trials, emergency protective order modification hearings, show-cause hearings, and administrative hearings.

Austin Municipal Court judges serve as magistrates and review the bulk of higher charge probable cause affidavits in Travis County. These offenses range from fine-only misdemeanors to capital murder. The primary function of magistrates is to advise arrestees of their rights as required by the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, *Miranda v. Arizona*, and Article 36 of the Vienna Convention of 1963. The judges provide magistration 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, at the Travis County Central Booking Facility. In this role, judges are also called upon to determine if probable cause exists for the issuance of arrest warrants, search warrants, blood warrants and emergency protective orders. Austin Municipal Court judges are also responsible for considering personal recognizance bond releases and the concurrent terms and conditions.

# MUNIIPAL COURT OPERATIONS

Municipal Court Operations is comprised of several Activities that provide customer services and case management for the citizens of Austin. The purpose, major performance measures and accomplishments for FY 2014 are in the following pages.



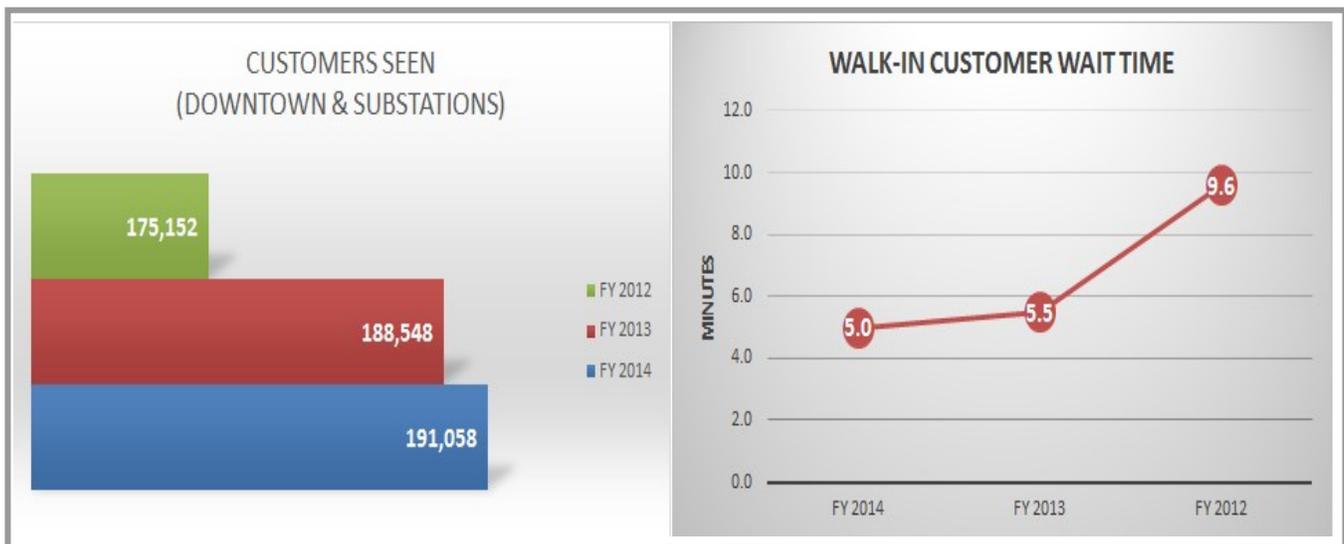
## CUSTOMER SERVICE

The purpose of Customer Services is to provide assistance for walk-in and mail customers so that cases may be processed in an effective manner. The unit provides information to customers regarding options to handle citations and process cases appropriately. At the counters, citizens may sign up for driving safety courses and deferred dispositions, apply for extensions and payment plans, file motions and other documents, make payments, and schedules cases on dockets. This unit also processes mail.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* 95.6% of customers were seen in less than 10 minutes compared to 92.9% in FY2013; an improvement of 2.7%.
- \* The average wait time was 5 minutes, slightly less than the 5.5 minutes last fiscal year.
- \* 191,058 walk-in customers were served compared to 188,548 in FY 2013; an increase of 1.3%.
- \* 92.3% of customers rated customer service as satisfactory or above in FY 2014 compared to 88.44% last fiscal year; an increase of 3.9%.
- \* 118,712 pieces of mail were processed this fiscal year compared to last fiscal year which was 154,606; a decrease of 23% mostly due to a 38.5% increase in the number of emails (See Communications).



### Accomplishments:

---

- \* Training Checklist was created for new clerks to ensure continuity and to use for regular training.
- \* Video cameras were installed in the count room and lobby enhancing security.

Also see the customer satisfaction charts on page 9.

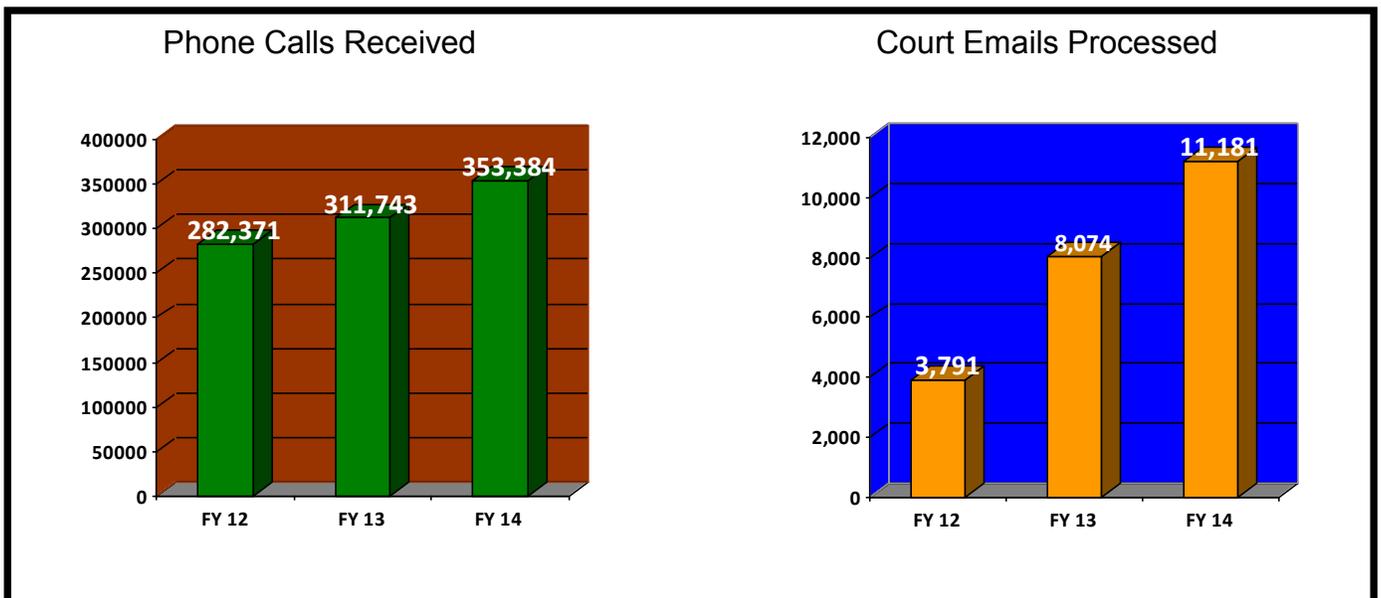
## COMMUNICATIONS

The purpose of Communications is to provide accurate, timely information by phone, internet, and email to the public so that cases are processed in a timely manner.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* 353,384 phone calls were received in FY 2014 compared to 311,743 last fiscal year; an increase of 13.4%.
- \* 11,181 emails were answered this fiscal year compared to 8,074 last fiscal year; an increase of 38.5%.
- \* \$1,092,683 was collected in credit card payments. This was the first year this unit performed this service.



### Accomplishments:

---

- \* The unit received training on full payments and began taking credit card payments in June 2014. This reduced call transfers resulting in improved customer service.
- \* Additional personnel were trained to handle customer emails for quicker response time.
- \* Templates were developed to standardize email responses which resulted in more consistency and accuracy.
- \* Data on most commonly asked questions was gathered to assist with clerical training.
- \* The Court's automated phone answering system was updated to include court information instead of just music for customers waiting to speak with a clerk.

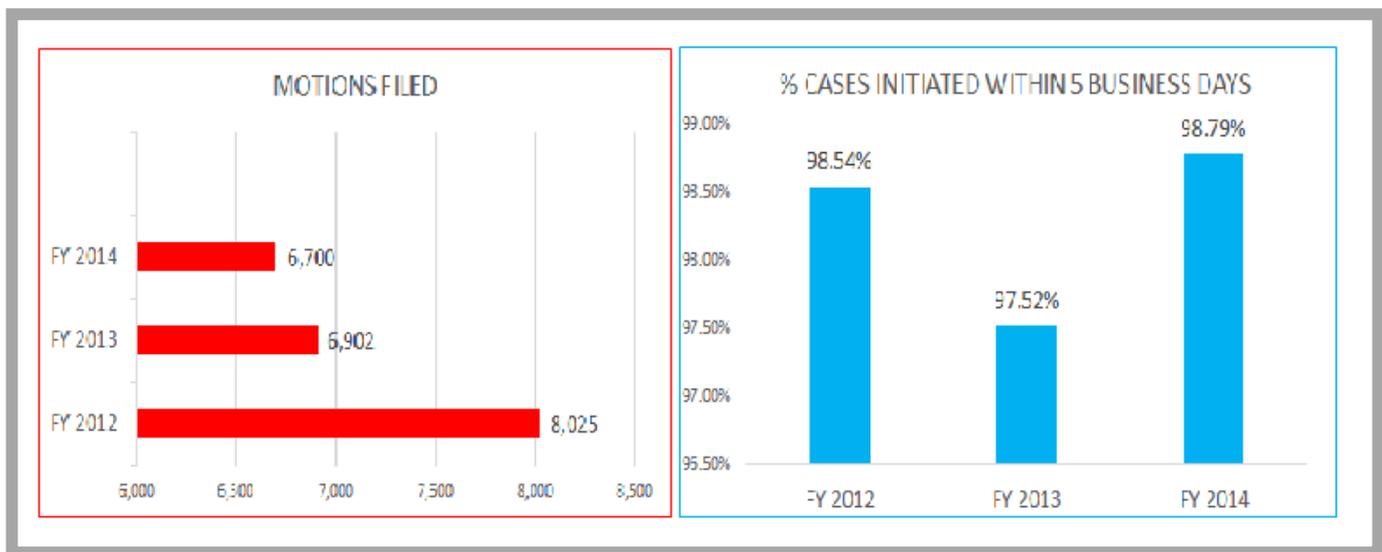
## CASEFLOW MANAGAMENT

The purpose of Caseflow Management is to ensure cases are processed accurately and efficiently for staff and customers so that cases are up-to-date. The employees monitor deferred dispositions and driving safety courses for compliance. They prepare the documentation required for appeals of convictions to the county court and respond to requests for information when that information is readily available. They code paper citations so that others performing data entry do so accurately.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* 98.79% of citations filed with the Court were initiated in the case management system within five business days of receipt compared to 97.52% last fiscal year; an increase of 1.27%.
- \* 15,948 cases were scheduled for trials in FY 2014 compared to 17,681 last year; a decrease of 9.8%. Of the cases scheduled for trial, 12 were appealed to county court this fiscal year compared to 11 last fiscal year.



### Accomplishments:

---

- \* New standardized forms for records requests and requests for time served were created.
- \* A new appeal packet consisting of information and forms was prepared and available at trial or online.
- \* A new timeline for appeal preparation was developed to assist with defendant input.
- \* Paper citations still used by many officers was re-designed to incorporate a number of enhancements included in the e-citation format.

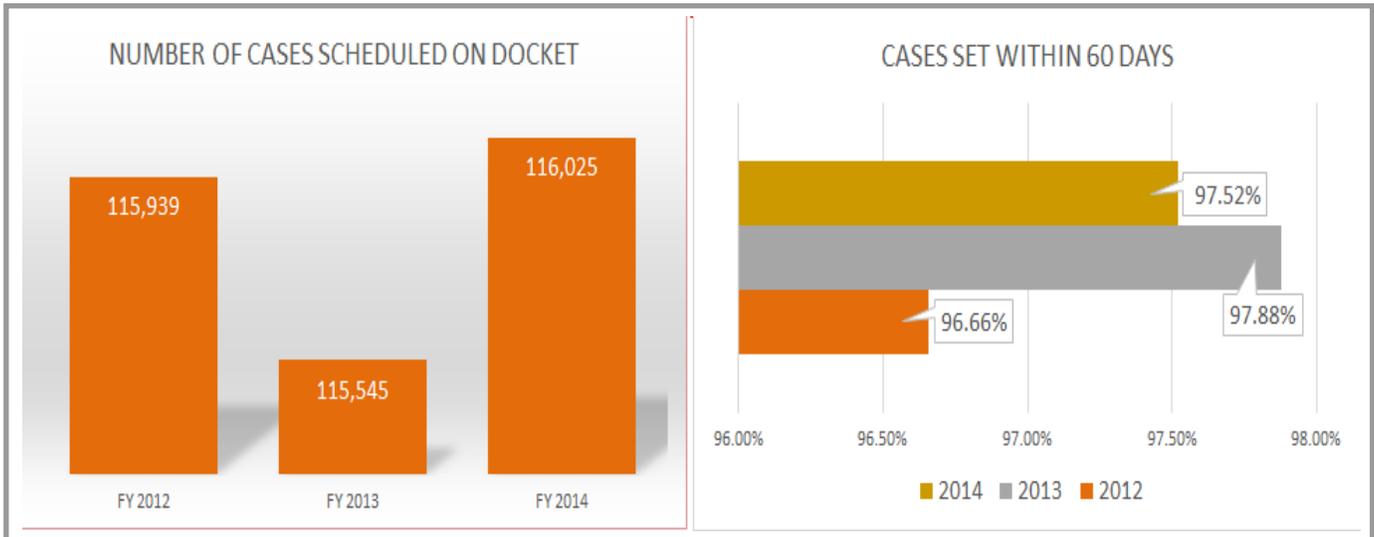
## COURTROOM SUPPORT

The purpose of Courtroom Support is to provide administrative support and maintain courtroom decorum in the courtroom so that court proceedings are efficient and case files complete. The unit sets cases on dockets according to the Presiding Judge's master docket schedule, scans documents and updates case files. It also records trials and coordinates jurors.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* 116,025 cases were set on scheduled and walk-in dockets this fiscal year compared to 115,545 last fiscal year; a 0.4% increase.
- \* 97.52% of cases were set on a docket within 60 days compared to 97.88% in FY 2013; a decrease of 0.5%.



### Accomplishments:

---

- \* Courtroom employees began recording courtroom proceedings, replacing the need for court reporters. They also now maintain label and maintain evidence.
- \* The unit had new projection systems installed in all courtrooms for better viewing of evidence by judges, jurors, attorneys and defendants.

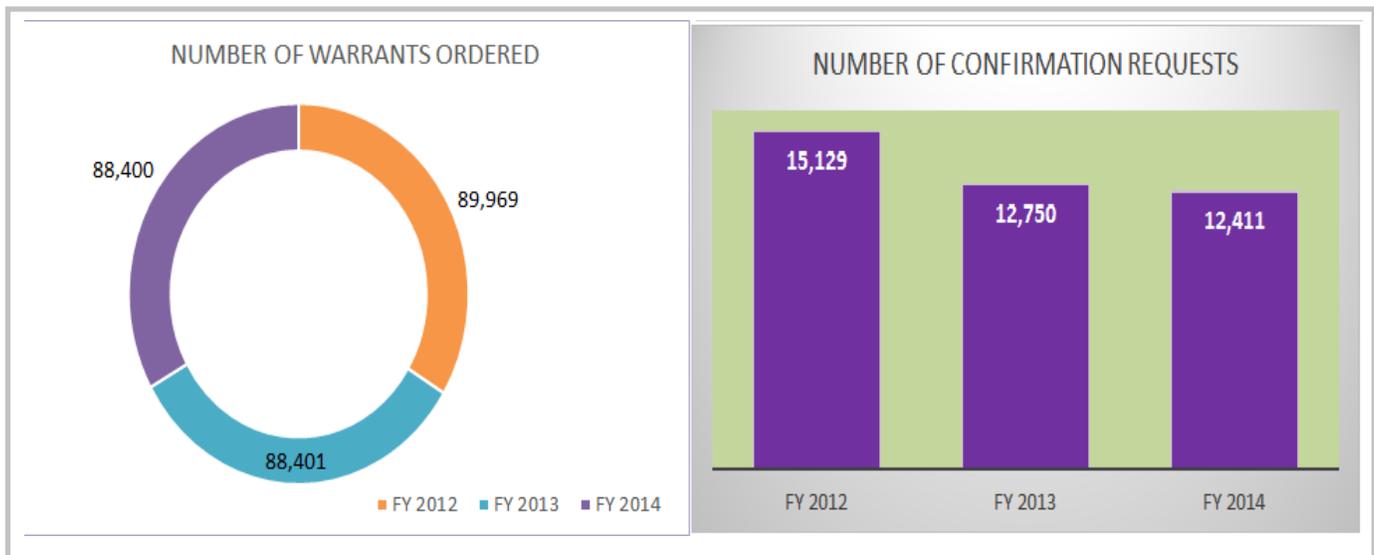
## WARRANT PROCESSING

The purpose of Warrant Processing is to prepare warrant paperwork for judicial review and to confirm the existence of valid arrest warrants for peace officers so that defendants who fail to appear or comply with orders of the court are subject to arrest. The unit is also responsible for creating the legal charging instrument (complaints) documents on cases and reporting of violations for non-residents of the State of Texas.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* 12,411 requests to confirm arrest warrants were received and processed compared to 12,750 last fiscal year; a 2.7% decrease.
- \* 88,400 warrants were produced in FY 2014 compared to 88,401 in FY 2013.
- \* 503 Non-Resident Violator Compact cases were processed compared to 467 last fiscal year; an increase of 7.7%.



### Accomplishments:

---

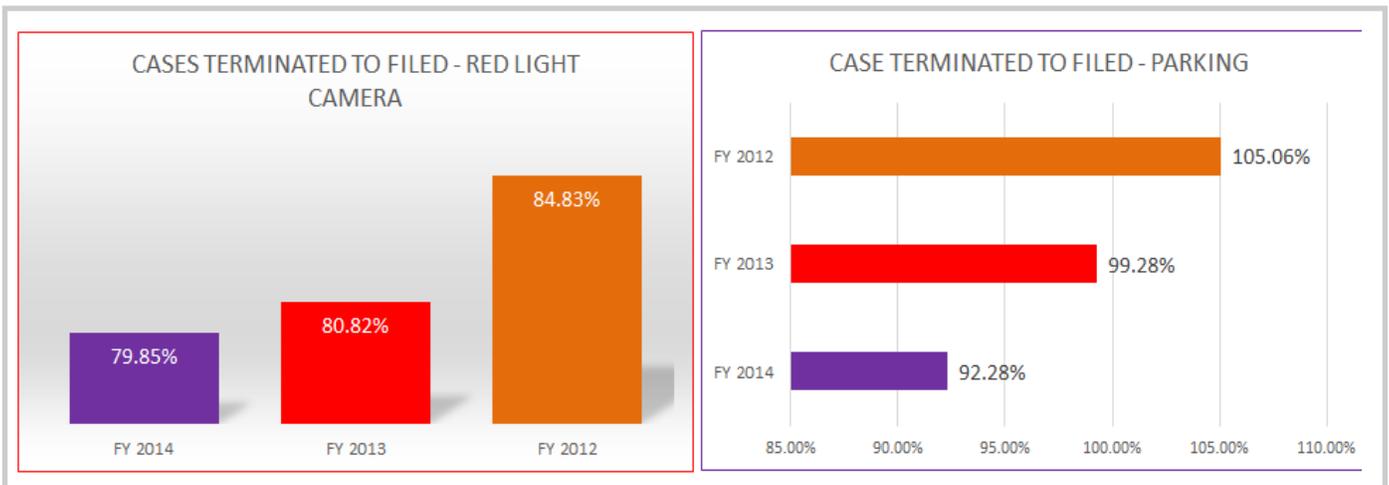
- \* Probable cause affidavit language was created for approximately 220 charge codes eliminating a backlog of several hundred cases.
- \* The number of cases waiting for warrants to be issued was reduced by 20%.
- \* Daily tracking of production by each clerk was initiated to monitor and increase productivity.
- \* A new electronic audit form was created to better track accuracy of new case creation.

## CIVIL ADMINISTRATION

The purpose of Civil Administration is to fairly and impartially administer justice for visitors and citizens of Austin who have received citations for parking or red light camera violations so that due process is achieved. All red light camera cases and most parking cases are handled as civil cases as opposed to as criminal cases and punishment is limited. Persons wishing to contest their cases appear before Hearing Officers instead of Judges. Appeals of their decisions are made the Municipal Court judges.

### Performance Highlights:

- \* 172,462 parking cases were filed in FY 2014 compared to 167,648 last fiscal year; an increase of 2.8%. And 181,180 parking cases were closed this fiscal year compared to 166,445 last year, an increase of 8.8%.
- \* 12,512 red light camera cases were filed compared to 9,200 in FY 2013; an increase of 36%. And 9,991 red light camera cases were closed this fiscal year compared to 7,435 last year; an increase of 34.3%.
- \* 12,392 out-of-state parking cases were filed this fiscal year compared to 11,188 last year; an increase of 10.8%.
- \* 3,139 parking hearings were held compared to 3,390 last fiscal year; a decrease of 7.4%. And 139 red light camera hearings were held compared to 79 last fiscal year. an increase of 75.9%



### Accomplishments:

- \* Two staff members were cross-trained as back-up hearing officers for better customer service. Hearings are conducted between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- \* Electronic notification for officers to appear for parking hearings was implemented. This was a great improvement over the mail notification process.
- \* Discussions were initiated with rental car companies to resolve large numbers of delinquent cases. Thus far, one payment of \$6,000+ has been received toward that goal.

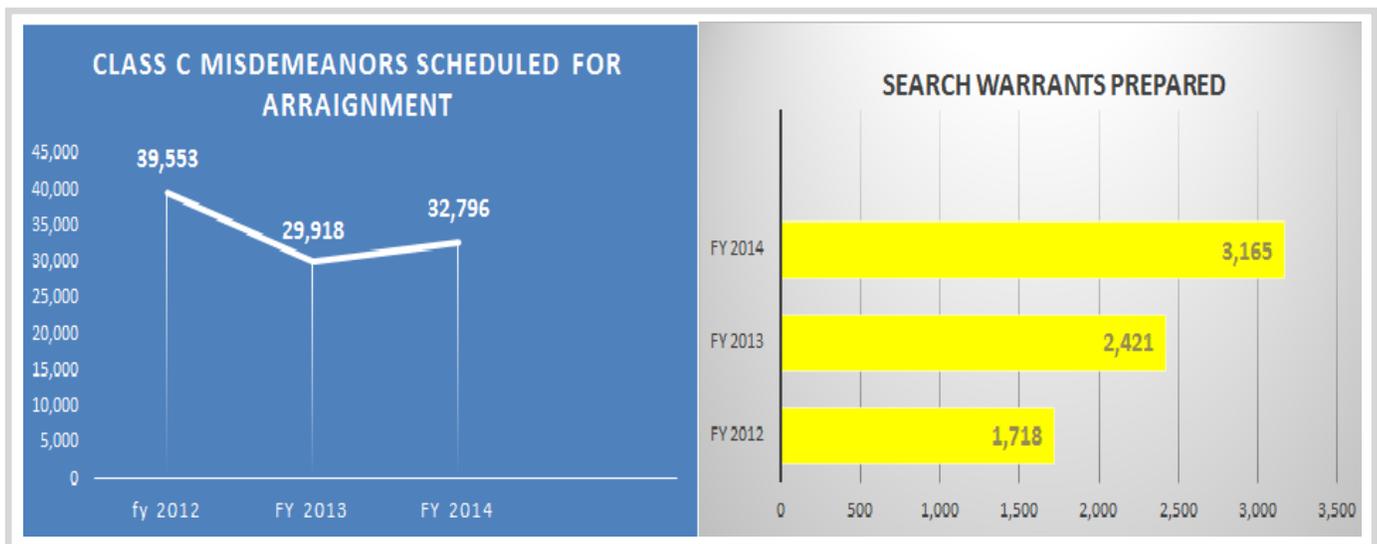
## CENTRAL BOOKING SUPPORT

The purpose of Central Booking Support is to prepare documents for judges, law enforcement officers and the public so that magistration and arraignment are accomplished at the jail. Magistration consists of advising arrestees of the charges against them and the amount of their bond, if any. Arraignment is the acceptance of pleas on class c misdemeanors. Unit personnel ensure that those arrested and brought to the Travis County jail are magisterated within 24 hours. These services are provided twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* 32,296 class c misdemeanors were prepared for arraignment compared to 29,918 last fiscal year; an increase of 7.9%.
- \* 3,165 search warrants were prepared for issuance by judges compared to 2,221 the previous fiscal year; an increase of 42.5%.
- \* 63,948 higher charges (other than class c misdemeanors) were prepared for magistration compared to 64,031 the previous year; a decrease of 0.1%.



### Accomplishments:

---

- \* Processes and procedures were streamlined to expedite case updating, allowing for quicker release of arrestees.
- \* Smaller equipment was obtained for better use of limited work space.
- \* Employees were cross-trained in other areas of the Court for increased efficiency and knowledge.

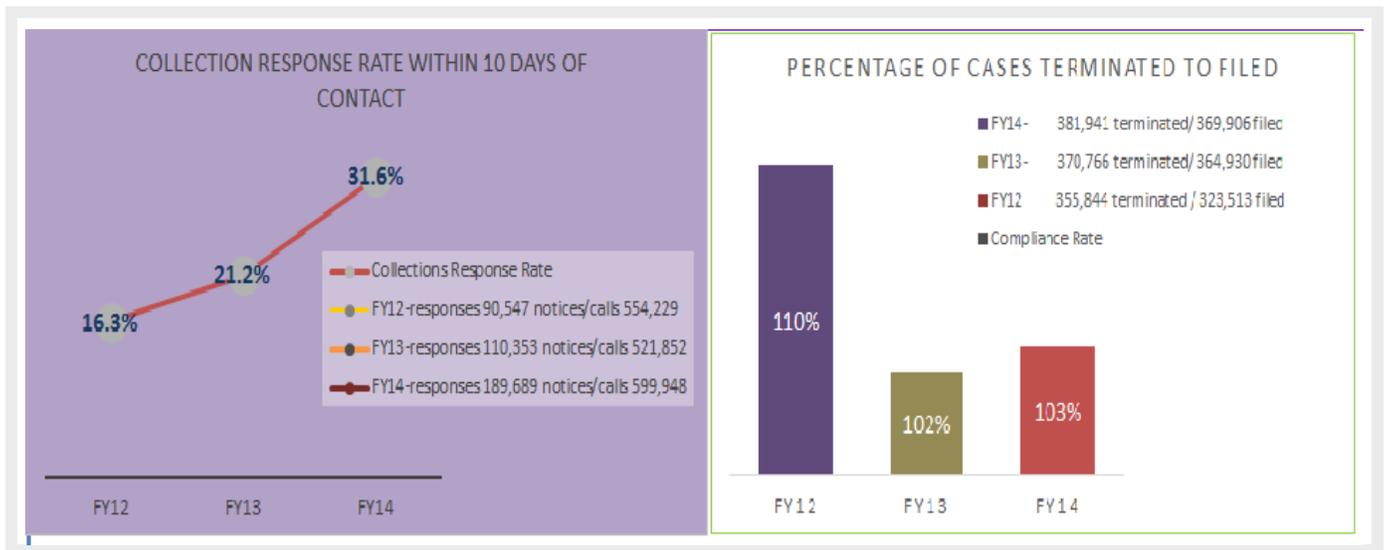
## COLLECTION SERVICES

The purpose of Collection Services is to locate and contact defendants for the Court so that compliance with court obligations is achieved and mandated program guidelines are followed.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* \$237,506 was collected from manual outbound collection calls compared to \$139,578 in FY 2013; an increase of 70.2%.
- \* More than \$240,000 was collected within 10 days following implementation of the unit's **new** warrant dialer calls.
- \* 189,689 responses were received within 10 days of all dialer calls compared to 110,353 last fiscal year; an increase of 71.9%. This includes one additional campaign.



### Accomplishments:

---

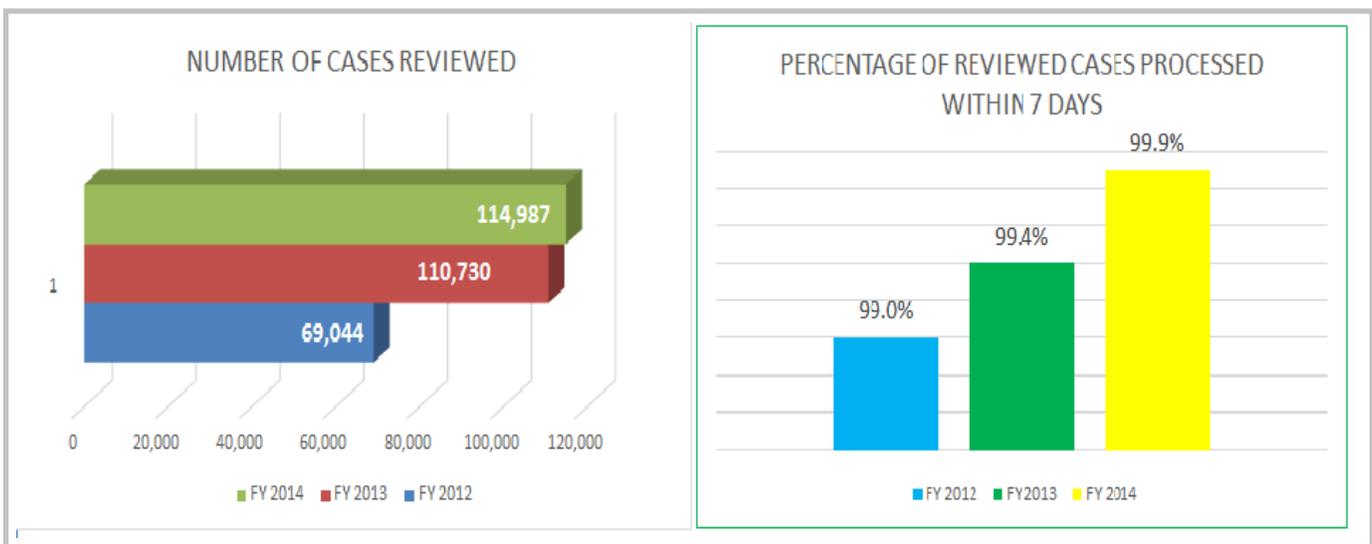
- \* Two clerks were added to the unit that resulted in a 20% increase in collection payments.
- \* A new automatic telephone message focusing on newly issued warrant cases was implemented.
- \* The notices mailed by the Court's collection vendor were revised to enhance clarity.
- \* The unit maintained an accuracy rating of over 90% on meeting the elements of the State mandated collections program.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

The purpose of Quality Assurance is to promote the accuracy and efficiency of court operations through case review, error correction, training, process analysis, and development of new procedure to improve the efficient administration of justice for staff and customers. Quality Assurance also manages reporting and information requests.

### Performance Highlights:

- \* 114,987 cases were reviewed to ensure elements for deferred dispositions, driving safety courses and dismissals are met prior to judicial consideration compared to 110,730 cases last year; an increase of 3.8%.
- \* 440 hours of training were provided in 117 sessions for 452 students. This is compared to 216 hours of training in 88 sessions last year.
- \* Modified or created 79 operational work processes compared to last year's 68.; an increase of 11 or 16.2%.



### Accomplishments:

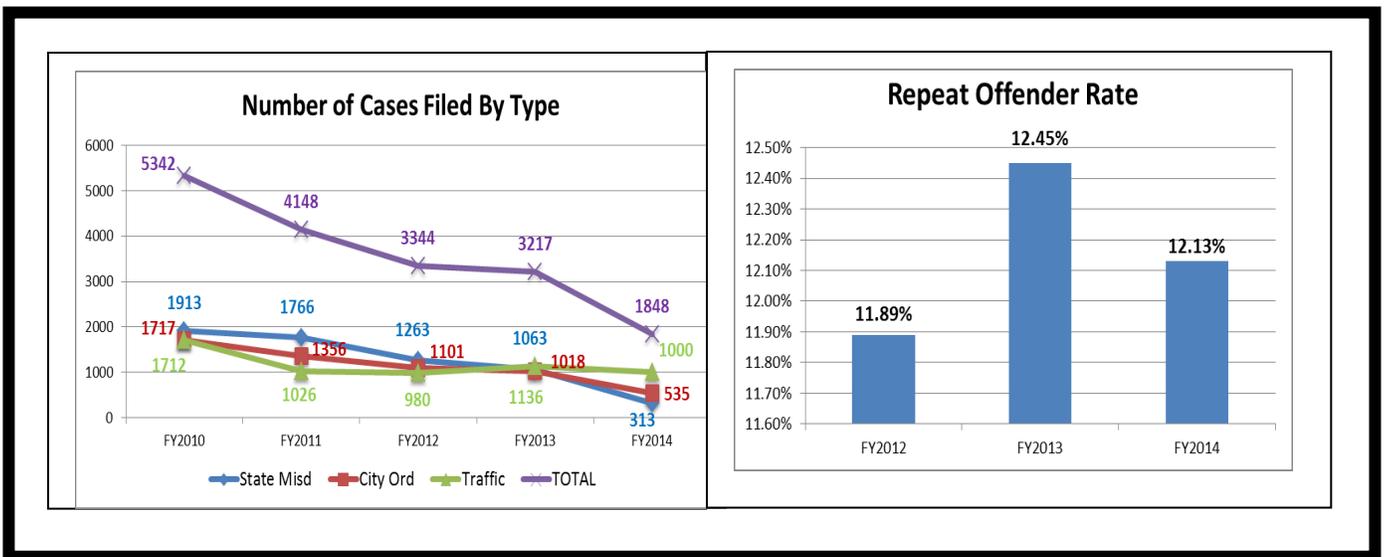
- \* New procedures were developed and court staff trained for a major revision of how deferred dispositions and driving safety courses are recorded in the Court's case management system. This allowed for more online payments.
- \* The unit continued to develop requirements for a major upgrade to the Court's case management system.
- \* The support structure was created for the new Youth Diversion Program in the case management system, to include setting up a new "agency", processes, workflows, codes and report.
- \* The unit perfected the required Office of Court Administration monthly case statistical report.

## YOUTH SERVICES

The purpose of Youth Services is to provide for the administration of juvenile cases so that youthful offenders are held accountable for their actions and do not re-offend.

### Performance Highlights:

- \* 1,848 juvenile cases were filed in FY 2014 compared to 3,217 the previous fiscal year; a decrease of 74.1%. This was mainly due to the creation of a diversion program where cases are not filed in the court unless the juvenile and parents do not successfully complete a voluntary diversion program.
- \* The FY2014 recidivism rate was 12.13% compared to 12.45% last fiscal year; a slight decrease of 0.32%.



### Accomplishments:

- \* Effective April 1, 2014, all juvenile cases except parking and traffic are reviewed by prosecutors for approval to participate in the Austin Youth Diversion Program. If the juveniles and parents choose to participate in the program and successfully complete all elements of their personalized plans, their cases will not be filed in the court. 724 cases have been initiated in the Austin Youth Diversion and 232 were subsequently filed in the Municipal Court for various reasons.
- \* New legislation requiring that juvenile information be kept confidential was implemented by "sealing" the cases.
- \* The process for juvenile expunctions was streamlined to make it easier for a juvenile to complete the application and the order easier to understand.

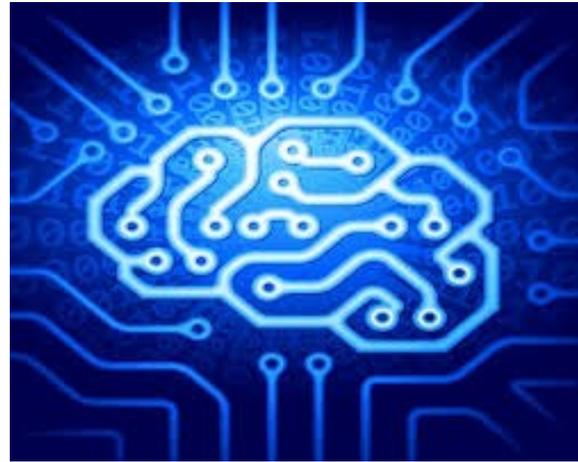
## SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services is comprised of four units, two which are financial. The purpose, major performance measures and accomplishments follow.

### Financial Services



### Information Technology Services



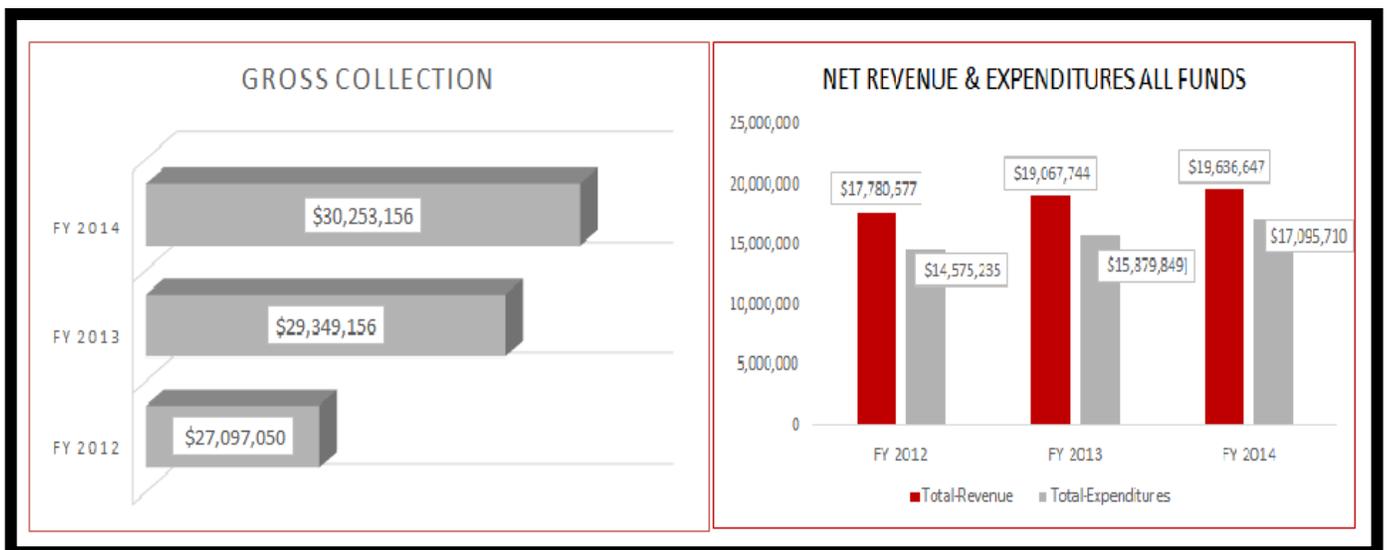
### Human Resources

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

The purpose of Financial Services is to ensure funds are budgeted, expensed, and collected accurately and efficiently to safeguard the financial health of the organization so that the department's goals can be attained

### Performance Highlights:

- \* Gross collections totaled \$30,253,156 in FY 2014 compared to \$29,349,156 the prior fiscal year; a 3.1% increase.
- \* Revenue (non-GASB, all funds) totaled \$19,636,647 a 3% increase for FY 2014 compared to \$19,067,744 in FY 2013.
- \* Expenditures (all funds) totaled \$17,095,710 in FY 2014 compared to \$15,879,849 in FY 2013, an increase of 7.7%.



### Accomplishments:

- \* Budget training was provided to Court managers and supervisors.
- \* Recognition was received from the City for development of a contract compliance manual.
- \* Reports were created to monitor refunds so that customers receive their checks in a timely manner.
- \* Reports and a database were created for enhanced random auditing and monitoring of cash handling, case payments and performance measures.

Note: Additional financial information was provided under Budget Revenue and Expense beginning on page 18.

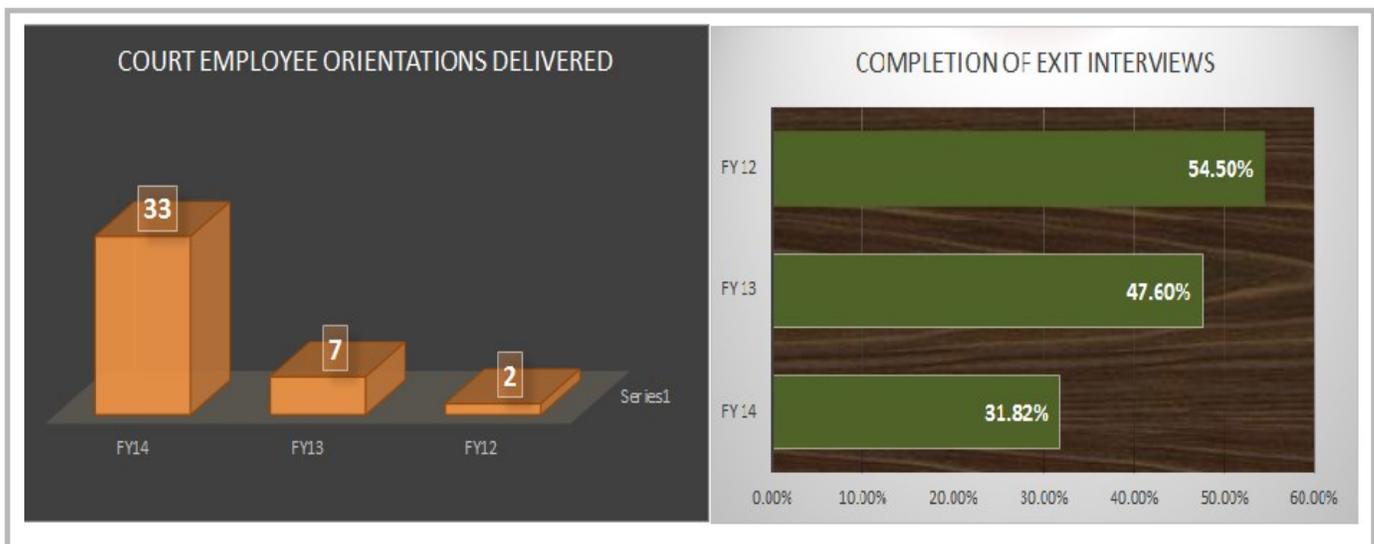
## HUMAN RESOURCES

The purpose of Human Resources is to ensure compliance with federal and state laws as well as the policies of the City of Austin and Municipal Court for consistent, accurate and appropriate application in personnel actions. The unit provides timely management and administration of employee relations matters, employment, compensation, benefits, FMLA, Workers Compensation, ADA, timekeeping and training for all Municipal Court employees.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* 31.82% of separating employees completed the exit interview compared to 20.97% citywide.
- \* 40 employees are receiving bilingual pay in FY 2014 compared to 42 last fiscal year.
- \* 177 Court employees completed their minimum required training (16 hours annually) compared to 175 last fiscal year.
- \* Court Employee Orientations for new employees increased from 7 in FY 2013 to 33 in FY 2014.
- \* Personnel Grievances remained at 0 for both years.



### Accomplishments:

---

- \* Unit staff were trained on the new Municipal Civil Services rules and trained supervisors and managers on the same.
- \* Unit staff hosted Wellness events such as on-site Health Assessment and flu vaccinations.
- \* Unit staff re-designed and updated the Court Employee Orientation presentation and significantly increased the frequency it was presented.

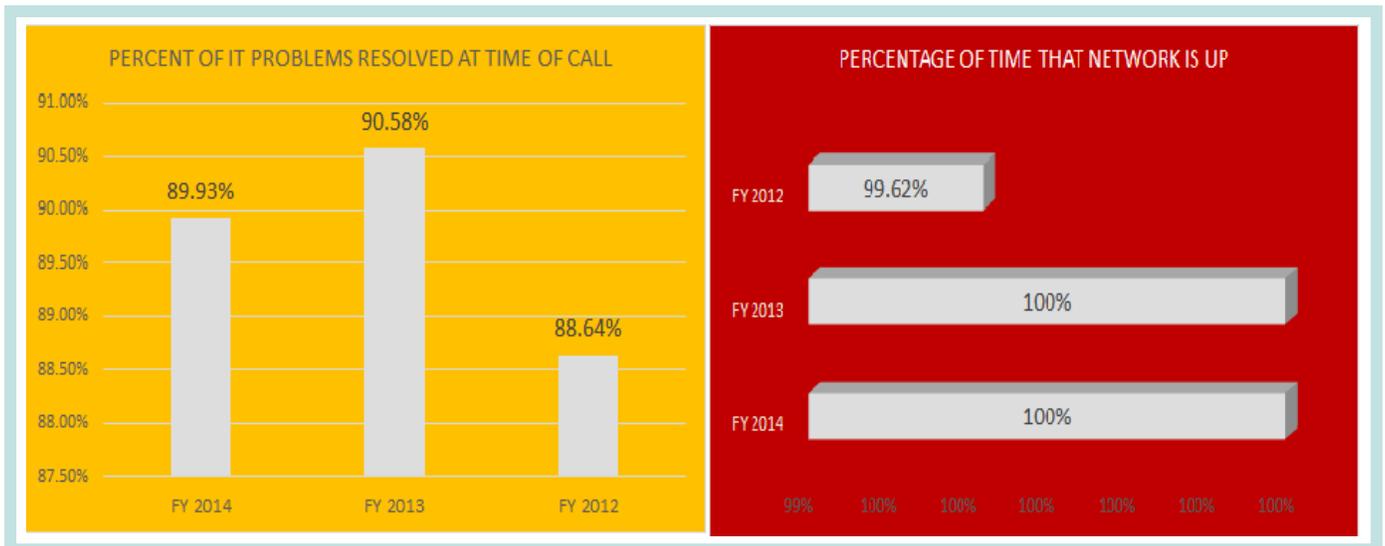
## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

The purpose of Information Technology Services is to provide network interconnectivity, computer hardware and software support, and information technology planning for the department to produce and communicate information.

### Performance Highlights:

---

- \* Payments taken on the Court's public website totaled \$7,875,951 for FY 2014 and \$6,728,759 for FY 2013; an increase of 17.0%.
- \* 4,994 calls were taken by the Help Desk compared to 6,995 last fiscal year; a 28.6% decrease. Note: Some duties previously performed by this unit were transferred to the Quality Assurance unit.
- \* 175 Queries/Programs were created for FY 2014.



### Accomplishments:

---

- \* A new IBM server was purchased and installed which increased system performance and reduced issues throughout the court with the Case Management System.
- \* For The Record, court reporting recording software, was fully implemented in all the courtrooms.
- \* "Green" PC's were rolled out to reduce electrical usage and potential waste.
- \* Phase 1 of the E-citation electronic ticket writer project completed.
- \* Video surveillance of the court taken over from the Austin Police Department.
- \* Staff was trained in the City's Enterprise Architecture methodology.

## DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY COURT

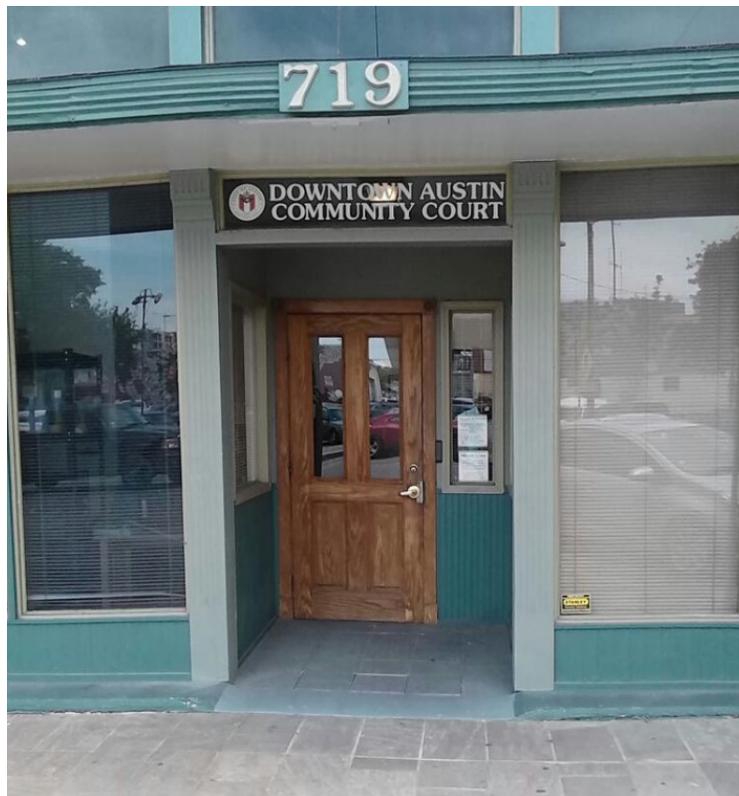
The Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) was established in 1999. It was the eighth community court established in the United States and the first established in Texas.

The purpose of the DACC is to collaboratively address the quality of life issues of all residents in the downtown Austin community through the swift, creative sentencing of public order offenders.

The court operates as a problem solving and rehabilitative court and provides referrals to supportive services for offenders. A majority of the offenses adjudicated through DACC are committed by defendants who are homeless, and a disproportionate number of offenses are committed by a small number of defendants who cycle through the criminal justice system at a high cost to all community services systems.

The DACC initially focused on the downtown area; 44% of public order offenses committed in Austin occurred in this area. After successfully handling of the downtown area, the city added East Austin and the West Campus area to the Community Court's jurisdiction.

More information is available at [www.austintexas.gov/department/community-court](http://www.austintexas.gov/department/community-court).



## THE FUTURE

Municipal Court has several projects on which it will concentrate in FY 2013-14 and future years.

- \* A new courthouse was included in the 2006 bond election; however, funding has been inadequate to complete the project. The city will retain a Development Analyst to assist with funding alternatives.
- \* A few years ago, Court was notified by its case management software vendor, CSDC, that support for the current version of the software (JEMS 6.0) will be discontinued in a few years. Since then, Court has been meeting regularly to develop requirements for the new system and, in FY 2013, funding was approved during the IT Governance process. Court anticipates a development contract with CSDC during FY 2015 so that the upgraded software will be ready to implement in 2016 or 2017. Numerous enhancements are being planning including a much expanded ability to handle cases online.
- \* The 84<sup>th</sup> Legislature will meet in 2015 with bills being filed beginning in November 2014. Prior to that time, Court will work the city's Government Services Office, the Texas Court Clerks Association, the Texas Municipal Courts Association, the Texas Municipal Lead and other courts around the state toward satisfactory legislative results.
- \* The Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) will begin using JEMS, the Municipal Court's case management system in FY 2015. DACC staff will be trained on how to use JEMS and finalize the court's business processes. Final testing will occur at the beginning of the year with a transition to production occurring shortly thereafter. DACC will incorporate the E-citation piece of the Municipal Court's Case management system which will allow for DACC to receive electronic tickets greatly reducing the time it currently takes for paper citations to reach the downtown court.
- \* New electronic processes are needed and will be implemented for processing requests for jail credit, public information requests and checking the validity of community service documentation.
- \* Court will work with the Prosecutors of the Law Department to pilot a "walk-in" process and, if successful, implement the program.
- \* Court will work with other Departments to expand the e-citation program.
- \* Court will look for more skip-tracing tools in order to find people with delinquent cases.
- \* Court intends to look into texting notices to defendants as opposed to or to supplement mailed or telephoned notices.
- \* Court intends to get the names of registered owners for parking cases more quickly so that rental vehicle companies and Cars to Go can process them faster.
- \* Court will continue to add to services and/or information provided online.