



District Court

Expenditures	2003	2004	2005	2006
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
Salaries & Wages	1,267,698	1,251,598	1,326,580	1,299,593
Personnel Benefits	244,921	253,607	281,796	301,634
Supplies	67,220	51,960	91,423	56,500
Other Services & Charges	377,857	406,300	441,373	399,954
Total	1,957,696	1,963,465	2,141,172	2,057,681
Staffing / FTE	30.90	27.40	27.40	27.33

[Revenues](#)
[Expenditures](#)

Program Description:

The District Court provides limited jurisdiction court services for Yakima County residents. The Court hears a wide variety of civil and criminal cases.

District Court has jurisdiction over crimes punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$5,000 fine. Criminal matters include driving under the influence of alcohol, thefts of property or service valued at \$250 or less, domestic violence assaults and protection order violations, hit and run, and driving with a suspended license and violations of hunting and fishing laws. The Court also hears traffic and non-traffic infractions such as tickets for speeding and driving without insurance that are punishable only by a financial penalty.

Most of the criminal and infraction cases are filed by the Washington State Patrol or the Yakima County Sheriff's Office.

District Court also hears civil matters such as damage claims for personal injury, property damage, and breach of contract for amounts up to \$50,000. The Court also hears small claim cases up to \$4,000, civil anti-harassment actions, name changes, and certain lien foreclosures.

The mission of the Yakima County Courts is to:

Provide effective and timely resolution of legal matters, assuring dignified and fair treatment to all participants while promoting respect for the justice system and maintaining the independence of the judiciary.

Major Objectives:

- Continue to provide quality services to the citizens of Yakima County with the limited resources allotted.
- Maximized the ability to handle caseloads within reasonable time frames absent adequate staffing levels and financial resources for operations to implement modern programs targeted at improved services.

Revenue/Expenditure Comment:

District Court operations are governed by state statute and constitutional requirements. Most expenses are beyond the control of the Court.

In order to increase efficiencies and reduce costs to the taxpayers, the Court shares its Court Administrator with Superior Court. This unprecedented administrative consolidation has been widely recognized as a model for other courts around the state. Compared to 16 other counties like Yakima in size, demographics and income, Yakima County District Court averages far fewer staff, far more cases per capita and higher crime rates than any of these comparable counties.

District Court aggressively enforces financial sanctions through collections outsourcing and an expanded method of payment (i.e. credit cards and payment drop box).