

2026



Legislative Reference Bureau

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CITY OF MILWAUKEE  
**MUNICIPAL COURT**

# MUNICIPAL COURT



## 2026 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

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Budget Hearing: 2:00 pm on Wednesday, October 15, 2025

# Municipal Court

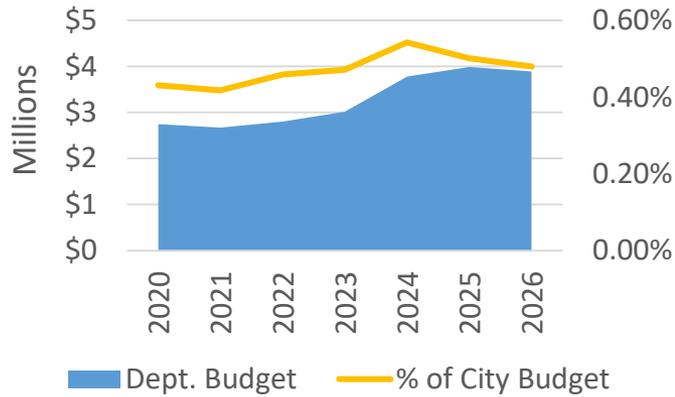
**\$3,890,813**  
Proposed 2026 Budget

**-\$93,630**  
Overall Change from 2025

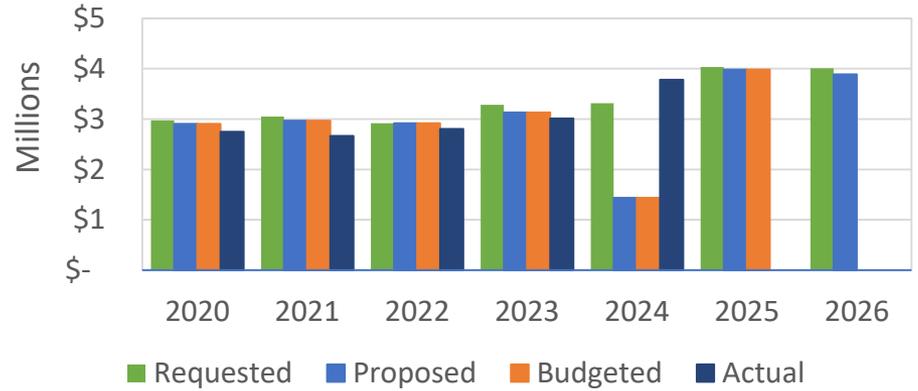
**-\$118,413**  
Difference from Requested

**\$4,009,226**  
Requested 2026 Budget

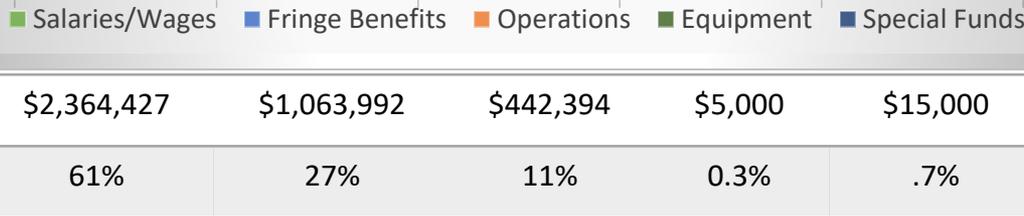
## Total Departmental Budget



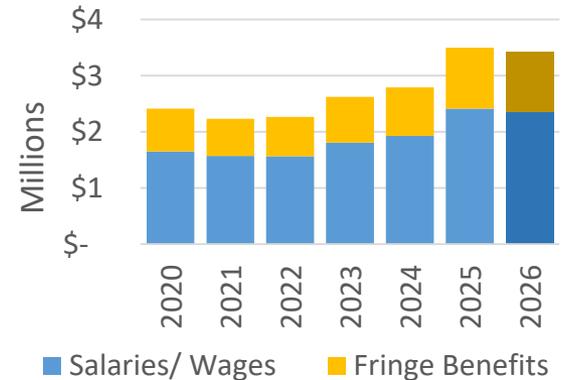
## Comparative Funding



## Levy Departmental Budget Appropriation by Category



## Personnel Budget



# Municipal Court

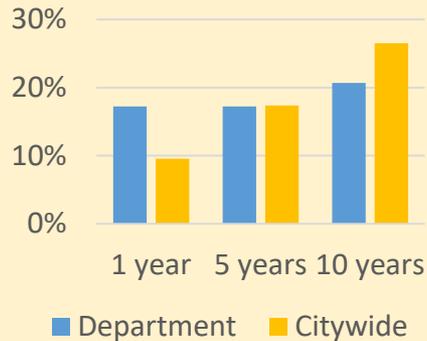
**-2%**

Percentage decrease in Salaries and Wages.

**-\$48,292**

Change in Salaries and Wages from 2025.

## Retirement Eligible



<b>-1</b> Change in Positions	<b>0%</b> % Change in Positions
<b>3</b> Current Vacancies	<b>1</b> Voluntary Separations in 2025

## Staffing Vacancies

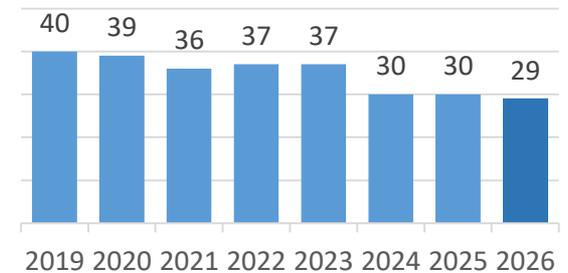
The Department currently has 3 vacancies, one of which is being eliminated in the 2026 Budget:

- One Court Accounting Assistant. Recruitment closed. Rating process of applicants has begun.
- One Court Applications & Software Developer. Recruitment closed. Rating process of applicants has begun.
- One Court Services Assistant II. This position is unfunded in 2026.

## Staffing Update

**Eliminated:**  
One Court Services Assistant II

## Department Positions



# Municipal Court

**-54%**

Decrease in revenues from 2014 (\$6,016,878) to 2024 (\$2,762,703).

**-55%**

Decrease in case filings from 2014 (79,300) to 2024 (35,355).

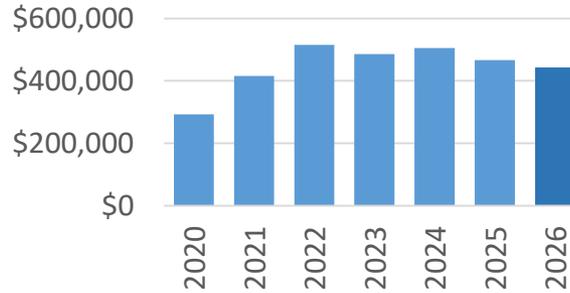
**495**

The number of cases heard during 24 scheduled Night Court sessions in 2024. These cases represent 348 individual defendants. This is up slightly from 2023.

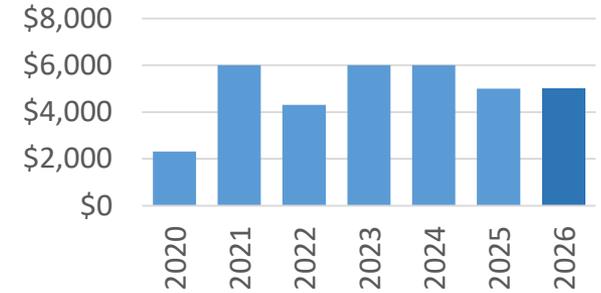
**88**

Number of Health-related cases filed as of September in 2025. This already exceeds the 74 from 2024, which was itself higher than previous years, discounting 2021, where cases reached 186

## Operating Expenditures Budget



## Equipment Budget



### Revenue

The Proposed Budget anticipates revenue of \$818,000 from Charges for Services and \$2,000,000 from Forfeitures, for total revenue of \$2,818,000. This is \$684,100 less than projected 2025 revenues.

### Special Purpose Accounts

Intervention Program	\$243,500
Care of Prisoners Fund	\$1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$244,500</b>

### Grants

This department has no grant funding.

### Capital Programs and Projects

The 2026 capital budget allocates \$370,000 for the Court's new case management system. The vendor has been selected, and the project will start in Q1 2026.

Anticipated completion in Q1 of 2028.

## 1.7

The average number of drivers license suspensions lifted per individual in 2024. (YTD 6,136 lifted suspensions for 3,585 individuals).

## -43.4%

The decrease in traffic-related court filings from 2013 (48,359) to 2023 (27,353).

## 612

Number of reckless driving cases in 2024. This is down slightly from 632 in 2023.

## 10

Number of Community Court sessions held in 2025, not including the VA. This represents 63 individual cases. The Court anticipates over 20 sessions in 2026.

### Remote Library Sessions

This is a new initiative. Last year, the Court worked with the Library to put together a memorandum of understanding for defendants to reserve and use conference rooms and laptops at 4 branch locations of the Library for the purpose of attending a virtual court sessions.

Participating branch locations were:

- Atkinson
- Center Street
- Mitchell Street
- Washington Park

During the sessions, defendants have internet access and a private space at to conduct their court business. The MOU was based on a pilot, 3-month program.

The Court and Library mutually agreed to keep this as an ongoing program in order to expand access for a mutually beneficial purpose. The program both increases access for defendants and serves the Library's mission to provide resources to residents.

### Previously Awarded Capital Requests

IT Infrastructure and Courtroom Updates:

- Windows 11 laptop rollout is on schedule for completion in 2025 Q4.
- Existing case management system is accessible as a virtual.
- The Court's server room is being decommissioned. Servers are being relocated to MPD's server room in the PAB.

SQL Migration, Website Upgrade, and Case Management Software Replacement:

- Previous goals, including the migration to Microsoft SQL and website updates, were successfully completed.
- Remaining funds are now being allocated to the Court's new management system.

### Anticipated Increase in Caseload

The Court does not create its own caseload, that is dependent on citations, which have been going down in recent years. However, the overwhelming majority of cases that do come to the Court are traffic cases. Due to renewed, City-initiated efforts to combat reckless driving, the Court anticipates there will be a corresponding increase in traffic caseloads in 2026, which will increase the overall caseload, despite recent trends.

# Municipal Court

## Key Performance Measures

Measure	2024 Actual	2025 Projected	2026 Planned
Number of cases filed	35,355	36,050	41,000
Judgments	30,664	40,479	45,000
Motor vehicle dispositions	48,339	32,495	45,000
Courtroom appearances	14,311	15,461	16,000
Cases Processed	95,592	99,173	110,000
Records requests & background checks	1,798	1,600	1,600
Number of enforced driver's license suspensions lifted	3,585	3,746	3,600

## Court Cases and Defendants

The Municipal Court collects data on the number of court appearances each year. This measures each instance of court employees interacting with a defendant and a case, so it does not measure individual cases or defendants, but instead Municipal Court personnel workload (for example, the same case and defendant could be counted as pre-trial, trial, and further proceedings).

Since 2018, the number of case appearances dealt with by the Municipal Court has fallen substantially, from 80,870 cases and 29,395 defendant appearances in 2018, to 16,392 cases and 10,947 defendants in 2023. Cases were up slightly in 2024, up to 14,311, while the number of defendants was down to 9,344.

### Municipal Court Filings 2014-2024

