

## Justice Court

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### Department Overview

Gallatin County has two Justice Courts, Department 1 and Department 2, each one administered by a full-time Justice of the Peace Judge. Justice Court is the venue responsible for original jurisdiction of all civil and criminal cases outside the city limits of Bozeman. The two courts provide an effective and efficient court system for the residents of the County through dedicated staff and efficient management, while being fiscally responsible within the allocated budget.

Gallatin County Justice Court is divided into three divisions: Criminal, Civil and Small Claims. Each Department handles all divisions. Below is a brief overview of each of the divisions:

The criminal division handles citations issued by the Gallatin County Sheriff's Office, Fish and Game, Highway Patrol, Airport and the Department of Transportation. The Court is also responsible for seeing people making their initial appearance on felony charges.

The civil division of Justice Court handles orders of protections, landlord/tenant disputes and contract disputes. The amount in dispute cannot exceed \$12,000.

Justice Court's small claims division handles contracts involving the recovery of money or recovery of specific personal property. The total amount cannot exceed \$7,000.

Given the potential of the sizeable workload increase of civil and criminal matters, Justice Court will need to continue to operate with two (2) full-time Justice of the Peace Judges for FY 2015. However, the two courts have historically operated below the authorized budget for personnel and operations since the establishment of two full-time judges in FY 2005.

### Department Goals

- To increase the quality of services through education, training, and technology.
- Ensure staff is helpful, friendly, and accurate in their dealings with the public.
- More efficient use of video arraignments via VisionNet© and SKYPE whenever appropriate.
- Increase training for department.
- Move forward in implementing technology into the courts' operations as it becomes feasible and applicable.

### Recent Accomplishments

- Worked with the Gallatin County Sheriff's Office to open the lines of communication and ensure all paperwork for Orders for Protection is carried out efficiently and correctly.
- Implemented additional training for the Supervisors.
- Implementation of Overdue Processing, a computer program that expedites collections of over-due fines.
- Coordinated with FWP and Sheriff Department to have FWP Warrants be issued and entered in the database through the Sheriff Department for Fish, Wildlife & Parks.
- Implemented new in-put process for Airport Parking citations for expedient collection of Gallatin Valley Airport parking fines.
- Increased general fund revenue by collecting on bad-debt cases 5 years or older.
- Activation of comprehensive case management software with jury module to accelerate the yearly jury-summons process.
- Increased use of Community Mediation Center in civil cases, resulting in an 85% settlement rate.

# GENERAL GOVERNMENT

## Justice Court

### Department Budget

Object of Expenditure	Actual FY 2013	Final FY 2014	Actual FY 2014	Request FY 2015	Preliminary FY 2015	Final FY 2015
Personnel	\$ 534,700	\$ 580,786	\$ 567,721	\$ 665,517	\$ 650,015	\$ 650,751
Operations	123,728	130,199	140,276	132,152	132,152	132,152
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Outlay	3,903	6,555	7,516	7,500	7,500	8,500
Transfers Out	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 662,331</b>	<b>\$ 717,540</b>	<b>\$ 715,513</b>	<b>\$ 805,169</b>	<b>\$ 789,667</b>	<b>\$ 791,403</b>

#### Budget by Fund Group

General Fund	\$ 662,331	\$ 717,540	\$ 715,513	\$ 805,169	\$ 789,667	\$ 790,403
Special Revenue Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Debt Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Project Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enterprise Funds	-	-	-	-	-	1,000
Internal Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trust & Agency Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 662,331</b>	<b>\$ 717,540</b>	<b>\$ 715,513</b>	<b>\$ 805,169</b>	<b>\$ 789,667</b>	<b>\$ 791,403</b>

#### Funding Sources

Tax Revenues	\$ 218,754	\$ 197,901	\$ 193,943	\$ 193,416	\$ 193,726	\$ 183,544
Non-Tax Revenues	69,800	467,403	471,953	534,263	497,794	540,246
Cash Reappropriated	373,777	55,235	49,617	77,490	98,147	67,613
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 662,331</b>	<b>\$ 720,539</b>	<b>\$ 715,513</b>	<b>\$ 805,169</b>	<b>\$ 789,667</b>	<b>\$ 791,403</b>

### Department Personnel

No. of Positions	FT/PT	Title	FTE 2013	FTE 2014	FTE 2015
2	Full-Time	Justice of the Peace	2.00	2.00	2.00
1	Full-Time	Executive Assistant	1.00	1.00	1.00
1	Full-Time	Management Supervisor	0.00	1.00	1.00
8	Full-Time	Justice Court Clerks	8.00	7.00	8.00
12		Total Program	11.00	11.00	12.00

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2015 Budget Highlights

Personnel

- Addition of one court support position

Operations

- No changes to operations

Capital

- Copier Reserve \$1,000
- Equipment Reserve \$5,000
- Desk \$2,500

County Commission Goals/Department Response

The County Commission established a set of overarching goals for the County government. Listed below are the goals, followed by the methods by which the Department is striving to fulfill those goals.

Align community needs with budgetary decisions

- Continually seek efficiencies and cost-saving measures while maintaining an elevated level of customer service.

Adhere to long-term plans

- Anticipate and adapt to increasing workload as the County population increases.

Demonstrate exceptional Customer Service

- Customer service in a courteous, professional and friendly manner.
- Prompt, accurate and timely processing of cases filed.
- Civil Judgments entered in a timely manner.
- General Temporary Orders of Protection are ruled upon and issued on the same date they are received in court.

Serve as a Model for Excellence in Government

- Effective, efficient court easily accessible to the public.

Improve communication within county government, other jurisdictions and our public

- Access to website.

Be an Employer of Choice and improve employee retention

- Provide professional development to staff.

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Workload Indicators / Performance Measures

<b>Workload Indicators</b>		<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Projected</b>
<b>Indicator</b>		<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
1.	Cases filed	7,991	7,090	7,300	7,373
2.	Court collections	\$69,810.69	\$73,150.69	\$74,800.00	\$75,000

<b>Performance Measures</b>		<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Projected</b>
<b>Measure</b>		<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
1.	Number of Orders for Protection filed	142	149	168	148
2.	Jury Trials Scheduled	150	78	139	145
3.	Average In-Custody Appearances		780	890	900
4.	Average number of cases handled in Open Court		1,872	2,976	2,550
5.	Omnibus Hearings		2,080	728	780
6.	Change of Plea Hearings		728	2,080	2,080
7.	Mediations		104	208	208

**Comments**