

# MUNICIPAL COURT

## MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Cedar Hill Municipal Court is to process cases in an efficient and impartial manner; promoting the highest standards in customer service.

## CORE FUNCTIONS:

- 1) **Process Class-C Misdemeanor cases** – Document and maintain case activity
- 2) **Prepare and maintain trial dockets** – Coordinate and schedule individual cases
- 3) **Enforce compliance of court orders** – Issue and serve warrants, summons and subpoenas
- 4) **Promote the highest standards of customer service** - Continuously strive to enhance customer service practices

## 2014 - 2015 WORK PLAN

### CORE FUNCTION: #1 Process Class-C Misdemeanor cases

#### Action:

- Document and maintain case activity for approximately 7,000 new cases annually

#### Activity Measurement:

- Enter citations into the Municipal Court System on same day of case(s) being filed
- Record and prepare citation deposit payments within one business day
- Monitor and dispose of pending cases weekly
- Process warrants within ten days of delinquency
- Update web payments daily
- Process incoming mail, jail documents and Protective Orders daily

#### Meets City Council's Premier Statement:

Cedar Hill is Safe.

**SUMMARY - MUNICIPAL COURT**

EXPENDITURES	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	EST.	FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015		
	FYE 12	FYE 13	FYE 14	CONTINUED	GROWTH	PROPOSED
Personnel	\$ 447,769	\$ 488,610	\$ 500,830	\$ 519,975	\$ 519,975	\$ 519,975
Supplies	10,281	9,250	9,800	9,650	9,650	9,650
Maintenance	6,365	5,671	8,700	8,700	8,700	8,700
Services	69,498	62,720	74,650	75,850	75,850	75,850
Utilities	2,853	2,711	5,010	4,375	4,375	4,375
Leases/Rentals	-	-	3,875	3,875	8,785	3,875
Sundry	5,685	6,503	9,350	9,650	9,650	9,650
<b>TOTAL Dept. Budget</b>	<b>\$ 542,451</b>	<b>\$ 575,465</b>	<b>\$ 612,215</b>	<b>\$ 632,075</b>	<b>\$ 636,985</b>	<b>\$ 632,075</b>

STAFFING	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	EST.	FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015		
	FYE 12	FYE 13	FYE 14	CONTINUED	GROWTH	PROPOSED
Court Administrator	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Senior City Marshal	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
City Marshal	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Juvenile Case Manager	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Senior Court Clerk	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Court Clerk	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Bailliff (Security Fund)	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80
<b>TOTAL Department Staff</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>6.80</b>	<b>6.80</b>

REPLACEMENT VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT:	ACTUAL COST	LEASE COST	FUNDED
Transport Vehicle	\$ 36,000	\$ 6,700	No

PROGRAMS:	PRIORITY	COST	FUNDED
Paper-Light Court	1	\$ 4,910	No

**CORE FUNCTION: #2 Prepare and maintain court dockets**

**Action:**

- Coordinate and schedule cases for all court dockets

**Activity Measurement:**

- Complete the complaint process for pre-trials, trials and hearings within ten business days of the scheduled trial date
- Schedule six dockets monthly
- Schedule trials within 90 days of defendant's request to appear
- Send notification to Department of Public Safety on juveniles that "Failed to Appear" in Court within three days of scheduled court date
- Subpoena witnesses for Court two weeks prior to scheduled docket
- Summons jurors for jury duty one month prior to scheduled docket

**Meets City Council's Premier Statement:**

Cedar Hill is Safe.

**CORE FUNCTION: #3 Enforce compliance of court orders**

**Action:**

- Issue and serve approximately 3,500 new warrants
- Locate defendants and process approximately 3,800 outstanding warrants

**Activity Measurement:**

- Maintain a collection rate of 68% on new cases filed
- Contact customer via letter, post card or phone at least one week prior to issuance of a warrant to provide options for resolution
- Coordinate and implement Warrant Round-Up Programs quarterly
- Generate warrant notice within five business days following issuance of warrant
- Contact defendant via telephone within ten business days following the issuance of a warrant
- Assist Cedar Hill Police Department with prisoner pick-ups within 24 hours of dispatch's request
- Maintain a 95% warrant clearance rate
- **Participate in at least two warrant round-ups annually**

**Meets City Council's Premier Statement:**

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**CORE FUNCTION: #4 Promote the highest standards of Customer service**

**Action:**

- Resolve customer related issues
- Implement strategies to prepare and educate customers for court proceedings
- Encourage and foster the development of Municipal Court staff
- Control cost of service delivery by the use of technology

**Activity Measurement:**

- Assist approximately 9,000 court customers annually
- Require Municipal Court Staff to attend, a minimum of, one training for customer service and court procedures annually
- Create a Training Plan and develop career path for the Municipal Court staff by January 2015
- Create a Policy and Procedures Manual for court by September 2015
- Participate in the Cedar Hill Block Party and National Night Out to inform public of their rights in Municipal Court
- Participate with CHISD, in Career day, to inform students about laws and the purpose of the Court System
- **Host Bi-annual Safety Fair for CHISD – Fall Fair for dangers of texting and driving; Spring Fair for dangers of drinking and driving**
- **Host mock trial for CHISD annually**

## **Program One (1): Paper-light Court (Third Year Requested)**

**Program Cost: \$4,910**

**Tax Rate Impact: \$0.0002**

**Included in City Manager's Budget: No**

**Option 1 Cost: \$6,000 – Implement this program without digital signatures and add signature technology at a later date.**

### **Program Description:**

The past four years, the Court has been reviewing all our processes and attempting to reduce the amount of time clerks require to process cases through the court system. During this time, we have been able to implement several cost effective procedures by the use of technology.

Each time a case is manually processed; there is a chance of errors. Clerks are expected to service customers at the counter, on the telephone and simultaneously, they are processing cases. By using technology, the Court not only sees a reduction in clerical time processing the case, but also a reduction in errors.

Document imaging for Courts is a key element in modernizing our Court to better serve the public. Some of the benefits of document imaging include:

- ✓ Faster case disposition
- ✓ Improved accuracy
- ✓ Easier access to Court records
- ✓ Improves Productivity

The above benefits will allow clerks to devote more time to the court customer and allow clerks to educate the customer on their options so they may make the best decision for their case.

As our Court handles ever-increasing caseloads, the current method of processing paper documents will be inadequate to meet the demands of the Court. Processing endless amounts of paper creates inefficiencies such as lost case files and constantly searching for available space to physically store documents - all of which results in higher costs to run the Court.

### **If this program is not funded:**

The Court will continue to serve our customers with the least amount of errors possible.

**Finance Department's Comments:**

1. This program may be eligible for the Equipment Lease Fund. The budgeted cost of the software is \$19,000 with a lease cost of \$4,910 per year for five years.
2. This program may be supplemented with the Court Technology Fund. As of March 15, 2014, there is approximately \$8,200 in this Fund. The Court averages \$16,000 (annually) in collections for this account.

MUNICIPAL COURT  
VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

ITEM	X IF ITEM IS UNRELIABLE	YEAR	MILEAGE	DESCRIPTION OF REPLACEMENT ITEM	COST	ESTIMATED LIFE	CM APPROVED
<b>COMPUTER EQUIP.:</b>							
Mobile Data Terminal		2014					
Mobile Data Terminal		2014					
Mobile Data Terminal		2014					
Mobile Data Terminal		2014					
<b>VEHICLES</b>							
Ford Interceptor Sedan - 502		2013	700				
Ford Crown Victoria - 501	X	2005	101,405	Ford Interceptor Sedan	\$ 36,000	5 Years	No
Ford Crown Victoria - 503		2005	93,258				



**CEDAR HILL**  
WHERE OPPORTUNITIES GROW NATURALLY