



Probate Court

2026 Operating and 5-Year CIP Budget Presentation

FY26 – Budget Requests

**Presenters: Chief Judge, Gary W. Washington &
Judicial Assistant, Jaime White**

Date: August 7th, 2025

Vision, Mission & Values

Department Statements



Opportunities & Challenges

SUCSESSES

- Successfully completed the fee schedule reconfiguration project required by SB 232
- Established a partnership with ViewPoint Health to administer adult guardianship and conservatorship evaluations
- Hosted a four-part Probate Court Speaker Series in collaboration with the Nancy Guinn Memorial Library
- Expanded community outreach through Probate Court speaking engagements
- Maintained ongoing professional development through regular judicial and clerk training

OPPORTUNITIES

- Implement mandatory e-filing to increase efficiency and accessibility
- Establish pro bono legal clinics to assist unrepresented parties
- Develop and implement a Rockdale County Probate Court mediation referral program and procedure

CHALLENGES

- Case Management System Limitations: The Court's current case management system must be expanded to meet modern demands for greater efficiency, secure file management, and compliance with the mandatory e-filing requirements that will take effect in 2028.
- Insufficient Personnel: The current number of funded positions is not adequate to handle the sustained increase in filings, hearings, and fiduciary compliance duties. The Court urgently needs a full-time Associate Judge to share the growing judicial workload, an additional Fiduciary Compliance Officer dedicated to estate matters, and a dedicated Deputy Clerk III focused on guardianship and conservatorship cases to protect vulnerable citizens and ensure statutory compliance.
- Inadequate Space: The Court's physical space is no longer sufficient to house the personnel necessary to serve the County's growing population. To operate efficiently and securely, the Probate Court must expand its available workspace to accommodate at least 12 staff members and an intern, up from the current capacity of 10.

FY26 Goals & Initiatives

Probate Court's Reimagine Rockdale Strategic Plan

Access

The Probate Court is expanding outreach and providing clear, accessible information on procedures, fees, and resources to help residents navigate court services confidently and transparently.

Equity

The Probate Court is committed to ensuring fair, equitable access to its services for all residents. By expanding resources and strengthening community partnerships, the Court is working to remove barriers and deliver justice fairly and consistently.

Innovation

The Probate Court is advancing innovation to modernize case management, implement mandatory e-filing, virtual hearings, and remote work solutions to address current space limitations. Investing in technology and smarter processes will deliver greater efficiency and service for our growing community.

Operating Budget Summary

*Report Provided by Finance

	Budget FY 2025	Proposed FY 2026	Change
Total Operating Expenses	\$326,800	\$223,000	(\$103,800)
Total Personnel Services & Benefits	\$756,889	\$1,052,606	\$295,717
Total Est. Budget impact	\$1,083,689	\$1,275,606	\$191,917

Operating Budget Request

* Include changes of \$5,000 or greater only

	Description	FY25 Budget	FY26 Cost	Amount Change
Professional Services	State (DHHS) filed cases and indigent parties; CMS upgrades; Special Process Servers; County Administrators and mental health hearings; GALs, Evaluators, and Court appointed Attorneys; Historic preservation.	\$235,000	\$105,000	(\$130,000)
Advertising	Legal newspaper publications, citations, and notices. *Unless required for State filed cases or indigent parties, these fees are paid into the cases by the parties and offset the budgetary amount.	\$18,000	\$36,000	\$18,000

Operating Budget Request Justification

Requests

Professional Services

(\$130,000)

- State (DHHS) filed cases and indigent parties; Court management software upgrades and mandatory E-file project; Special Process Servers for Fiduciary compliance; County Administrators and mental health hearings; Guardian ad Litem, Court appointed Evaluators, and Court appointed Attorneys; Historic preservation of vital records.

*O.C.G.A. § 9-15-2; O.C.G.A. § 53-7-54; O.C.G.A. 29-3-1 et seq.; O.C.G.A. 29-5-1 et seq.

Advertising

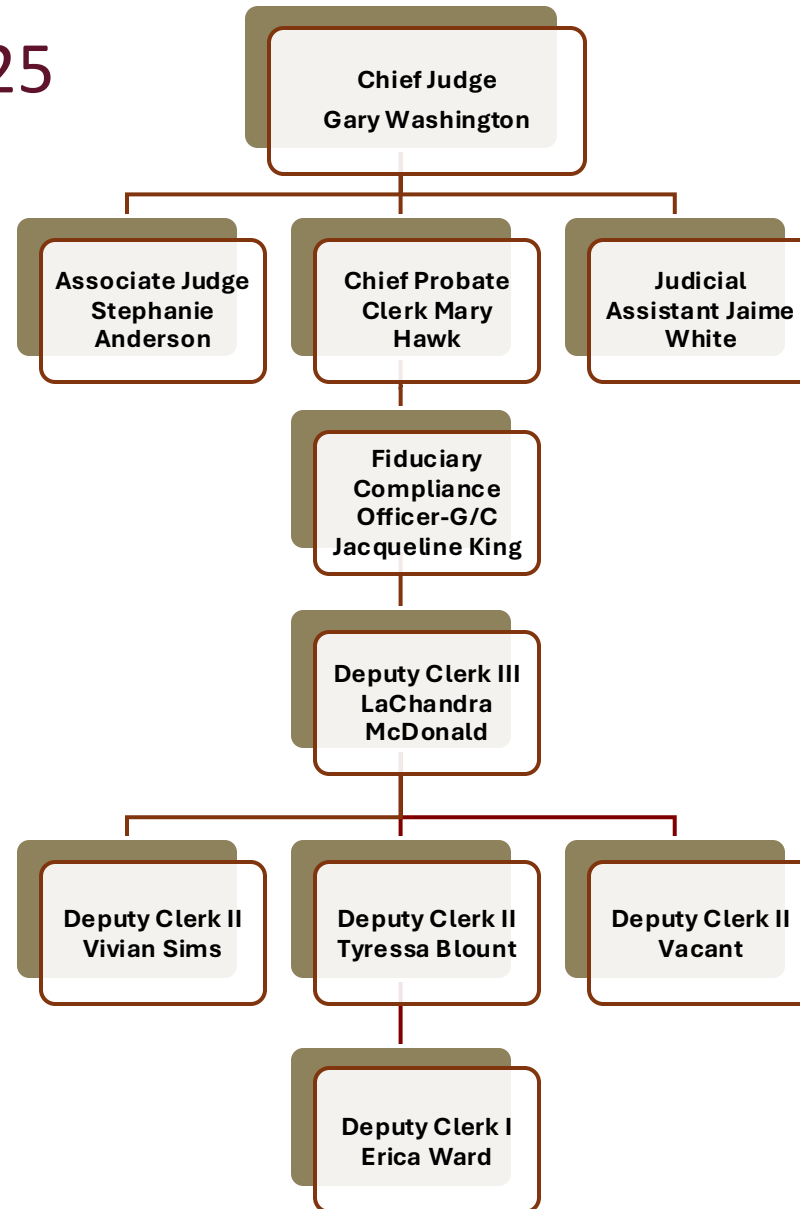
\$18,000

- Legal newspaper publications, citations, and notices have drastically increased.

*Unless utilized for State filed cases or indigent parties, these fees are paid by the parties and offset the budgetary amount.

Current Organization Chart

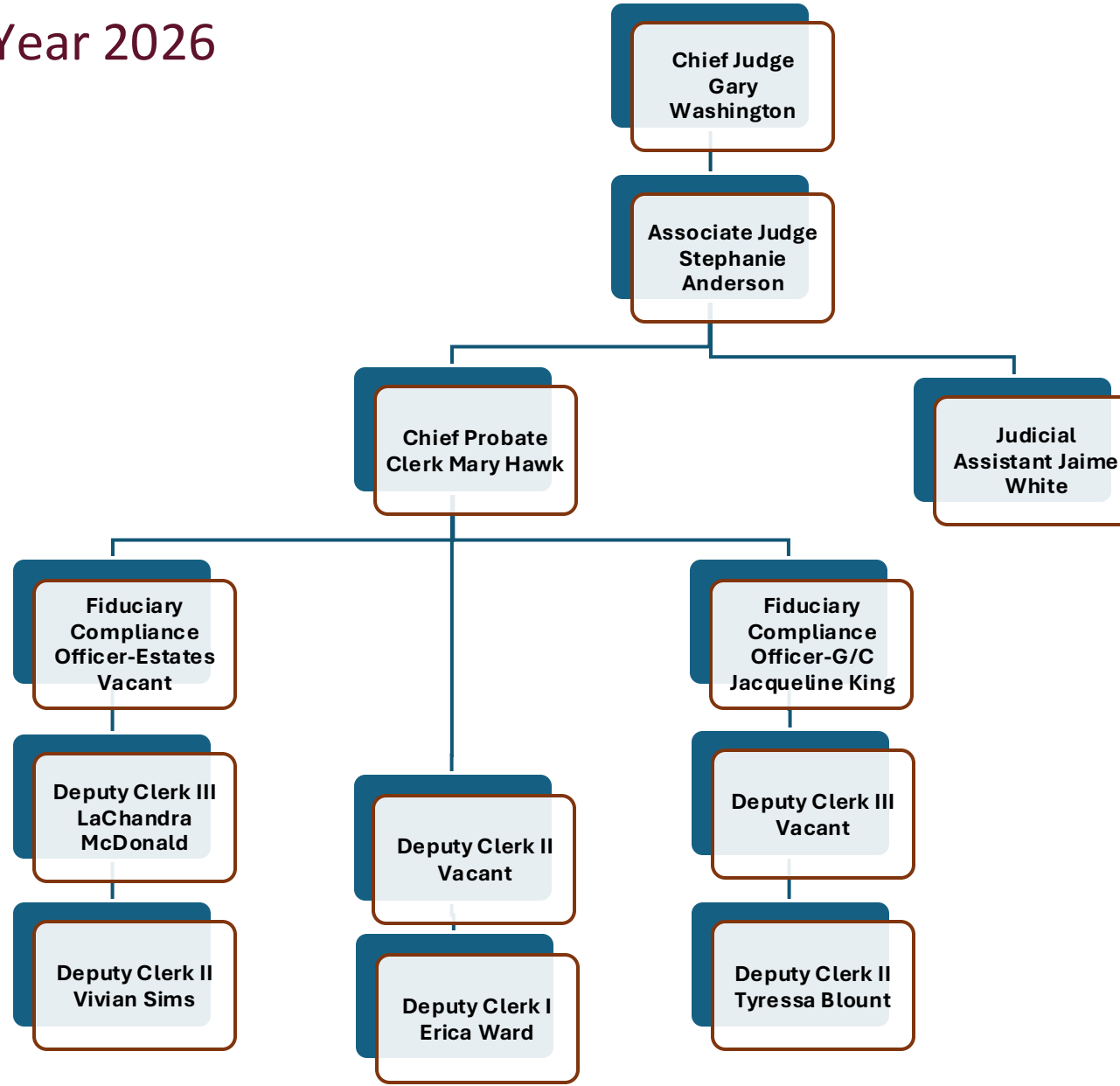
Fiscal Year 2025



Vacancies - 1

Proposed Organization Chart

Fiscal Year 2026



Personnel Changes

- Reclass Part-Time Associate Judge to Full-Time
- Request addition of Deputy Clerk III
- Request addition of Fiduciary Compliance Clerk-Estates

Personnel Budget Request

FY25 Budgeted Department Total- 10

FY26 Requested Additional Personnel – 2

Job Title	Fund	Division	FTE or PT	Head Count	Request Type	Salary +40% Benefits
Deputy Clerk III	TBD	N/A	FTE	1	New Position	\$52,157.25
Fiduciary Compliance Officer-Estates	TBD	N/A	FTE	1	New Position	\$59,703.28
Associate Judge	TBD	N/A	FTE	1	Reclass	\$112,596.34
					Total Est. Budget impact	\$224,456.87

New Department Total (w/Request)- 12

Personnel Budget Request Justification

New Position Requests

Deputy Clerk III

1 FTE - \$52,157.25

- The escalating volume and complexity of adult and minor guardianship and conservatorship cases demand a dedicated Deputy Clerk III. This specialized role will ensure efficient case management, accurate record-keeping, and timely processing of all related legal documents. Ultimately, this position is vital for streamlining court operations and fulfilling our duty to protect vulnerable individuals and their assets.

Fiduciary Compliance Officer – Estates

1 FTE - \$59,703.28

- A Fiduciary Compliance Officer for Estates is essential to manage the increasing complexity and regulatory demands of estate administration. This role will ensure meticulous oversight of fiduciary duties, proper asset management, and adherence to all legal and ethical standards. Ultimately, this position safeguards beneficiaries' and heirs' interests and mitigates the court's risk of non-compliance.

Reclass Position Requests

Associate Judge

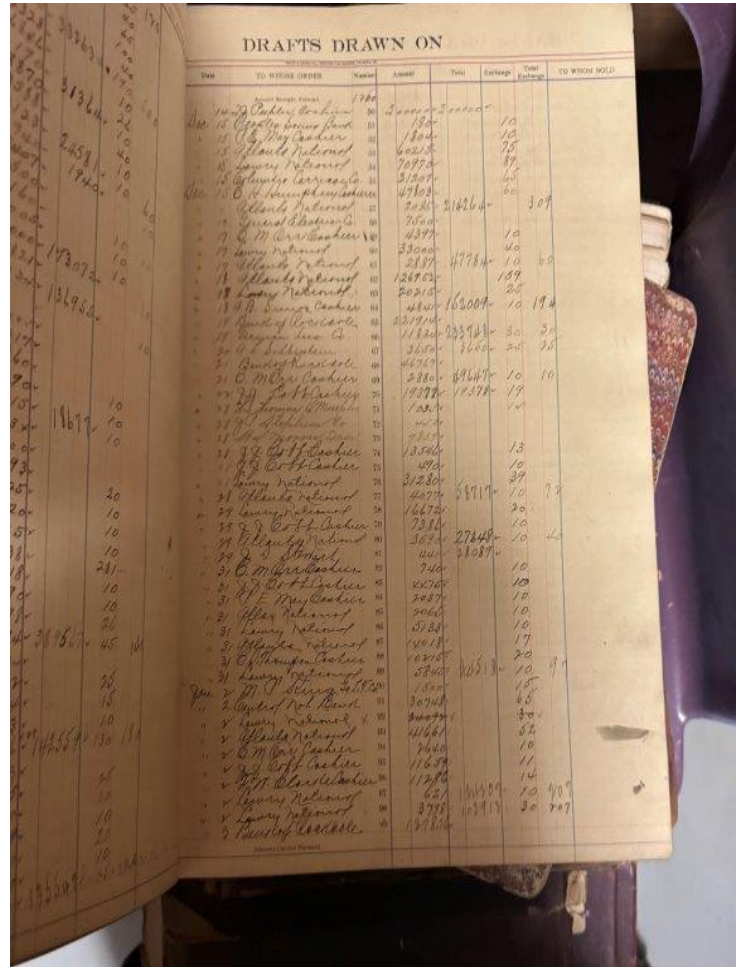
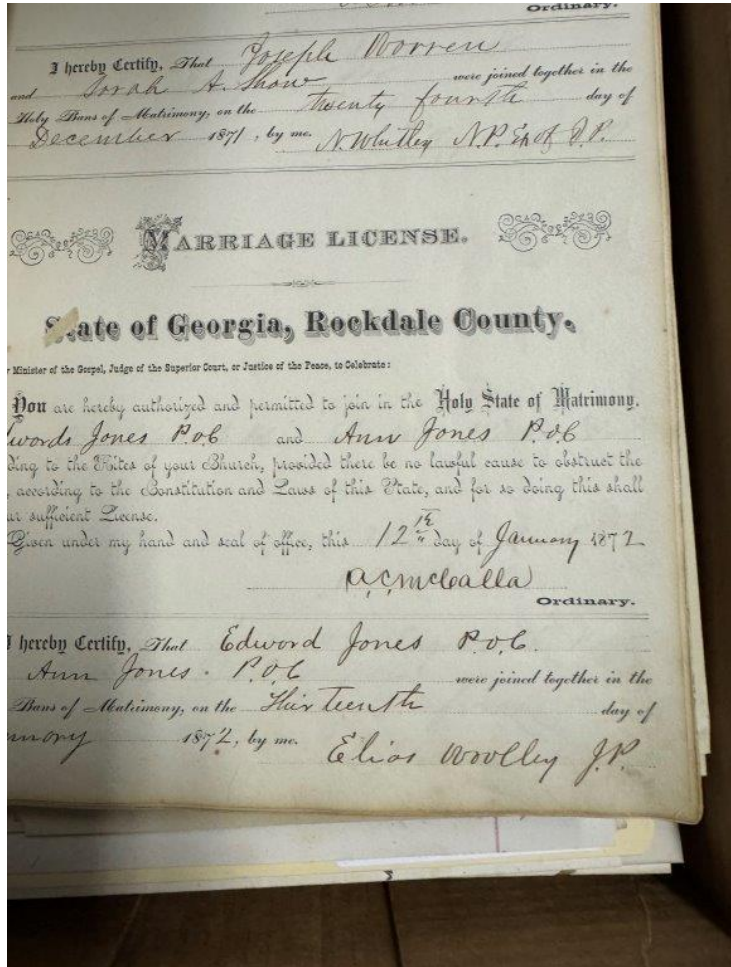
1 FTE - \$112,596.34

- Reclassifying the part-time judge to full-time is critical to address our escalating caseload and judicial backlogs. A dedicated full-time judge will significantly improve case processing times, reduce delays, and enhance access to justice for our community. This change will also increase judicial consistency and efficiency across all court operations.

An aerial photograph of a lush, green forested area. A body of water is visible in the lower-left corner, reflecting the surrounding trees. A light-colored path or road winds through the forest. The image is partially obscured by a large blue rectangular overlay on the right side, which contains the title text. The bottom right corner of the image features a yellow and blue geometric design.

5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) 2026-2030





Rockdale County Probate Court
Five Year Capital Improvement Plan
 Fiscal Year 2026-2030

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Five Year Total
Automotive Equipment						
Technology Programs & Improvements	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$150,000
Construction & Heavy Equipment						
Building Improvements/Renovations/Expansions						
New Buildings						
TOTALS	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$150,000.00



Thank You