

FY 2015 DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

**Total Operating Budget
(in Millions)**

COUNTY COUNCIL \$3.5
 Legislation
 Audit

COUNTY EXECUTIVE \$2.1
 Direction and Control
 Office of Economic Development

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION \$19.6
 Law
 Administrative Services
 Finance
 Human Resources

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ROW OFFICES \$6.6
 Prothonotary, Register in Chancery, Register of Wills,
 Recorder of Deeds, Sheriff, Clerk of the Peace

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES \$62.3
 Administration
 Internal Services Administration
 Fleet Operations
 Facilities Maintenance
 Property Maintenance
 Environmental Operations
 Construction Support
 Sewer Maintenance
 Plant Operations
 Environmental Compliance
 Engineering

DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE \$12.8
 Administration
 Planning
 Licensing
 Customer Service and Enforcement

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES \$18.8
 Administration
 Community Resources
 Carousel Park
 Libraries
 Community Development & Housing

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY \$89.4
 Administration
 Police Operations
 School Crossing Guards
 Emergency Communications
 Emergency Medical Services
 Emergency Management
 Volunteer Fire, Rescue & Ambulance Services

**DEBT SERVICE, CONTINGENCIES,
AND ETHICS COMMISSION** \$41.0

**Program Summaries -
General Government**

■ **Prothonotary**

√ **Service Narrative**

This is a non-service appropriation to compensate and reimburse former County employees who elected to transfer to the Office of the Prothonotary for the State of Delaware. Pursuant to House Bill 282, the County is to pay for pension contributions (\$35,500) and fund sick pay entitlement and FICA tax.

√ **Expenditure Summary**

	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Budget
Expenditure	\$29,600	\$32,275	\$35,500

■ **Register in Chancery**

√ **Service Narrative**

Costs included in this budget unit relate to the transfer of the Register in Chancery to the State of Delaware (House Bill 226). The personnel costs are fully reimbursable from the State of Delaware.

√ **Budget Highlights**

The FY2015 budget represents an increase of \$664 or 0.26% over the FY2014 authorization. This increase is in personal service costs.

√ **Expenditure & Position Summary**

	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Budget
Expenditure	\$246,297	\$256,667	\$251,424
Full-Time Positions	3	3	3

■ **Register of Wills**

√ **Service Narrative**

The Register of Wills performs the duties and responsibilities mandated by State statute and the rules of the State Court of Chancery. The duties and services can be categorized into four areas: pre-probate, probate, non-probate and ancillary. The Register of Wills is elected at-large for a four-year term.

**Program Summaries -
General Government**

■ **Register of Wills** *(Continued)*

√ **Fiscal 2014 Major Service Level Accomplishments**

- Continued to provide courteous and prompt service for New Castle County residents during the probate process.
- Maintained monthly hours at the Middletown satellite office.
- Continued to pursue delinquent estates and collect the resulting fees.
- Won national recognition award from NACRO for drafting of electronic filing best practices.
- Held probate procedure seminars to educate the legal community, banks, and public.
- Continued to improve the Register of Wills website by implementing necessary changes to policies and procedures while creating user-friendly forms and instructions for the layperson.
- Proactively continued work with Register of Wills offices in Kent and Sussex Counties in developing combined forms and uniform procedures.

√ **Fiscal 2015 Major Service Level Goals**

- This office will continue to provide state-mandated services and collect \$3,371,200 in delinquent and current probate fees by June 30, 2015 (Policy III, VI-#4).
- Provide superior service to the public during the probate process (Policy III-#2).
- Educate the constituents of New Castle County about the Register of Wills office and the probate process through seminars, outreach, and our website (Policy III).
- Continue to proactively pursue delinquent estates and collect old revenue where applicable (Policy VI-#4).
- Improve and streamline the File and Serve process (Policy III-#2).
- Develop and complete the best practices procedure for electronic filing (Policy III-#2).
- Continue to maintain the proper security and management of legal documents recorded in the Register of Wills office (Policy III-#2).
- Begin searching for a new case management software package to replace the current Wills program (Policy III-#2).
- Continue our ongoing commitment to the constituents of New Castle County by completing development of a Policies and Procedures manual to unify office procedures (Policy III-#2).
- Streamline fee schedule to make it easier to understand and use (Policy III-#2).
- Continue to pursue our ongoing project of converting older estate images to new electronic filing medium in order to keep full record of estate files in one place. At present, the cost for this is unknown (Policy III-#2).

Performance Measures	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Projected
Quantitative			
Files opened	2,516	2,600	2,550
Estates probated	1,351	1,500	1,450
Wills filed for safekeeping	184	110	120
Clients issued small estate affidavits	1,133	1,075	1,050
Qualitative			
Revenue budget attained	\$3,125,410	\$3,825,000	\$3,371,450

√ **Budget Highlights**

The FY2015 budget represents an increase of \$17,910 or 1.17% over the FY2014 authorization. The increases are in personal service costs (\$15,278), training and civic affairs (\$115), materials and supplies (\$2,600) and contractual services (\$32); offset by a decrease in communications and utilities (\$115).

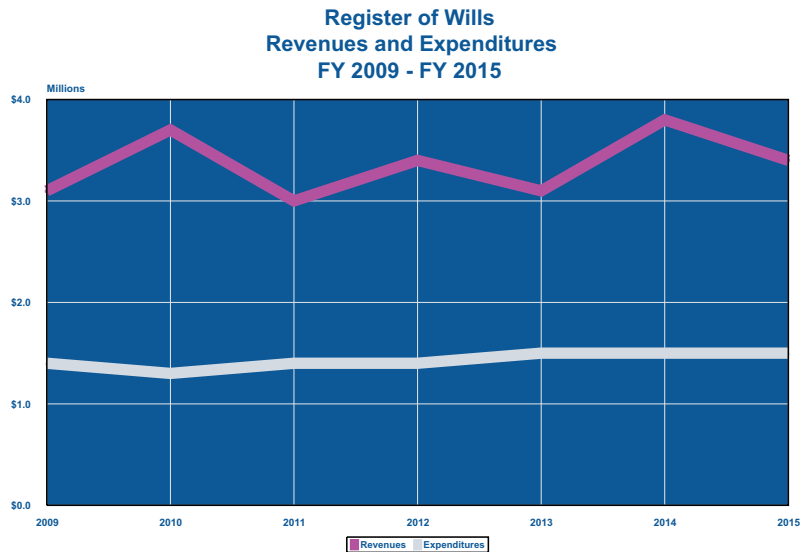
**Program Summaries -
General Government**

■ **Register of Wills** *(Continued)*

√ **Expenditure & Position Summary**

	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Budget
Expenditure	\$1,523,089	\$1,521,352	\$1,549,760
Full-Time Positions	19	19	19

The chart to the right presents the revenues generated compared to the cost of operations for the Register of Wills operation.



■ **Recorder of Deeds**

√ **Service Narrative**

The Recorder of Deeds is the repository for all land transaction records, corporate filings and financing statements in New Castle County. Responsibilities include receiving, recording, processing and delivering the following: deeds, deed restrictions, easements, mortgages, assignments, satisfaction of mortgages, partial releases of mortgages, federal tax liens, plot plans and all other documents proper to be recorded. Under Chapter 96 of the Delaware Code, this office is elected, and is responsible for recording, indexing, maintaining and making available to the public all records stated above.

The Recorder of Deeds Office provides the above services and collects fees set by County Council. The revenues are turned over to the New Castle County general operating fund. In addition, the office also collects the transfer taxes for New Castle County, the State of Delaware, and several other municipalities. The Recorder of Deeds is elected at-large for a four-year term.

√ **Fiscal 2014 Major Service Level Accomplishments**

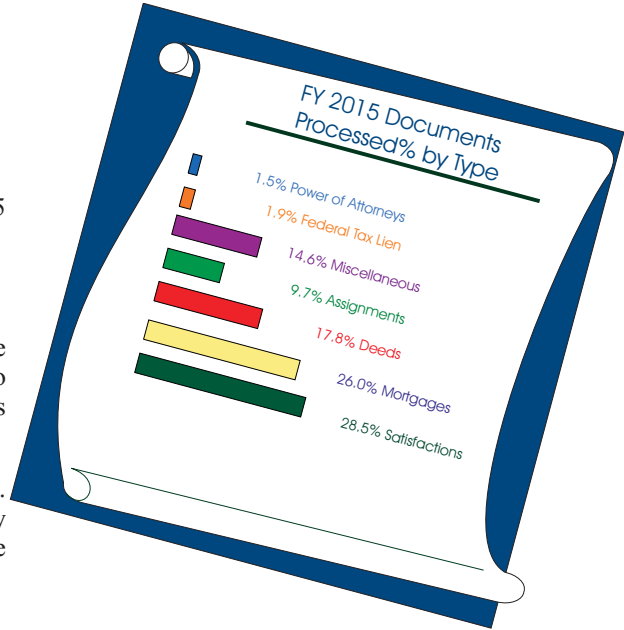
- Collected over \$6,000,000 in revenues.
- Since July 1, 2005, the Recorder of Deeds has collected over \$765,000 for their technology fee, which is used for upgrades in technology within New Castle County row offices and more recently provided an upgrade for Public Safety.
- Empowerment Continuous Improvement Matrix meetings have improved employee morale and continue to serve as a means of developing new and innovative ways to improve the overall “customer experience.”

**Program Summaries -
General Government**

■ **Recorder of Deeds** (Continued)

√ **Fiscal 2015 Major Service Level Goals**

- Generate over \$6,800,000 in revenues by June 30, 2015 (Policy VI-#4).
- Process 80,000 documents (Policy III-#2).
- Continue to work on the implementation of the Delaware Uniform Real Property Electronic Recording Act to create electronic recording for the primary business organizations (Policy III-#2).
- Continue the rescanning of older mortgage books. Performing this function in-house is saving the County \$143,000, which is the cost if this project were outsourced (Policy III-#2).



Performance Measures	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Projected
Quantitative			
Mortgage satisfactions	27,419	18,600	22,000
Deeds recorded and indexed	12,133	11,900	13,000
Mortgages recorded and indexed	24,506	17,200	20,000
Certified copies processed	3,502	3,900	3,500
Assignments recorded & indexed	6,179	6,200	6,500
Qualitative			
Percent of revenue earned to estimate	113%	84%	100%

√ **Budget Highlights**

The FY2015 budget represents a net decrease of \$16,287 or 0.72% under the FY2014 authorization. The decreases are in personal service costs (\$17,220); offset by an increase in contractual services (\$933).

√ **Expenditure & Position Summary**

	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Budget
Expenditure	\$2,175,414	\$2,114,182	\$2,249,451
Full-Time Positions	27	27	27

Program Summaries - General Government

■ Sheriff

√ **Service Narrative**

The Sheriff is a countywide elected official whose term runs four years. Currently the department provides service of process for writs issued by the State courts, several State departments, along with Out of State and Out of Country courts. A Sheriff Sale of foreclosed real estate property and tax lien property is held once a month. Sheriff Sales of levied personal property (Goods & Chattels) are performed as needed throughout the year. In addition to the civil process, the Sheriff is also responsible for taking into custody individuals wanted by the court on civil capias. These individuals, once in custody, are taken to the issuing court or to a mental health facility as dictated by the court.

√ **Fiscal 2014 Major Service Level Accomplishments**

- Implemented an electronic delivery for Sheriff Return Letters to Superior Court through a bridge between CivilServe (our software provider) and File & Serve Express (courts software provider).
- Collected \$5 million in total revenue.
- Maintained bank wire transfers to the County's bank (Wells Fargo).
- Processed and served over 30,000 court documents requiring over 57,000 service trips.
- Performed over 12,000 service trips for AG Subpoenas, for which we receive zero compensation per *Delaware Code*, Title 10, Section 2105.
- Maintained a 79% success rate on completion of service.
- Executed and transported 5 Civil Commitments to various Mental Health Facilities.
- Maintained an independent monthly audit review process of our financial and production records.
- Enhanced our website by adding foreclosure assistance information links and listing the G&C Sheriff Sale list and Property Detail information links.
- The Sheriff continues to review cases with significant excess proceeds, and has made successful efforts in several cases returning \$89,371 to people who otherwise may not have received them.
- Added video and audio security system to enhance office and employee security.
- Have reduced account receivable cases in excess of 120 days to nearly zero.

√ **Fiscal 2015 Major Service Level Goals**

- Continue to upgrade and enhance the financial and management software system to improve overall department efficiency, reduce costs, and increase security to prevent the opportunity for theft and fraud (Policy III-#2).
- Continue to update and improve the Sheriff's Office website (Policy III-#2).
- Work with County Council, County Law, State Attorney General, Superior Court Judiciary and State Legislators to develop and implement distinguishable rules regarding Real Estate purchased at Sheriff Sale and when the property is legally under the control of the purchaser (Policy III-#2).
- Continue to explore revenue growth through financial streamlining for accounts receivable and payable (Fed Wire) (Policy V-#12).
- Continue to provide customer access of software program to attorneys and law firms (Policy III-#2).
- Generate over \$5 million in revenue by June 30, 2015 (Policy VI-#4).
- Continue to work with the courts to enhance and improve efficiency in the electronic delivery of Sheriff Return Letters to the courts (Policy III-#2).

**Program Summaries -
General Government**

■ **Sheriff** (Continued)

Performance Measures	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Projected
Quantitative			
Civil Actions/Civil Commitments	18,540/14	21,456/20	24,674/20
Service trips for court documents	49,137	57,622	61,191
Qualitative			
Real Estate Sales scheduled/sold	1,620/820	1,714/923	1,796/795
Revenue Attained	\$4,196,440	\$4,987,146	\$5,062,704

√ **Budget Highlights**

The FY2015 budget represents a net increase of \$9,606 or 0.51% over the FY2014 authorization. The increases are in personal service costs (\$38,230), training and civic affairs (\$1,800), materials and supplies (\$3,600), and contractual services (\$1,110); offset by decreases in communications and utilities (\$1,800) and fixed charges (\$33,334).

FY2015 reflects the increase of one Account Clerk II position.

√ **Expenditure & Position Summary**

	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Budget
Expenditure	\$1,863,756	\$1,888,179	\$1,906,339
Full-Time Positions	20	20	21

■ **Clerk of the Peace**

√ **Service Narrative**

The Clerk of the Peace Office is a licensing, record keeping and service Row Office that directly or indirectly affects the lives of every resident in New Castle County. Among its functions, the office issues marriage licenses; performs civil marriage ceremonies; conducts marriage and civil union record searches, converts civil unions to marriage, issues certified copies of marriage and civil union licenses; publishes legal notices of marriage licenses issued; and performs various other administrative and record keeping functions for New Castle County. The Clerk of the Peace is elected at-large for a four-year term.

√ **Fiscal 2014 Major Service Level Accomplishments**

- Upgraded our current WebMarriage software to convert civil unions to marriage, and issue same sex marriage licenses effective July 1, 2013.
- Officiated 975 office ceremonies (133 more than FY2013).
- Issued 3,590 marriage licenses which includes converting 207 civil unions to marriage (859 more licenses issued than in FY2013).
- Generated \$358,854 in revenue (28% higher than projected).

**Program Summaries -
General Government**

■ **Clerk of the Peace** *(Continued)*

√ **Fiscal 2015 Major Service Level Goals.**

- Maintain the same level of service as in FY2014 and generate over \$315,000 in revenue by June 30, 2015.
- The Clerk of the Peace will propose legislation to the Delaware General Assembly to update Title 13 (marriage laws) of the *Delaware Code*.

Performance Measures	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Projected
Quantitative			
Marriage & Civil Union Licenses issued	2,731	3,383	3,150
Marriage & Civil Union Ceremonies performed	842	975	875
Certified Marriage & Civil Union Records issued	1,767	2,108	2,320
Name Change Kits issued	419	724	650
Wedding & Civil Union Photos	519	650	675
Wedding & Civil Union Videos & Live Streaming	259	315	275
Witness Fee	62	0	0
Civil Union Conversion to Marriage	*	207	61

*Law effective July 1, 2013.

√ **Budget Highlights**

The FY2015 budget represents a net increase of \$9,660 or 1.48% over the FY2014 authorization. The increases are in personal service costs (\$12,542); offset by a decrease in contractual services (\$2,882).

√ **Expenditure & Position Summary**

	2013 Actual	2014 Estimated	2015 Budget
Expenditure	\$637,935	\$672,936	\$661,529
Full-Time Positions	7	7	7

Picture to the right shows Clerk of the Peace Office, located in the City/County Building in downtown Wilmington, prepared for a wedding ceremony.



