



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



leecountyda.org



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Lee County
District Attorney

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Lee County District Attorney 2025

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Lee County District Attorney

Letter from District Attorney

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2311 Gateway Drive
Opelika, AL 36801

Each year, I look forward to the opportunity to reflect on the work our office has accomplished and share it with the people of Lee County. Since releasing our first report in 2021, hundreds of printed copies have been distributed, and digital versions have been made available online to ensure transparency and accessibility.

Our mission continues to guide our work: an office that is equally committed to enforcing the law and preventing crime. In 2025, we focused on strengthening partnerships with law enforcement, improving internal processes, and ensuring that justice is carried out fairly and effectively.

Public safety also depends on prevention. We are proud to support local organizations addressing domestic violence, addiction, suicide prevention, and elder abuse—efforts that help strengthen families and reduce crime in our community.

Looking ahead, we are committed to further improving efficiency in both our office and the courtroom. Our goal is to ensure that cases are handled promptly and resolved in a timely manner, providing certainty for victims, fairness for defendants, and confidence in the justice system.

It is an honor to serve as your District Attorney and to present the 2025 Annual Report.

Jessica L. Ventiere





WHAT WE DO

WHO WE REPRESENT

The District Attorney is a locally elected official responsible for representing the people of the State of Alabama in the prosecution of criminal cases and various civil actions.

WHAT WE HANDLE

All felonies are processed through the District Attorney's office, as well as misdemeanor offenses that occurred during the commission of a felony offense. Also, we're responsible for all misdemeanor and traffic offenses committed in the county, the prosecution of Juvenile offenders, and Child Support Enforcement.

WHERE WE ARE

As an office, we are active in our community. We work to highlight and support local nonprofits whose work positively impacts public safety and community well-being. These nonprofits address the needs of at-risk youth, food insecurity, education and literacy, child victims, and so much more.



Lee County
District Attorney

MEET THE TEAM

PROSECUTION TEAM:

JESSICA VENTIERE, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

CLAY THOMAS, CHIEF ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

CATHEY BERARDI, SENIOR TRIAL ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MADISON GRANTHAM, SENIOR TRIAL ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JEREMY DUERR, SENIOR TRIAL ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

COURTNEY DAVIS, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FREDERICK CUSHMORE III, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MARGARET MAYFIELD, CHILD SUPPORT ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

KIM DEAN, CHILD SUPPORT ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

INVESTIGATIONS:

DAVID LANE, CHIEF INVESTIGATOR

LITIGATION SPECIALISTS TEAM:

ALEX WOOD, LITIGATION SPECIALIST COORDINATOR

HARRIS ANNE WALKER, LITIGATION SPECIALIST

EVETTE DANIELS, GRAND JURY COORDINATOR

KRISTEN MAYES, LITIGATION SPECIALIST

LINDSAY DONNELLY, LITIGATION SPECIALIST

OPERATIONS:

JEANETTE HART, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

AMANDA SALOMONE, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

PRETRIAL:

BECKLEY MOBLEY, PRETRIAL DIVERSION COORDINATOR

RESTITUTION RECOVERY:

EBONY ASKEW, RESTITUTION COORDINATOR

CHILD SUPPORT:

BRIANA MARTINEZ, CHILD SUPPORT SPECIALIST

DANA CROWE, SENIOR CHILD SUPPORT SPECIALIST

EMILY WHITLOW, CHILD SUPPORT SPECIALIST

NICHOLE LOWERY, CHILD SUPPORT SPECIALIST

SHANNON FRANKLIN, CHILD SUPPORT COORDINATOR

HELPING FAMILIES INITIATIVE:

LEKEISHA PRESLEY, DIRECTOR

LORI GRUBBS, CASE OFFICER



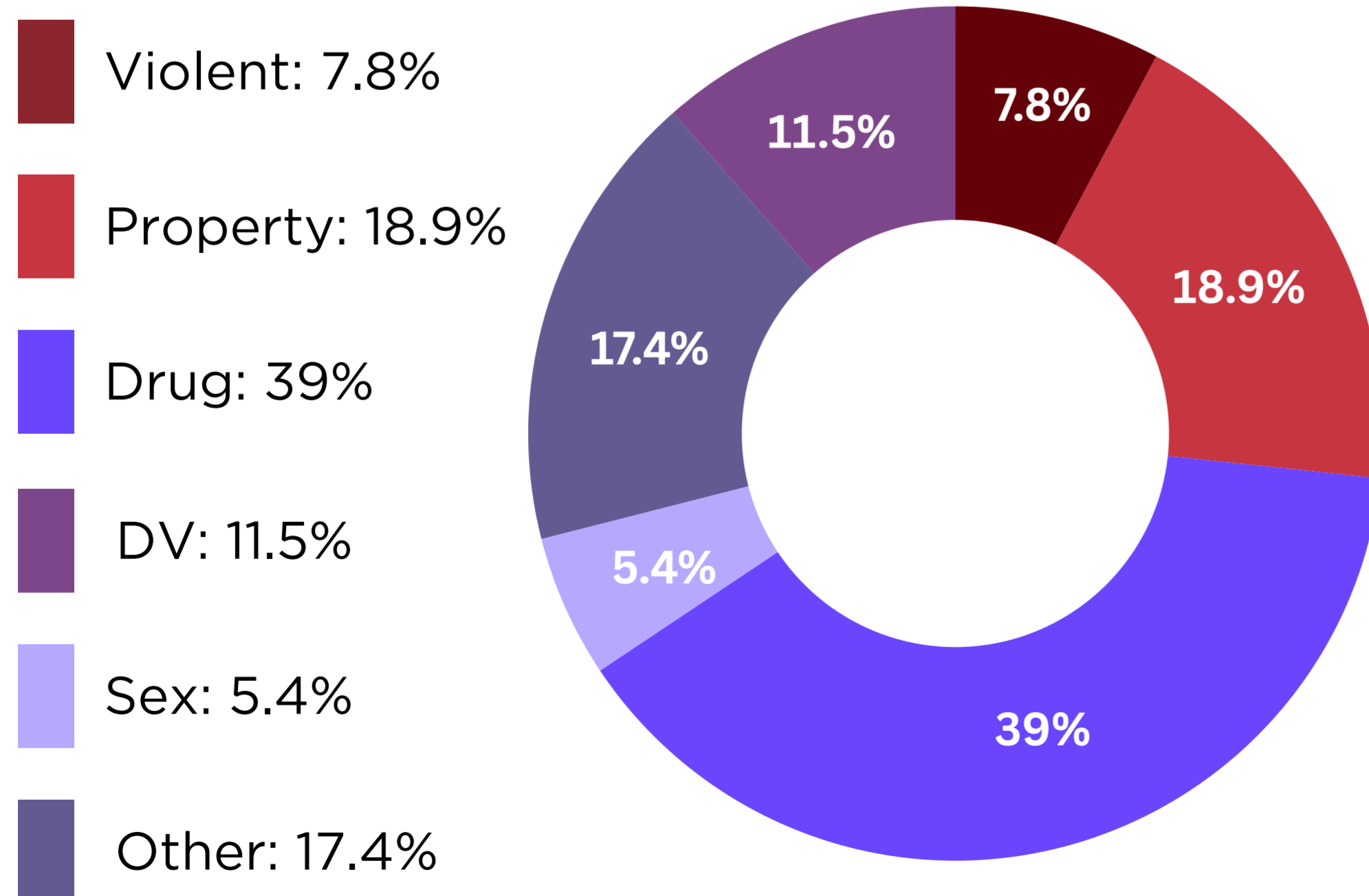
2025 CRIME TRENDS

By The Numbers



CRIME ANALYSIS

Crime Trends: Approximately 3323 criminal charges were filed in Lee County in 2025. The numbers and percentages reflected are based on criminal charges rather than defendants.



*For the purposes of this chart the categories will have the following definitions:

Domestic Violence: all domestic or family-related offenses.

Drug Crimes: all drug-related offenses, including paraphernalia.

Sex Crimes: all sexually motivated offenses.

Property Crime: all crimes dealing with the loss of personal or real property.

Violent/Dangerous Offenses: all homicides and any other crime dangerous to the health of another person such as assault, robbery, and attempted murders.



NOTABLE CASES

In 2025

Darrell Spinks

Convicted of Receiving Stolen Property. Sentenced to 3 years.

Dalton Bridges

Convicted of Felony Attempted to Elude. Sentenced to 9 years split to serve 12 months.

Bobby Pitts

Cold case conviction- Rape 1st, Sodomy 1st, Kidnapping 1st. Sentenced to 14 years.

Adrian Dabney

Convicted of sex abuse of a child less than 12, attempted rape 1st, and Sodomy 1st. Sentenced 20 years.

Johnny Thornton

Convicted of Murder & Shooting into an Unoccupied Building or Vehicle. Sentenced to Life for Murder & Sentenced to 20 years for Shooting into.

Taharra Brunson

Convicted of Capital Murder (Kidnapping). Sentenced to Life Without the Possibility of Parole.

Jamarion Mitchell

Convicted of Felony Murder-Child Abuse. Sentenced to 47 years.



WHO'S IN ALABAMA PRISONS

In 2025

Fig 1 Top 25 In-Custody Offenses

(Alabama Department of Corrections)

**down from
FY 2023-2024**

1	Murder	3,735	↑
2	Robbery 1st	3,007	↑
3	Rape 1st	1,293	↑
4	Capital Murder	1,027	↑
5	Distribution of Controlled Substance	983	↑
6	Manslaughter	931	↑
7	Attempted Murder	760	↓
8	Trafficking Drugs	759	↑
9	Theft of Property 1st	560	↓
10	Sodomy 1st	556	↑
11	Assault 1st	491	↓
12	Possession of Controlled Substance	488	↑
13	Sexual Abuse of Child < 12 years	467	↑
14	Burglary 3rd	421	↓
15	Burglary 1st	393	↓
16	Assault 2nd	334	↓
17	Robbery 3rd	329	↓
18	Receiving Stolen Property 1st	288	Same
19	Community Notification Act Violations	284	↑
20	Robbery 2nd	279	↓
21	Burglary 2nd	261	↓
22	Rape 2nd	235	↑
23	Discharge Gun Occupied Bldg/Vehicle	217	↓
24	Sexual Abuse 1st	185	↑
25	Domestic Violence 2nd	184	↑
Top 25 Offenses		18,467	
Other Offenses		3,222	
Total Custody Population		21,689	

*Note: Arrows represent an increase or decrease from FY 2023-2024

*Source: Alabama Sentencing Commission

Lee County
District Attorney

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In 2025

Grand Jury

To meet the needs of our growing community, we increased the number of Grand Jury terms from 4 weeks per year to 7 weeks per year. Grand Juries met in January, February, May, June, September, November, and December. 2,148 cases were presented to Grand Juries in 2025. That is an average of 306 cases per the Grand Jury term.

2025 WCU Collections

The Worthless Check Unit (WCU) assists businesses and individuals who receive insufficient funds and account-closed checks. There is no charge to victims to use our service. When the bad check writer fails to pay through our office, we assist with the prosecution. \$6,817 in lost restitution was collected and returned to businesses and victims in 2025.

Restitution Recovery

Our Restitution Recovery monitors, tracks, and collects delinquent restitution and court costs owed in criminal cases. The Restitution Recovery program enforces the court's order with several different methods, including restitution dockets, contempt hearings, and restitution agreements. 2025 Collections: \$300,780.

Pretrial Diversion

Our Pre-Trial Diversion (PTD) Program continues to work with nonviolent defendants who have no prior criminal history, by diverting them from the traditional court system into an individualized and supervised restorative program. In 2025, 90 individuals were accepted into the program.

Child Support

The Lee County District Attorney's Child Support Unit acts as the legal counsel for the Lee County Department of Human Resources in court actions for paternity establishment and enforcement of child support orders. FY24-25 Collections: \$10,822,780.

Rapid Resolution

Rapid Resolution Docket (RBD) is a plea docket for individuals who want to plead guilty to their charges prior to being indicted by a Grand Jury. RBD saves the time of Grand Jurors and conserves valuable prosecutorial and judicial resources. In 2025, 67 individuals pled guilty through Rapid Resolution, resolving 182 criminal charges.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In 2025

Victim Services

In 2025, our Victim Service Officers helped victims and survivors recover \$49,207 in benefits from Alabama Crime Victims' Compensation. These monies are paid to the victims to help cover medical bills and funeral expenses.

Internships

Our internship program offers an insider's view of the criminal justice system. We have intern opportunities for high school juniors and seniors, college students, and law students. While interning in our office, students will rotate through the different departments, observe proceedings, learn about the legal system, and develop basic business skills.

Victims Assistance Funds

Established in 2021, the Victims' Assistance Fund helps victim service organizations and individuals meet needs that arise as a result of a crime. These funds are provided through public and private donations.

Community Involvement

In 2025, we remained true to our goal of promoting public safety through support of local nonprofits, as well as our own programs. We hosted our Family Fun Day, collected school supplies and coats, attended National Night Out, read to students, spoke to numerous civic groups, and so much more! Public safety through community service.



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CANINE COMPANIONS

Service Dog



Josette ("Jo") has been working full-time in the criminal justice system since May 10, 2019, when she graduated with her handler as a certified facility dog from Canine Companions. Jo and her handler have served in Birmingham, Columbiana, Clanton, Pell City, Prattville, and Wetumpka. As well as Lee & Russell Counties and Wellhouse, a nonprofit group.

Canine Companions trained Jo in over 40 commands that she uses to serve crime survivors and witnesses as they navigate the judicial process. Prior to being placed as a certified facility dog, Jo was required to pass a public access test with her handler, demonstrating that she has the appropriate temperament and demeanor to work in a public setting. Jo is required to recertify with her handler periodically. Jo's primary duty is to reduce the stress of crime survivors and witnesses when they testify in criminal proceedings, thereby enhancing the ability of the court to obtain full and accurate testimony.

She does this by lying quietly and unseen at the witness's feet while he or she testifies. Jo also serves survivors and witnesses outside the courtroom by attending meetings with them and waiting with them prior to and after testimony. When not in the courtroom, Jo is able to use her skills to engage with survivors and witnesses by playing games, reading books, and taking walks. When Jo is not working, she loves to chase the ball and have her teeth brushed.



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HELPING FAMILIES INITIATIVE

Four Years of Impact

2025 marked the fourth anniversary of the Helping Families Initiative, a milestone that highlights the program's sustained commitment to prevention and family support. The Helping Families Initiative continues to demonstrate that consistent support and collaboration can lead to meaningful improvements in student attendance and engagement.

Over the past four years, the program has supported thousands of students and families, helping them connect to resources that set our children up for success.

Supporting Families in 2025

During 2025 alone, the Helping Families Initiative:

- Connected more than 100 families with local community agencies for supportive services
- Assisted 15 families with housing needs
- Helped 30 families meet basic needs such as food and utility assistance

These interventions focus on removing practical obstacles that keep students from attending school, ensuring families have the necessary support to keep children engaged in their education.

Promoting Mental Wellness: Strike Out the Stigma

In addition to attendance support, HFI continues to emphasize the importance of student mental health and community encouragement. In 2025, the initiative hosted its Second Annual "Strike Out the Stigma" event, bringing together 120 high school students for a morning dedicated to mental wellness, connection, and encouragement. As students cheered each other on from lane to lane, the message was clear: setbacks are part of life, but support from friends, family, and the community helps keep us moving forward.

Looking Ahead

The Helping Families Initiative demonstrates how early intervention, strong partnerships, and compassionate support can strengthen families and improve educational outcomes. By continuing to work side-by-side with schools, families, and community organizations, the Lee County District Attorney's Office remains committed to ensuring that students are in class, on time, and ready to learn.

Success starts with showing up—and together, our community is making that possible for more students every year.

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Budget Letter

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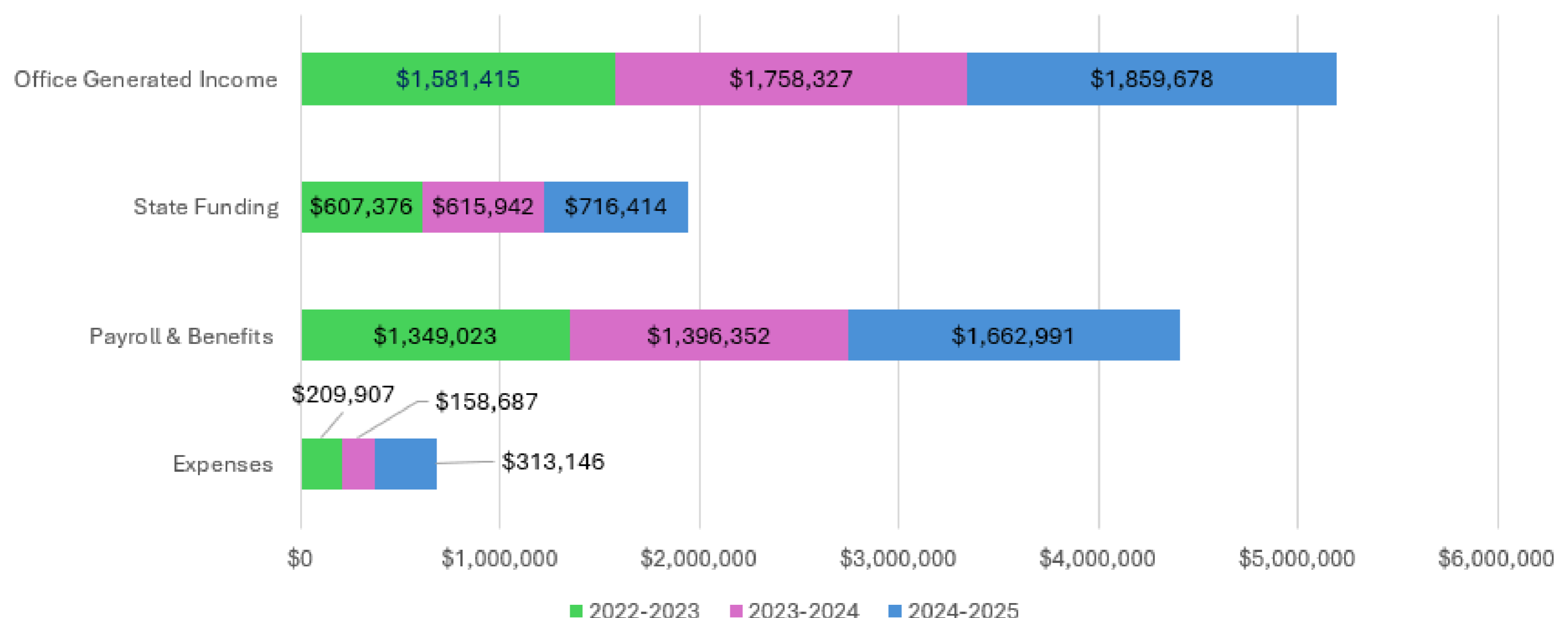
As Lee County continues to grow, so too does the demand placed on the criminal justice system. The District Attorney’s Office handles a high volume of cases each year while also providing critical services that often occur behind the scenes—reviewing search warrants, advising law enforcement, preparing cases for trial, and ensuring that victims and their families receive support throughout the process. These responsibilities require experienced prosecutors, investigators, victim service professionals, and administrative staff working together to keep the system moving.

In 2027, Lee County will add a new Circuit Court judge to help address the growing volume of cases in our community. While this additional judgeship will help the courts hear more cases and move dockets more efficiently, it will also increase the workload placed on the District Attorney’s Office. Each additional courtroom requires prosecutors to prepare and try more cases simultaneously, respond to additional hearings and motions, and provide the staffing necessary to ensure that cases are ready for trial. As the court system expands to meet the needs of a growing population, the prosecution team must expand as well to keep pace.

Like District Attorney offices across Alabama, the Lee County office operates within a funding structure that requires careful management of resources. While the State provides a portion of the funding needed to operate local prosecution offices, additional resources are often necessary to support the full scope of services required to effectively prosecute cases and serve victims. Our office works diligently to maximize every available dollar through responsible budgeting, grant funding, and strong partnerships with local agencies.

Despite these challenges, the Lee County District Attorney’s Office remains committed to operating efficiently while continuing to meet the needs of a growing community. The safety of our neighborhoods and the integrity of our justice system depend on the ability of prosecutors to thoroughly prepare cases, support victims, and hold offenders accountable. Continued community support and investment in the justice system help ensure that our office has the personnel, tools, and resources necessary to carry out this mission and keep Lee County a safe place to live, work, and raise a family.

Finances 2022-2025



CONTACT OUR TEAM

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Socials

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