

**FY 2025 CRITICAL BUDGET REQUEST:
OPERATIONS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS UNIT**

Description:

**General Fund: 100
Cost Center: 03910**

Purpose/Objective:

The Office of the DeKalb County District Attorney requests funding in the amount of \$69,314.00 to support the Operations and Special Projects Unit through the creation of three (3) positions: one (1) Legal Office Coordinator (Job Code: 45060/Grade 20); one (1) Departmental Information Technology Specialist position (Job Code: 99555/Grade 15); and one (1) Systems Analyst, Senior (Job Code: 16025/Grade 21).

This funding request includes salary and associated benefits and is proposed to take effect on October 13, 2025. The addition of these roles is critical to enhancing the unit's technological capabilities and ensuring efficient support of departmental operations.

The Operations and Special Projects Unit ("Ops") serves a mission-critical role within the Office of the DeKalb County District Attorney's Office. It ensures that our 300+ staff members have the varied tools, software and equipment they need to do their work, which stretches from investigations in the field to court appearances in all levels of criminal court within DeKalb County including jury trials in Superior Court, and all other responsibilities to ensure the ethical and efficient prosecution of felony cases. Among other things, Ops manages and secures our physical and digital evidence and maintains our databases; provides in-house technical support, maintenance, upgrades, and technical training for all staff and manages all their equipment that runs the spectrum from office furniture to laptops to service firearms. From weather events to cyber events to a global pandemic, when a crisis strikes, Ops is the first on the ground, troubleshooting the problem and minimizing its impact on office operations and assets. And, because our office is running court calendars 6 days a week, Ops must always be ready.

Additionally, Ops supervises, trains and supports the administrative support professionals who are the backbone of the office. This includes our records technicians who are responsible for administrative work at case initiation and closure and our trial assistants who provide essential administrative support to our trial teams during the life cycle of a case. Currently, we have **one** direct supervisor whose capacity to supervise is limited to the ten (10) trial assistants assigned to our Trial Division. The remaining sixteen (16) administrative assistants and paralegals, who are spread among our specialized units, are currently without an administrative supervisor who understands their day-to-day work and can provide direct coverage when needed.

The pandemic and the implementation of the Judicial Emergency Orders in March 2020 accelerated the District Attorney's Office's transition to a modernized, technology-dependent

operation. Additionally, over the past few years, we have experienced a massive increase in digital evidence which brings continued challenges with storage and sharing. As a result, we have expanded our technological capabilities to more efficiently interface with our DeKalb County criminal justice partners. We have also launched several new software platforms to improve the management of daily operations and the substantial volume of digital work handled by this office. This growth has been spearheaded by one Deputy Director who has shouldered the development, implementation and maintenance of our software applications in addition to her other responsibilities. Additionally, technical support for the entire office has been handled by our one in-house Information Specialist who is assigned to Ops. As technology continues to play an increasingly critical role in our operations, the need for additional personnel, to include a Systems Analyst, Senior and an internal IT support, has become clear.

In total, we request funding for a second Legal Office Coordinator, a Systems Analyst, Senior, and a second Information Technology Specialist.

Justification:

Legal Office Coordinator

Our trial teams are perpetually in court and preparing to be in court. Our administrative professionals ensure that our trial teams have what they need to meet their responsibilities inside and outside the courtrooms. They also work closely with staff from the Clerk's Office, Court Administration, Sheriff's Office and the ten divisions of Superior Court. Currently, we have one Legal Office Coordinator who leads the ten (10) trial assistants assigned to the Trial Division. She trains and supports these employees and provides coverage as needed. Because Superior Court operates double calendars through the use of senior judges in its self-created Divisions 11 and 12, it is necessary to have someone who understand the administrative duties and can step in when needed. She also coordinates extradition requests and special administrative matters that arise in the Trial Division. In contrast to the Trial Division, our sixteen (16) administrative professionals assigned to our specialized units do not have a Legal Office Coordinator to train and support them. This creates training and knowledge gaps which, in turn, negatively impact how cases are administratively handled in our specialized units. Examples of negative impacts range from incorrect data being entered to an inmate not being produced for trial to discovery not being properly served. It is critical that we minimize these negative impacts. Additionally, there is no coverage for administrative support in our specialized units when needs arise. We seek an additional Legal Office Coordinator position to create consistency in supervision and work standards for all administrative professionals across divisions in our office.

Systems Analyst, Senior

Since March of 2020, the DeKalb County District Attorney's Office has grown increasingly dependent on digital tools and new software—from case management platforms and digital evidence systems to secure communications and remote access. This strategic change in methodology has allowed us to better serve the public and more fully operate within a modernized criminal justice system. It has also allowed us to keep pace with the challenges of investigating

and prosecuting cases in a digital age. Simply put, we cannot function without the ability to receive, store and analyze large amounts of data and digital evidence. Likewise, because our court system has moved from being paper-based to electronic-based, we require the right software programs to do our work. Our recent advances in data and information technology – which currently includes up to thirty software programs per employee – have been led by one Deputy Director. This person has been working well beyond capacity to manage major office-wide projects like development, implementation and maintenance of our new digital evidence storage platform and various DoIT migration projects. She also directly handles onboarding of all new employees to make sure they are operationally set up to do their work, is responsible for all software licenses for the office, is the primary contact and liaison for outside vendors and DoIT, and handles training for the office to ensure that over 300 employees know how to use the various software applications necessary for their job. She is exclusively responsible for troubleshooting any issues that arise with the many software programs that we depend upon to do our work. In short, it is too much for one person to handle – particularly since we are continuously adding programs to meet the evolving nature of our work. It is impossible for one person to manage the programs we have and continue to advance our growth in the area of data and technology. Therefore, we seek a Systems Analyst, Senior who will share in the responsibilities of software administration and training.

Departmental IT Specialist

As our use of technology has increased, so has the internal demand among our 300+ staff members for technical hardware support, maintenance, upgrades, and training. In response, our office created the original internal IT Specialist position to directly address the department-specific needs that the County's Department of Information Technology (DoIT) is unable to meet effectively. DoIT's focus is on county-wide infrastructure, and it is often overworked, understaffed, and not equipped to provide the kind of rapid, department-tailored support our office requires. Our internal IT Specialist position assumed responsibility for nearly all tech support-related tasks. This includes everything from routine technical support and system maintenance to urgent technological assistance and troubleshooting digital evidence issues. In addition to the daily service requests and support activities, our IT Specialist is also tasked with various special projects, such as cell phone and Active Directory migrations, and cyber security. All of these tasks are critical to successfully completing essential work in our office and are a regular part of every workday for Ops. Currently, these duties fall completely on a single individual.

This is an unworkable level of daily requirements for one person. Between daily support requests, special projects, and cybersecurity-related tasks, the workload of our current IT Specialist would be more adequately handled by two to three IT Specialists. The Information Technology Industry's best practices dictate an IT Specialist to client ratio between 1:50 and 1:100 for the government IT sector (Global Hardware IT Management / Workwize February 2025). Our current ratio is nearly 1:300, close to triple the industry's best practice recommendations. Special projects such as system migrations, cybersecurity initiatives, or digital evidence handling require dedicated attention and specialized knowledge. Due to the current workload, these types of projects are currently triaged alongside daily helpdesk duties. This leads to inevitable delays in both the projects and daily supports tasks while creating a dynamic where an overworked and distracted IT

Specialist could easily make errors. Errors in system migrations or with digital evidence could result in lost work time or compromised work product. Any inadvertent gaps in our cyber security initiatives could result in vulnerability to ransomware or malware attacks. As we learned from the Fulton County ransomware attack, these cyber tactics can be catastrophic for government agencies.

In addition to a burdensome workload, as previously mentioned, having one IT Specialist creates a single point of failure. Any extended absence of the current specialist, let alone an unexpected separation, could cripple critical operations. That is why redundancy in IT staffing is essential. It improves response times, reduces downtime, and ensures continuity of operations. An additional IT Specialist would not only ensure coverage during vacations, sick leave, or emergencies, but also provide the necessary support to maintain uninterrupted service. In the event of a large-scale project—such as an Active Directory migration—or a critical incident like a cyberattack, one IT Specialist can only address a single issue, and often only one user at a time. This would almost certainly lead to backlogs in other essential areas. For a department of our size with the nature of our work, it is unrealistic to expect one IT Specialist to simultaneously liaise with County IT, manage internal security measures, respond to incidents, perform system updates, and conduct user training. Many of the same reasons that led to the creation of our internal IT Specialist position also support the need for a second position, rather than relying on County IT for backup. In addition to faster response times, a second IT Specialist would bring specialized knowledge of office-specific systems and maintain established relationships with key vendors. This would help ensure continuity of service and streamline support and communication with our vendors.

As mentioned above, County IT (DoIT) is our present backup to the in-house IT Specialist. DoIT relies heavily on our IT Specialist to handle time-sensitive and critical tasks within the Office of the District Attorney. If a help ticket is sent to DoIT, they will often assign it back to our IT Specialist to handle. DoIT has made it clear that our office will not receive priority when it comes to IT matters, but will handle them in the order received. This often means a response time of hours to days. Our office does not have the luxury of time when it comes to court appearances and other time-sensitive and public safety matters. Further, the specialized nature of the programs we use and how to troubleshoot issues within those programs are outside the knowledge base of DoIT. It is additionally an unworkable solution and unduly burdensome for DoIT to aid us in our daily IT needs.

The Enhancement Links to a Budget Priority of Improving Public Safety:

One of the County's priorities is to prevent and reduce crime and promote the safety and security of individuals and their communities, residential and commercial establishments and public facilities. Funding this enhancement will ensure that the District Attorney is properly resourced to address the increasing demand for technical support, maintenance, upgrades, and training that inherently accompany a technology-based workplace that depends on automated processes, an electronic case management system, a digital evidence storage system and other technological systems that promote a modernized approach to our work and allow virtual and remote access to services for all parties in the criminal justice system.

The Enhancement Links to a Budget Priority of Retention, Hiring and Training:

The County prioritizes workforce retention, hiring and training. This budget request aligns with the County's priorities of workforce retention, hiring, and training. By adding this position, we aim to reduce staff burnout and better distribute workload across the unit.

Most importantly, it will support the retention of key personnel who have developed valuable expertise in handling the unit's specialized operational needs.

The Impact of the Enhancement on the Office's Performance Measures:

This funding will allow the District Attorney's Office to operate at a higher level of effectiveness and efficiency as the Office continues to expand our technological capabilities and increases our use of digital tools. It will improve response time for tech-related issues, allow the office to plan and manage larger IT projects, handle a growing number of users and devices while efficiently managing day-to-day tasks and support requests. It will also promote retention of staff by making the workload more manageable and mitigating against burn out.

Need/Impact:

The funding necessitates appropriate staffing by the District Attorney, October 13, 2025. The District Attorney will require one (1) Legal Office Coordinator (Job Code: 45060/Grade 20) ;(1) Systems Analyst, Senior (Job Code: 16025/Grade 21); and one (1) Departmental IT Specialist position (Job Code: 99555/Grade 15).

Fiscal Impact:

\$69,314.00 for the District Attorney's Budget.

DeKalb County District Attorney's Office:
FY2025 Critical Budget Request- Operations and Special Projects Unit

Supplies and Equipment for New Position				
Desk Phone	\$ 150.00	New Position	x3	\$ 450.00
Cell Phone	\$ 360.00	New Position	x3	\$ 1,080.00
Computer Equipment	\$ 3,330.00	New Position	x3	\$ 9,990.00
			Total:	\$ 11,520.00

--

DeKalb County District Attorney's Office:
FY2025 Critical Budget Request- Operations and Special Projects Unit

Position Requests										
Type	Position	Job Code	Base Salary	Health Cost	FICA	Pension	401 (a)	Annual Salary Cost	Cost per pay period	Prorated Salary Cost (October 13- December 31, 2025)
New	Departmental IT Specialist	99555	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 5,737.50	\$ -	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 96,487.50	\$ 3,711.06	\$ 18,555.29
New	Legal Office Coordinator	45060	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 5,737.50	\$ -	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 96,487.50	\$ 3,711.06	\$ 18,555.29
New	Systems Analyst, Senior	16025	\$ 85,000.00	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 6,502.50	\$ -	\$ 2,550.00	\$ 107,552.50	\$ 4,136.63	\$ 20,683.17
TOTAL								\$300,527.50		\$ 57,793.75

PERSONNEL REQUEST		\$ 57,793.75
OTHER EXPENSES:		\$ 11,520.00
TOTAL REQUEST:		\$ 69,313.75