

Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office

2025 Business Plan Presentation

**District Attorney
Patsy Austin-Gatson**



Rule 3.8: Special Responsibilities of a Prosecutor (Comment)

“A prosecutor has the responsibility of a minister of justice and not simply that of an advocate. The responsibility carries with it specific obligations that the defendant is accorded procedural justice and that guilt is decided upon the basis of sufficient evidence beyond a reasonable doubt.”

– State Bar of Georgia



District Attorney's Office Overview

**District Attorney
Patsy Austin-Gatson**

Investigations

**Special Victims Unit
Child/Elderly Crimes**

Preparation and Trials

Accountability Courts

**Drug/Gang
Task Force**

Juvenile Court

**Victim/Witness
Program**

**Forensics Lab
Investigations**

**Sworn/Non-Sworn
Administration**

**Justice/Community
Initiatives**

**11 Prosecutorial
Divisions**

**Pre-Trial Intervention
Diversion Programs**



2024 Accomplishments

- Four Drug and Gang Taskforce multi-defendant cases resulted in a 100% conviction rate.
- 16 Homicide cases resulted in 100% conviction rate.
- Six Special Victims Unit cases resulting in an 83% conviction rate.
- 54 jury trials resulting in a 90% conviction rate.
- DA's Victim Witness Program awarded the 2024 Georgia Crime Victim Service Collaborative and Innovative Project Award given by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.



Approved 2024 Decision Package Update

2 Assistant District Attorney

- **Staffing:** Both ADAs were hired and are now active in the Prelims Unit.
- **Impact:** The unit prevents the need to reassign attorneys from their primary duties, maintaining overall efficiency.
- **Efficiency Gains:** Improved case management and reduced delays have resulted from this specialization.

1 District Attorney Investigator

- **Staffing:** The new investigator was hired and integrated into our Investigation Unit.
- **Impact:** This addition has enhanced our ability to gather evidence, conduct thorough investigations, and support prosecutorial efforts.

2024 Challenges

| COUNTIES | # OF ADA'S | 2024 POPULATION |
|----------|------------|-----------------|
| Fulton | 136 | 1.12 M |
| Gwinnett | 59 | 1.01 M |
| Dekalb | 98 | 783.44K |

- Not having the adequate amount of ADA positions to service Gwinnett's growing population
 - We need all seven Assistant District Attorney positions approved
- Staffing to adequately support the population
- Office space is an ongoing issue



Notable Metrics/Statistics

| 2024 Crimes | 2024 January – August |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Homicide | 28 |
| Rape | 58 |
| Burglary | 646 |
| Theft | 2589 |
| Gang-related Incidents | 205 |

2024 Deaths by Drugs

81 confirmed drug deaths/34 awaiting toxicology reports



Notable Metrics/Statistics

| | Opened Cases |
|----------------|--------------|
| Superior Court | 2,863 |
| Juvenile Court | 831 |
| Total | 3,694 |

| | Closed Cases |
|----------------|--------------|
| Superior Court | 2,698 |
| Juvenile Court | 820 |
| Total | 3,518 |

- Drug and Gang Task Force (DGTF) has opened 96 cases in 2024
- Special Victim Unit (SVU) has opened 97 cases in 2024



2025 District Attorney Office Plans

- Continue working on the successful initiatives developed by this administration and create new programs for returning citizens
- Develop top prosecutors, investigators, and victim advocates who are the best in the state
- Serving victims of crime in an excellent manner
- Empowering and educating the community through educational programs

And MORE



New Operational Request (7 Additional ADA's)

2 Assistant District Attorneys

The county's growth has led to more cases and a significant backlog. Our staff is overwhelmed, and additional attorneys are needed to handle the increased caseload effectively, ensuring continued quality service to Gwinnett County's residents and crime victims.

Cost – \$267,432



New Operational Request

2 Assistant District Attorneys (Congruency)

Our four deputy chief attorneys oversee courtroom divisions and manage high-profile and time-consuming cases. Recently, our office was assigned the Fulton County murder and bus hijacking case, pulling key attorneys from their regular duties. Additional ADAs are necessary to cover these high-profile cases without disrupting regular operations. In addition, these two attorneys will also assist the deputy chief with other tasks.

Cost – \$285,102



New Operational Request

1 Assistant District Attorney (Appellate)

Appellate advocacy requires specialized expertise to uphold trial convictions in Appeals Courts including the Supreme Court of Georgia. Our two full-time appellate attorneys, including one managing attorney, are currently overextended and cannot handle all appeals. An additional appellate lawyer is needed to effectively manage the division's workload and take some of these tasks off the trial divisions.

Cost – \$133,717



New Operational Request

2 Assistant District Attorneys (Juvenile Court)

Our Juvenile Court division currently covers three courtrooms, and with the appointment of two additional Associate Judges, the workload is expected to increase. The current team of three attorneys, including the managing ADA, is insufficient. Two more attorneys are needed to adequately support the court's growing demands.

Cost – \$267,432



New Operational Request

1 Criminal Investigator

Our office operates with eleven trial units and four specialized divisions to uphold the Gwinnett County standard. Adding a criminal investigator will strengthen these teams, ensuring more effective prosecutions and better outcomes for the county and its residents. This new investigator will support the new ADA positions.

Cost – \$208,739

(this amount includes compensation package, vehicle, equipment etc.)



New Operational Request

2 Victim Witness Advocate

Our Victim Witness Advocates serve as the primary contact for victims, guiding them through the judicial process and ensuring they are informed as required by Marsy's Law. These advocates are essential in representing victims' voices. Additional staff is needed to ensure all victims are properly supported and kept informed about their cases.

Cost – \$140,943



Office Initiatives

- Facilitating our third Restorative Justice Program class for Rehabilitation Enables Dreams (RED)
- Continued our Junior DA/INV Mentorship program
- Held our fourth cohort for Ryzer Program, trial intervention in Juvenile Court
- Proceeded with our virtual homicide victims support group
- Community Conversations to help shed light on essential topics
- Launching our second Citizens Academy to help create a better understanding of the criminal justice system in our community



Total Requested Budget

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Total 2025 Request | \$30,338,694 |
| New Operational Request | \$1,303,365 |

