

# **PRODUCTIVITY REPORT**



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ACQUISITIONS

UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES IN THE  
OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

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In Cooperation With:

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## I. PROJECT SUMMARY

### A. Agency and Productivity Results

This study examined the potential for increased productivity in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, in response to a request by the Clerk for management analysis assistance. The immediate results of this project are primarily in terms of improved delivery of services, although the following quantifiable benefits also are anticipated:

- Estimated annual cost avoidance of \$137,816, by improved procedures and organization structure prior to installation of automated information system;
- Availability of 4,708 man-hours (or 2.26 man-years) per year for more productive utilization; and
- Estimated revenue increase of \$6,000 per year from installation of a self-service microfilm reader/printer system for public use of historical documents. However, it should be noted that a greater benefit of the microfilm reader/printer system for historical documents is the reduced handling of the documents themselves which will minimize their rate of deterioration.

The improved delivery of services noted above is anticipated to result from:

- Better work flow management,
- Decreasing work backlogs,
- Preventive work load control to eliminate future backlogs,
- Improved employee morale,
- More equitable grade structure,
- Increased possibility of self-service for the public's use of book-type records,

- More efficient jury selection and management procedures,
- Increased public accessibility to historical County documents, and
- Improved employee retention rate, thus reducing employee turnover and time spent in training new personnel.

B. Summary Description of Project

This project examined four separate areas of operation within the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court. The accomplishments of the project are summarized below, according to the four areas studied.

1. Staff Structure and Assignment of Responsibility

Based on individual interviews with key staff members, the organization structure was revised and job descriptions, using standard County personnel classifications, were rewritten for those positions requiring restructuring. The appropriate paperwork has been submitted to the Office of Personnel and has been assigned a high priority by that Office in its current review of agency requests for grade structure revisions.

The revised organization structure provides better supervisory control, is a more accurate representation of actual staff responsibilities and organization functions, and establishes a career ladder with upward and lateral mobility. It is designed to enhance employee development. The changes in grade structure affecting 27 staff members, provide more equitable grade hierarchy, with level of pay more appropriate to level of responsibility, at a first-year cost of \$35,894.

2. Records Management Practices

The Clerk's records management practices were comprehensively reviewed, including a detailed inspection of all records storage areas, in order

to prepare a comprehensive inventory and to identify areas in need of improvement. The analysis that followed sought ways to increase security, and to improve the accessibility to historical records and the retrieval capability for records in day-to-day use. A detailed Records Inventory, as complete as was reasonably possible, was produced to assist staff and the public in locating documents more readily, and to provide aggregate data to assist management personnel in analyzing the quantity and placement of records holdings and the utilization of available storage space.

3. Jury Selection and Management Procedures

A plan has been developed for the collection of data needed to assess the jury selection and management processes. This data collection effort will include both the aggregation of one year's worth of data concerning past juries and the installation of data collection instruments for use by Court staff in monitoring the utilization of future jurors in greater detail. The timing of this data collection effort will allow participation by Court staff during the lighter, summer case load period. It will also be coordinated with the design of the grant-funded automated data processing system currently being developed for the Circuit Court, which will include automated selection of jurors.

4. Accessibility to the Clerk's Historical Documents

A plan has been developed for a comprehensive effort, involving several County agencies and outside organizations, to relocate, identify, index

and restore valuable County historical documents which are currently stored in the Courthouse attics at jeopardy to their preservation and without accessibility by staff or the public.

C. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

The major conclusions and recommendations for each of the four areas of this project are presented below in separate sections.

1. Staff Structure and Assignment of Responsibility

a. Conclusions

- (1) The distribution of work between the Records Section and the Courts Section within the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court had not been formally or logically defined according to function.
- (2) The existing organization structure provided an inadequate chain of command for assignment of tasks or for general supervision.
- (3) Specific tasks usually involved several persons in the course of their completion, with the result that responsibility was fragmented, time for task completion was dependent on several segments of waiting time, and opportunity for error and misplaced documents was high.
- (4) Personnel turnover was high and could be attributed in large part to low pay grades and lack of opportunity for advancement.



b. Recommendations

- (1) That the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court be reorganized according to the revised organization structure shown as Appendix A.
- (2) That the changes in grade for 27 positions submitted to the Office of Personnel be approved and implemented as soon as possible.

2. Records Management Practices

a. Conclusions

- (1) The present storage facilities are overcrowded, difficult to use and do not provide adequate security.
- (2) The present office layouts do not offer quiet, conducive work environments, or modern storage and retrieval facilities for the staff and the public.
- (3) The Clerk's Office elevator allows unmonitored public access to all three storage floors. In addition, the first and second floor rear stairway doors allow for unmonitored access to all the storage areas, and the basement front door allows for unmonitored access to the basement storage area.
- (4) Prior to this study, there had been various types of indices which served as inventory listings.
- (5) The public is largely dependent upon the Clerk's staff for help in determining what types of records are available to them and for locating specific documents.

- (6) Low vertical storage units used to house book-type documents are almost twice as expensive as high vertical storage units.
- (7) The traditional, bound-book format for storing land records and other documents entrusted to the Clerk of the Circuit Court is unwieldy, expensive, and consumes large amounts of space, in contrast to more modern microfilm formats which are easier to use, less expensive, more durable, and much more compact.
- (8) There are many book documents produced during World War II, which were processed using an inferior quality of printing chemicals. Eventually, the information in these books will "weep" or become completely illegible.

b. Recommendations

- (1) That the Clerk's Office purchase and install more modern file equipment, such as the Elecompacks approved in the FY1978 budget, and utilize the color-coded, terminal digit filing system designed to accompany their installation, in order to provide a more secure, easy-to-use file system.
- (2) That the first and second floor office layouts be revised, as suggested in Appendices B and C.
- (3) That the second floor selector button in the Clerk's Office elevator be removed and replaced with a key-operated selector device, and a fire lock be installed on the first and second floor stairway doors to improve control of public access to the file areas.

- (4) That the Circuit Court Records Inventory, produced during the course of this study, be updated periodically.
- (5) That the Circuit Court Records Inventory, the user's guide to the inventory, and the locator maps be made available to the staff and the public.
- (6) That any additional storage units purchased for books be the more economical high vertical unit type.
- (7) That a microfilm conversion program be initiated to provide better space utilization and that a self-service viewing and copying program for the public and staff be established.
- (8) That a program be started as soon as possible to reprint the books produced with an inferior quality of printing chemicals. These have been identified on the records inventory.

### 3. Jury Selection and Management Procedures

#### a. Conclusions

- (1) The jury selection process is largely determined by the Code of Virginia, which was recently amended (effective July 1, 1977) to require the utilization of random selection techniques, either manually, mechanically, or electronically, using a current voter registration list and other lists to be designated by the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court.
- (2) Fairfax County maintains a computerized voter registration file, as well as other computerized files which may be suitable for use in the jury selection process.

- (3) Once the names of potential jurors are received by the Court from the jury commissioners, several routine clerical tasks are performed in preparation for the notification of jurors. These tasks could be facilitated by using computer assistance in the preparation of juror summonses, mailing labels, occupation lists, et cetera.
- (4) While the management and utilization of jurors appears to be working smoothly, sufficient aggregate data are not available to use in analysis to determine if any improvements can be made.
- (5) The time-consuming detailed compilation and review of data needed for analysis can best be accomplished during the summer months when the Court calendar is not full.
- (6) That the jury payroll process is cumbersome in requiring calculation of juror mileage and separate accountability and payment for County and State cases.

b. Recommendations

- (1) That juror selection be accomplished by the use of the County's computerized voter registration list and an appropriate random selection technique.
- (2) That a determination be made of the suitability of other computerized files for use in the juror selection process and that those found to be appropriate be recommended to the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court.

- (3) That the automated data processing system currently being developed for the Clerk of the Circuit Court include the capability for preparation of juror notices, mailing labels, et cetera, to reduce routine clerical processing tasks.
- (4) That a system be established to collect data relevant to the analysis of juror selection and management procedures for past and future jury terms, in order to analyze the efficiency of the procedures.
- (5) That the data collection process be started to compile one year's worth of data for past jury terms, during the summer of 1977 with the assistance of temporary summer employees.
- (6) That the feasibility and economy of a flat fee system for persons traveling within the County only (eliminating a separate mileage payment) be determined and that the necessary legislative changes be forwarded for General Assembly consideration.

4. Accessibility to the Clerk's Historical Documents

a. Conclusions

- (1) The current storage of historical records in the Courthouse attic is inadequate because the documents are not stored in an orderly fashion, nor property identified, and adverse conditions in the attic are contributing to the deterioration of the documents.

(2) A plan to alleviate the situation is needed; such a plan should take into account the many factors preventing an immediate, easy solution as identified in the body of this report.

b. Recommendation

That the plan on the following page be considered for adoption by the Clerk of the Circuit Court and that implementation of the plan begin as soon as possible.

EXHIBIT 1

Recommended Plan for Increasing the  
Accessibility of Historical County Records

1. Determine if the scope of the project should be limited to the records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, or should also include other County agencies.
2. Obtain counsel on the legal requirements for retention of historical records and the criteria for designating records as historical.
3. Obtain grant funds, if possible, from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and/or from private foundations.
4. Select a project manager, preferably from among County staff, with expertise in historical records management. The expertise available in the History Section of the Office of Comprehensive Planning should be utilized.
5. Obtain supporting staff, including student interns.
6. Obtain work space for sorting the records.
7. Screen and index the records.
8. Utilize Library of Congress staff for assessing the condition and the need for restoration of the historical documents. In addition, County history program expertise should be utilized to determine the value of these documents.
9. Determine the amount of space and type of facilities needed to store the documents (within the new courthouse or elsewhere).
10. Have the documents restored.
11. Prepare a deposition and retention schedule.
12. Microfilm the documents for use in the historical records search room.

## II. INTRODUCTION

This study provides general background information on the FY1977 productivity study conducted for the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

### A. Purpose

The purpose of this project was to determine the best utilization of staff and other resources within the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court in order to improve productivity and provide better and faster service to the public.

### B. Scope

At the request of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, this project concentrated on four areas of the Court's operation. These four areas, which will be discussed in detail elsewhere in this report are:

- staff structure and assignment of responsibility;
- records management practices;
- jury selection and management procedures; and
- accessibility to the Court's historic documents.

During the course of the study, the following factors placed limitations on the scope of the study and the extent to which recommendations could be implemented:

- requirements of the Code of Virginia and the need for some revisions to the Code;
- the lack of space in the Courthouse;



- the moratorium on reclassifications within the County personnel system; and
- the need to coordinate findings of this project with the design and implementation of the Circuit Court's automated information system.

C. Background

This project was initiated in response to a request from the Clerk of the Circuit Court for management analysis assistance, as part of a comprehensive effort by the then newly-elected Clerk to modernize office procedures and facilities and to improve the utilization of available staff and other resources. During the course of the study, additional in-house analyses by Court staff were being conducted simultaneously and improvements were implemented frequently,<sup>1</sup> including the installation of new business machines, reassignment of personnel, alteration of space allocation, and revised procedures. Consequently, the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court was and is an exciting and dynamic work environment.

In contrast, the status of the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court upon the present incumbent's arrival in January 1976 presented many problem areas which needed to be studied, but had remained unchanged. Of those problem areas encountered, this productivity study sought to examine and develop solutions for the following:

- frequent turnover of personnel;

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<sup>1</sup> This report does not attempt to document all of the changes made during the course of the study, nor to suggest that the process of change has been halted.

- lack of supervisory control of task assignment;
- backlogs of work in areas such as indexing of marriage licenses, charters, and wills, and filing of court cases;
- lack of an inventory of records holdings and storage facilities;
- lack of a space planning program;
- frequent interruption of staff by the public seeking assistance in locating documents;
- overfilled file storage facilities;
- inadequate security for documents;
- frequent, time-consuming searches for misplaced documents;
- need to increase the security of Court records;
- need to examine the efficiency of juror selection and management procedures;
- need for protection of valuable historical documents; and
- need to increase accessibility to records stored in the Courthouse attic.

D. Approach

This project was a joint effort by the Office of Research and Statistics personnel and by staff from the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court. The four areas selected for study were treated as separate projects, although in a few instances information obtained in the analysis for one

was useful in another area. The approach taken in each of the four areas is described below.

1. The staff structure and assignment of responsibility was examined in detail by means of individual interviews conducted with most of the Clerk's employees.
2. Records management practices were examined by inspecting storage facilities, producing an inventory of Circuit Court records holdings, reviewing relevant sections of the Code of Virginia, and consulting with microfilm and storage equipment vendors.
3. The jury system was studied by interviewing the staff participants, observing the process in action, and referring to published material on juror management.
4. The accessibility of the Court's historical documents was determined by inspection of the Colonial Room and attic storage areas and consultation with personnel from other County agencies and outside organizations.

### III. ANALYSIS

This analysis is in four parts--one for each of the four areas of the Clerk's operation that was examined during the productivity study.

#### A. Staff Structure and Assignment of Responsibility

The purpose of this part of the project was to ensure the efficient allocation of the Clerk's staff resources by identifying individual staff responsibilities, determining if those responsibilities were appropriately distributed among the staff and properly reflected by the organization structure, and ensuring a smooth flow of work within the organization.

The data needed for the analysis was obtained from individual desk audit-type interviews with most staff members. The interview topics included the employees' task assignments and responsibilities, their perceptions of problem areas, and their suggestion for improvements. The information thus obtained was then compared for similar positions to determine the need for adjustments.

The interviews revealed a great variety of responsibilities, thus confirming that the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court is a very complex operation. Many of the responsibilities were split among several persons, who were not necessarily assigned to the same organizational units. A good example of this is the responsibility for court case initiation which was divided between clerks whose major responsibility was assisting the public at the public service counter, and the clerks in the Courts Branch who would actually be working with and ultimately be responsible for the court case files. In fact, the case filing handled at the public service counter was not at all relevant to the major function of the counter and its staff.

Consequently, the case initiation functions will be reassigned to the Courts Branch when space permits the relocation of personnel, for assimilation into the data entry process of the automated information system.

One of the most significant findings was that many employees were unable to identify their supervisor, with appropriate certainty, thus illustrating a lack of supervisory control. In several cases, employees had been at their jobs for many years and "knew what to do without being told"; in fact, many employees were familiar with quite a few jobs and could serve as supervisor/overseer for newer employees on a variety of tasks. Nevertheless, the overall operation suffered because no person or persons had been officially designated or made to function as overall manager to control work flow, assign work, or divert resources as the work load required. Since the work load was ever increasing, serious backlogs developed, even though everyone seemed to be working at or even beyond capacity.

Another problem related to organization structure was employee turnover. Records show that during calendar year 1976, 15 employees resigned from the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, out of a total regular staff<sup>2</sup> of 51 positions. Of the 15 employees who left, at least 8 of those resignations were due to low pay and/or lack of career opportunity within the structure of the Clerk's Office. For example, there is a high proportion of positions at the S-06 level and below, compared to other County agencies, and several S-02 and S-03 positions which are rarely found in the County structure. Furthermore, several employees had worked in the Office for many years and had reached the end step in their grade, and, therefore, had no opportunity for advancement in pay. Because of the fragmented nature of the assignment

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<sup>2</sup>Excluding two intern-type law clerks and the elected Clerk himself.

of responsibility, there was also very little opportunity for career advancement to more satisfying or challenging positions.

The revised organization and grade structure is designed to help correct the existing situation. It should be noted that on a long-term basis, the Clerk would prefer a reclassification of positions to provide lateral as well as upward mobility. Revised job descriptions were written for 27 positions which will be affected by the new grade structure. The cost of upgrading these positions will be \$35,894 for the first year for all 27 positions, based on the FY1978 pay scale. As pointed out elsewhere in this report, the revised structure provides the following qualitative benefits:

- an expanded career ladder,
- pay more appropriate to level of responsibility,
- increased supervision,
- reduced turnover rate and decreased time spent training new employees,
- better control of work flow, and
- improved morale.

The proposed reorganization and revised grade structure is expected to have long-range benefits in connection with the installation of the automated information system currently being designed for the Circuit Court. The orderly work flow which will result from the improved supervisory control will alleviate the pressure for additional staff frequently experienced with the advent of an automated information system. Many of the tasks related to the new system will likely be absorbed by existing staff because of the realignment of duties implemented by the revised organization structure. Since courts in other jurisdictions installing automated information systems have reported personnel

increases averaging 25 percent, this means a potential savings of as many as 14 clerical positions.

B. Records Management Practices

1. Compilation of the Inventory

The analysis of the records management practices of the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court was based primarily on the records inventory produced during this study. The inventory was prepared after a shelf-by-shelf, cabinet-by-cabinet inspection and listing of the Clerk's records holdings. Approximately 85 percent of the Clerk's total records were included in the inventory; index books and historical documents in the Courthouse attics (which are discussed elsewhere in this report) were the primary types of documents excluded. The inventory was produced and updated by means of keypunched card input to the computer, to eliminate repetitive typing and unwieldy corrections and to facilitate continuous updating in the future. In addition, locator maps and a users' guide were prepared to make the inventory self-explanatory.

2. Content and Use of the Inventory

The specific information contained on the inventory includes:

- type of file,
- file number or date sequence,
- location,
- type and capacity of storage unit,
- kind of printing used for book-type documents, and
- microfilm sequence number, if any.

The primary use of the inventory is to assist the Clerk's staff and the public in locating records. Considering that the Clerk's records holdings increase at the equivalent rate of 32 files per day and 1 book per day, the easily updated feature of the inventory is both valuable and necessary. In addition to serving as a guide to the Clerk's records, the information on the inventory can be used as a management tool to monitor the utilization of space and storage facilities, to determine the progress of microfilm production, and to determine the rate at which documents requiring reprinting have been replaced.

### 3. Problem Areas

The analysis of data obtained from the inventory served to confirm and add quantification to the problems identified during inspection of the Clerk's records holdings--problems which were already familiar to the Clerk's staff--and to point to their solution. Three major problem areas are discussed below.

#### a. Inadequate Security

The problem of inadequate security for many of the Clerk's records is evidenced by their distribution throughout the courthouse on three floors and in three attics. Most of the records are directly accessible by the public as part of a self-service system. To the extent that easy access is desirable, the use of the updated inventory will serve to improve the public's ability to locate the records efficiently and to decrease the public's dependence on the Clerk's staff for assistance in locating documents.

There is currently no control by staff over public use of book documents, but there is also little danger of losing these large



volumes. On the other hand, there is only minimal control by the staff over public use of court case files, and the opportunity for misplacing or "unauthorized borrowing" of these documents is much greater. Time-consuming searches for misplaced documents occur with some regularity and only recently during the course of the study was a charge-out card system implemented to identify the borrower or file destination when a folder is removed from its place. The modern file equipment recommended below will improve security, as well as overcrowding.

Furthermore, the current physical layout of the files area does not allow control by staff. The direct public access provided by the rear elevator and stairway increases the security problem in the second floor files area. To alleviate these control problems, revised space layouts, providing for public service counters for files control, are recommended as alternatives (see Appendices B and C).

b. Overcrowded Facilities

The analysis of inventory data also showed that file space was at a premium for the Court's documents. Although at the time the inventory was taken in the fall of 1976, approximately 5 percent of book slots were available, the book documents received since then have utilized available space and incoming books will have to be stacked on the floor within the next two months. Book documents are stored in two kinds of shelving units--high vertical units which hold 60 books each, and low vertical units which hold 48 each and provide a work table on the top surface. Cost data

show that each book slot in a low vertical unit is \$24.40 more expensive than a book slot in a high vertical unit. While conversion to high vertical units would provide more economical utilization of file area space, the work area provided by the top of the low vertical units is needed as long as books are the primary format used for making the documents available to the public and no other work space, such as a reading room, is available. Furthermore, the cost of total replacement of all low vertical units would be prohibitively expensive.

The continued use of the traditional book format, however, does not compare favorably to the more modern microfilm format. The book format is more expensive and unwieldy and requires much more storage space than a microfilm system. One reel of microfilm holds the equivalent of 1 1/2 to 2 books of data, weighs only a few ounces and occupies only a few cubic inches of space; while the large deed books weigh nearly 30 pounds and require a special roller rack for ease of handling. Cost of microfilm systems vary greatly depending on the format chosen, but they provide a relatively inexpensive durable record.

In regard to files, the Clerk had contacted storage equipment vendors for information on improved facilities. The study prepared for the Clerk by the Sperry Remington Company recommended the use of high open mobile files (called Elecompacks). This solution would provide improved utilization of space by requiring much less floor space and be much easier to use than the aged, battered, and overcrowded conventional file cabinets now used. In addition,

because the Elecompack files in their normal closed position have no aisle for access, they provide more security and decrease the possibility of unauthorized use. The Elecompacks have been approved for the FY1978 budget and are expected to be installed by October 1977; prior to their installation, a rearrangement of office space will be necessary and will be made possible when additional space becomes available in the present courthouse in September 1977.

c. Need for Reprinting Some Records

Another problem area which the inventory process helped to quantify is the identification of books which were printed during World War II with white characters on black paper. At the time of the inventory, a total of 2,235 books or nearly 40 percent of all the books held by the Clerk's office were of this type. This photostatic method of printing, which is no longer used, employed printing chemicals that produced printed images that eventually "weep," or fade out completely. In order to preserve the information in these books, it will be necessary to reprint all of them in the standard "black on white" method. Furthermore, the Clerk of the Circuit Court has a legal obligation to retain all the information in the "white on black" books, making the reprinting imperative.

C. Jury Selection and Management Procedures

The analysis of the jury selection and management process was affected by the state of flux caused by a recent legislative change and the impact of the automated information system now being designed for the Circuit Court by the County's Office of Research and Statistics.

1. General Description of the Jury Selection and Management Process

The Code of Virginia prescribes the major steps of the jury process, as well as some of the detailed procedures. The following is an overview of the process.

By December of each year, the nine appointed jury commissioners submit to the Court a list of names from their respective districts totalling 4,000 prospective jurors. A few weeks prior to the start of each court term,<sup>3</sup> one of the judges and several members of the Clerk's staff draw 500 names from this list to serve as jurors for the two-month term. Summonses are delivered by the Sheriff's deputies notifying each juror of the date, place, and time to report for jury duty. The group of 500 is divided into four groups of 125 each and assigned to a day of the week, Monday through Thursday; each juror is required to report for duty on the designated day each week of the term unless instructed otherwise. On its first day of the term, each group of jurors is assembled and instructed by a judge and by staff members from the Sheriff's Department and the Clerk's Office regarding their duties as jurors and the mechanics of the jury process. Jurors who desire to be excused consult with the judge at this point.

For any given court day, it is the responsibility of the Clerk's staff to determine the number of jurors needed based on the number and types of trials on the daily court docket. Since the cases are not finalized for the docket until late in the afternoon of the day before the court date, jurors are notified if their presence is required by means of a

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<sup>3</sup>The six court terms per year occur in January, March, May, July, September, and November.

tape recorded message<sup>4</sup> which is made available at 4:30 p.m. the day before the court date. It is each juror's responsibility to obtain this information and report only as needed. It is possible, however, for cases which are scheduled for trial by jury, to be settled out of court the afternoon before the trial or as late as the morning of the trial. In some instances, the jurors will have arrived at the Courthouse for jury duty before a case has been settled.<sup>5</sup> Jurors are assigned to cases and empaneled or rejected for service according to the court's rules of procedure.<sup>6</sup> Jurors are dismissed for the day as soon as the case they are involved in is finished, provided all other jury trials have been staffed with jurors. This process continues each week of the term, at the end of which the jury payroll is processed.

## 2. Impact of the Recent Code Change

The Code of Virginia was amended during the last legislative session to require random selection of jurors from the voter registration list and the other lists which the Chief Judge may choose. Since the voter registration list in Fairfax County and other extensive citizen lists, such as the real estate assessment file and the personal property tax file, are computerized, the logical random

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<sup>4</sup>Known as a Code-a-Phone, this device was installed in November 1976.

<sup>5</sup>The frequency of this occurrence and the types of cases in which it is likely to happen are among the items to be determined by the proposed compilation of data on past and future juries, in order to ensure the most economical number of jurors is being called. This would minimize jury payroll costs since jurors are paid whenever they attend court, whether or not they are actually used in a case.

<sup>6</sup>The various steps in the assignment and empanelment process have not been detailed here, but within those steps there occur several waiting periods which will be accounted for in the proposed data collection process for future juries.

selection method to be used in Fairfax County would be electronic, replacing the traditional hand-drawn method now used. The result of drawing juror names from comprehensive citizen lists instead of the current practice which leaves the selection of source lists up to each jury commissioner (and tends to be based on membership lists from organizations with which the jury commissioner is familiar) is likely to be the selection of a more representative cross-section of citizens as jurors. The impact of this may well be totally different qualification and response rates which could alter the number of jurors which need to be drawn in order to produce a workable number of actual jurors serving. For this reason, it is important to determine how well the current system is working and how much leeway there is within the size of the juror pool currently in use, so that any necessary adjustments can be made with a smooth transition.

3. Other Roles for Computerized Processing

Much of the manual processing now employed in organizing the list of juror names, once they have been drawn from the master pool, will be easily accomplished by computer assistance when the computerized random selection of names is implemented. The tedious addressing and alphabetizing tasks are estimated to require 8 man-hours of a Clerk Typist II's time each term, or the equivalent of 48 man-hours annually. While this will not be a direct savings to reduce the Clerk's budget or decrease his staffing needs, it will result in increased productivity by freeing the time of the staff for additional tasks.

The extent of computerized assistance feasible for the jury selection and management process is being considered in the development of the

Circuit Court information system currently underway. Computerized assistance may also be feasible in monitoring juror days served and calculating the resulting payroll. However, as discussed below, there are other possible changes which could be employed to simplify jury payroll processing.

4. Additional Data Needed for Analysis

While the current jury management system appears to be working smoothly, the data needed to confirm this are not readily available. Much of the data needed to evaluate the management and utilization of past juries can be found in the official court term papers, but the time and personnel needed to compile and aggregate the data have not been available. Such a task is best done during the summer term, when the Court's schedule is not as busy as during other times of the year. Current plans call for the utilization of temporary summer personnel and some Court Clerk staff, along with Office of Research and Statistics support, to compile the data in the summer of 1977. Appendix D lists some of the data items to be collected for past and future juries. Evaluation of these data will determine the number of jurors having to be paid. Furthermore, starting with the July 1977 term, Court Clerks will be asked to maintain records on the exact utilization of juror time spent at the Courthouse, thus maximizing juror productivity and minimizing juror time spent waiting, which is traditionally a basic factor in juror dissatisfaction. The time intervals to be recorded are also shown in Appendix D. The criteria and formulae provided in LEAA's manuals on juror usage and jury system management will be applied in the evaluation.

An additional aspect of the juror management system which requires evaluation is the jury payroll process. The current system, largely prescribed by the Code of Virginia, is cumbersome and time-consuming, as it requires the computation of juror mileage (at 12 cents per mile) to and from the Courthouse and the separation of per diem payments (at \$12 per day) according to the type of case served--State (criminal) cases or County (civil) cases. Separate checks are issued for State and County cases. The feasibility and economy of a flat fee system, with no separate payment for mileage, to reimburse persons traveling within Fairfax County will be determined once data for past juror payments are compiled and a comparison made of payment totals under the current system and the flat fee system. If the processing time, which currently totals approximately 360 man-hours per year, can be reduced by one-half by using a simplified payment system, this would free 180 man-hours annually, in addition to a possible reduction in total juror fees paid. Therefore, if such a change is determined to be both feasible and economical, a recommendation will be made for Code revision to allow such a flat fee for juror payment and to eliminate the requirement for separate accounting of and payment for State and County cases.

D. Accessibility to the Clerk's Historical Documents

As noted previously, the Clerk's historical documents, stored in the Courthouse attics, were not included on the inventory. This omission from the inventory was necessary for the following reasons:

- there is little order to their storage arrangement;
- the Clerk's records are mixed in with the records of other agencies; and
- there are few indices or listings of the records stored there.



This lack of order renders these records inaccessible by the Clerk's staff or the public and, thus, does not meet the Clerk's legal responsibility to make these public records available for public use.

This serious situation is compounded by a degree of urgency. Many of the records in the attics are very old and, to begin with, not in optimal condition. The attic storage areas provide adverse conditions of extreme temperature, large amounts of dust, and various forms of vermin. In addition, many of the records are stored in boxes which are precariously piled one on top of the other. This combination of factors increases the rate of deterioration of the records and makes it imperative that corrective action be taken as soon as possible. However, the need to act quickly is complicated by a scarcity of space in which to move the documents for sorting; the need to coordinate the interests of several agencies and organizations; and the need to act cautiously to ensure that all documents are carefully handled, accurately identified and indexed, and properly preserved. In addition, it is also necessary to identify legal requirements for retention, to develop a retention and disposition schedule, and to provide for adequate space and facilities in the new courthouse, scheduled for completion in 1981.

Although actual screening of the attic records was beyond the scope of this study, certain preliminary steps have been taken. Discussions were held with members of the Fairfax County History Commission and the staff of the History Branch of the County's Office of Comprehensive Planning, who are very much interested in these historical records. Prior to this study, in January 1974, these agencies, in conjunction with the Clerk of the Circuit

Court, were involved in removing some valuable historical documents from the attics and placing them in the newly established Colonial Room in the basement of the Courthouse. Since then, the History Commission has been cataloging, indexing, and evaluating this material. Other community and national organizations with expertise in history and the preservation of documents were contacted, including the National Archives, the Library of Congress, George Mason University, and the University of Virginia. These organizations expressed serious interest in Fairfax County's historical documents and can contribute ideas, manpower, and other resources to a restoration and preservation effort. Lastly, possible funding sources were explored. The National Historical Publications and Records Commission, part of the National Archives, provides grant monies to governments for restoration and preservation of historic documents, and at least 10 private foundations also provide funds for such projects.

As a result of this analysis, a recommended plan has been developed (provided on page 11) to accomplish the screening, indexing, and restoring of the Clerk's historical documents and to pave the way for the eventual microfilming of these valuable records. The ultimate goal of this project, therefore, is to establish a sizable collection of valuable historical documents for use in an historical records search room utilizing microfilm reader/printers. The most significant benefit of this project will be the protection of the historical documents themselves. Utilization of a microfilm copy of the documents will reduce handling and decrease the rate of deterioration. When such an operation becomes a reality, the Clerk of the Circuit Court has estimated that increased revenue of approximately \$6,000 per year can be realized by charging 50 cents per page, or one half the maximum allowable fee.

#### IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND COST SAVINGS

##### A. Implementation Schedule

This section summarizes implementation dates for recommendations contained in this report.

##### 1. Staff Structure and Assignment of Responsibility

- a. The proposed revisions in grade structure and level of pay are expected to be approved by the Office of Personnel early in FY1978.
- b. The proposed reorganization will be put into effect shortly thereafter.

##### 2. Records Management Practices

- a. The responsibility for updating the Records Inventory should be assigned after the reorganization has taken effect and a period of adjustment has occurred. A suitable time interval for periodic updating (such as monthly) should be established at that time.
- b. When this has been done, the Records Inventory, users' guide, and the locator maps should be made available for use by the staff and the public.
- c. A microfilm reader and a reader/printer are scheduled to arrive in August 1977 for use with existing microfilm records, e.g., deed records dating from 1742 to 1822 on microfiche and more current land records on microfilm reel.

- d. The purchase of the Elecompacks has been approved for FY1978 and will be ordered so that arrival and installation will occur in October 1977 when additional space becomes available in the present courthouse.
- e. In conjunction with the expansion into the additional space, office layouts will be revised.

3. Jury Selection and Management Procedures

- a. The compilation of time sequence data on future jurors will begin with the July 1977 term.
- b. The data collection effort regarding past jury terms will begin in the summer of 1977, using temporary summer personnel.
- c. The analysis of possible changes to jury management and utilization procedures should be prepared in time for legislative proposals for the next General Assembly.
- d. A system for the random selection of jurors using the voter registration file, and other appropriate County files, must be ready by January 1, 1978, according to the Code of Virginia.
- e. The Circuit Court's automated case processing information system, including the jury management subsystem, will be operational by July 1, 1978.

4. Accessibility to the Clerk's Historical Documents

- a. Preliminary sorting of documents in the courthouse attics will begin with close supervision of temporary personnel in the summer of 1977.

- b. Consideration and adoption of the proposed plan for increasing accessibility (presented on page 11) is pending.

B. Cost Savings Summary

As can be seen from the preceding implementation timetable, this has been a multi-faceted project with many accomplishments past, present, and still to come. The majority of these accomplishments, as noted in the Project Summary of this report, are improved delivery of services, which in many instances require expenditure of funds to install modern equipment and to achieve more equitable pay for the Clerk's staff, with no demonstrable cost savings. However, Exhibit 2 details the ways in which the specific improvements resulting from this study will free a total of 4,708 man-hours or 2.26 man-years for more productive utilization of manpower.

In the area of cost avoidance, the improved organization structure, new career ladder, and revised procedures will enable the Clerk of the Circuit Court's staff to absorb most of the tasks created by the automated information system. This will alleviate the pressure for additional staff which has been experienced by Courts in other jurisdictions. The average staff increase experienced elsewhere has been 25 percent, which is equivalent to 14 of the Clerk's 56 positions. At an average grade of S-06-2, or \$8,486 per year, and allowing 16 percent for fringe benefits, this totals a potential \$137,816 cost avoidance.

In the category of increased revenue, the Clerk of the Circuit Court has estimated that the availability of a self-service microfilm reader/printer system for copying historical documents will generate considerable interest-- at least 1,000 copies per month. If the current charge of \$1 per document

page were reduced to 50 cents per page because of the self-service nature of the proposed system, the additional revenue would total \$6,000 per year:

1,000 copies per month = 12,000 copies per year at 50¢ per copy = \$6,000 per year.

Summary

More Productive Use of Manpower	- 2.26 man-years
Potential Cost Avoidance	- \$137,816/year
Potential Increased Revenue	- \$6,000/year

EXHIBIT 2

Clerk of the Circuit Court  
 Summary of Improvements in Utilization of Staff Resources

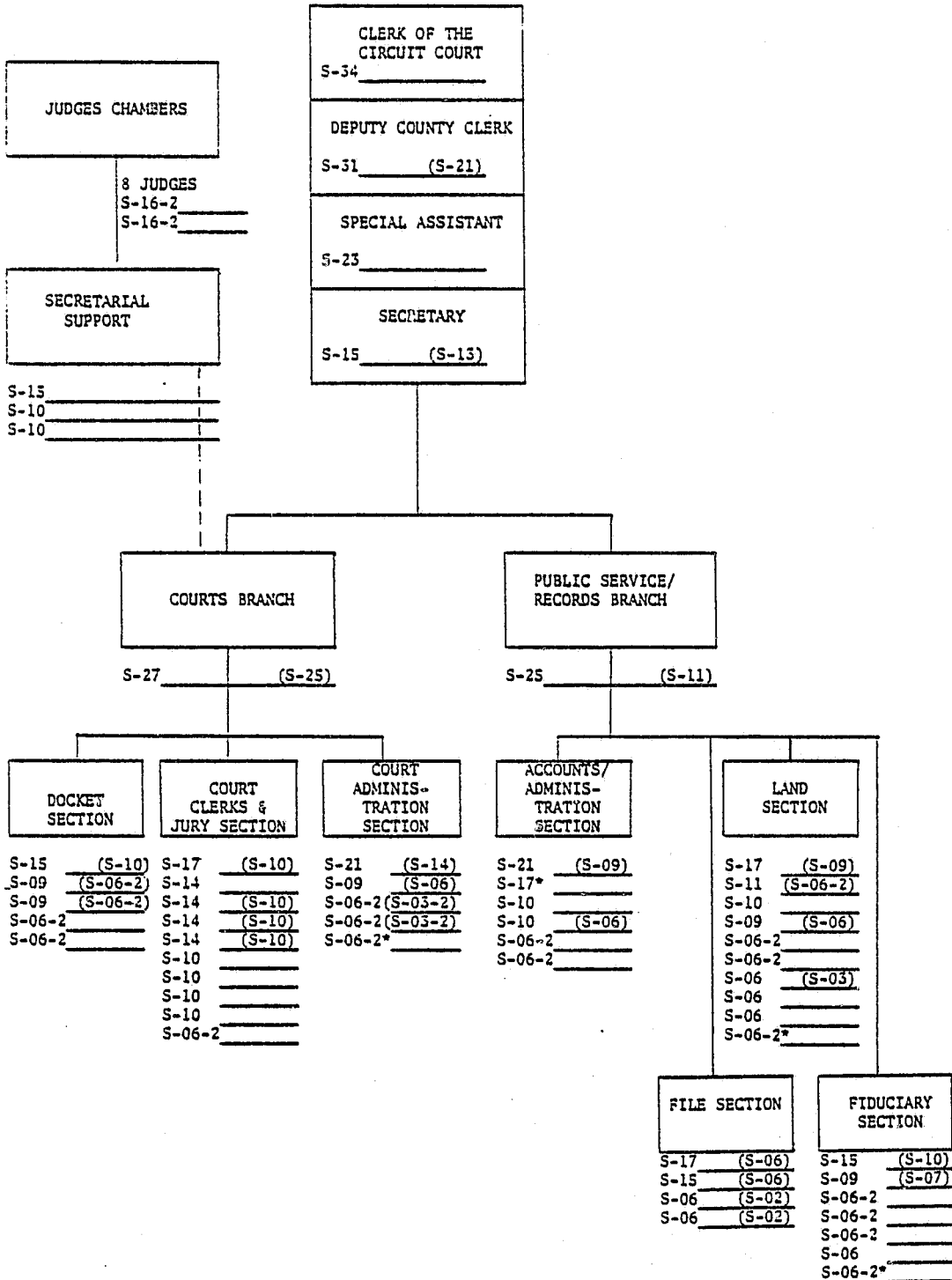
Improvement	Impact	Estimated Time Involved Currently	Man-hours Per Year Available for Better Utilization
Installation of the Code-A-Phone (accomplished 11/76)	Elimination of Daily Calls to Jurors - by Clerk's staff = 1 man-hour per day - by Sheriff's staff = 4 man-hours per day	5 man-hours per day 4 days per week 50 weeks a year	1,000
Implementation of Automated Juror Information System (scheduled for Spring 1978)	Reduction of Clerical Effort in Juror Notification	8 man-hours per term (6 terms per year)	48
Proposed Change in Code of Virginia to Allow Flat Fee for Juror Payments (time-frame uncertain)	Elimination of Payment for Juror mileage - reduce staff time by 1/2	1 1/2 man-weeks per term (which would be reduced by 1/2 under proposed Code change)	180
Update of Records Inventory and Distribution for Public Use (timeframe uncertain)	Reduction in Staff Interruptions by Public Requests for Aid in Locating Documents	5 min. per hour for 3 Clerks = 2 hours/day	480
Installation of Elecompacts, including terminal digit filing, color coded folders, charge out cards and control counter (to begin in part in October 1977)	Reduction in Staff Time Spent in Searching for Misplaced Files	2 man-hours per day	480
Implementation of Self-Service Microfilm Reader/Printer System (first reader/printer equipment scheduled to arrive July 1977)	Reduction in Staff Time Spent in Making Copies for the Public	Estimated 14 man-hours per day (of which 3/4 would be saved by self-service system)	2,520
		TOTAL	4,708 man-hours available or 2.26 man-years.

APPENDIX A

Recommended Organization Structure and Grade Adjustments  
as of July 1, 1977



Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court  
 Recommended Organization Structure and Grade Adjustments  
 as of July 1, 1977



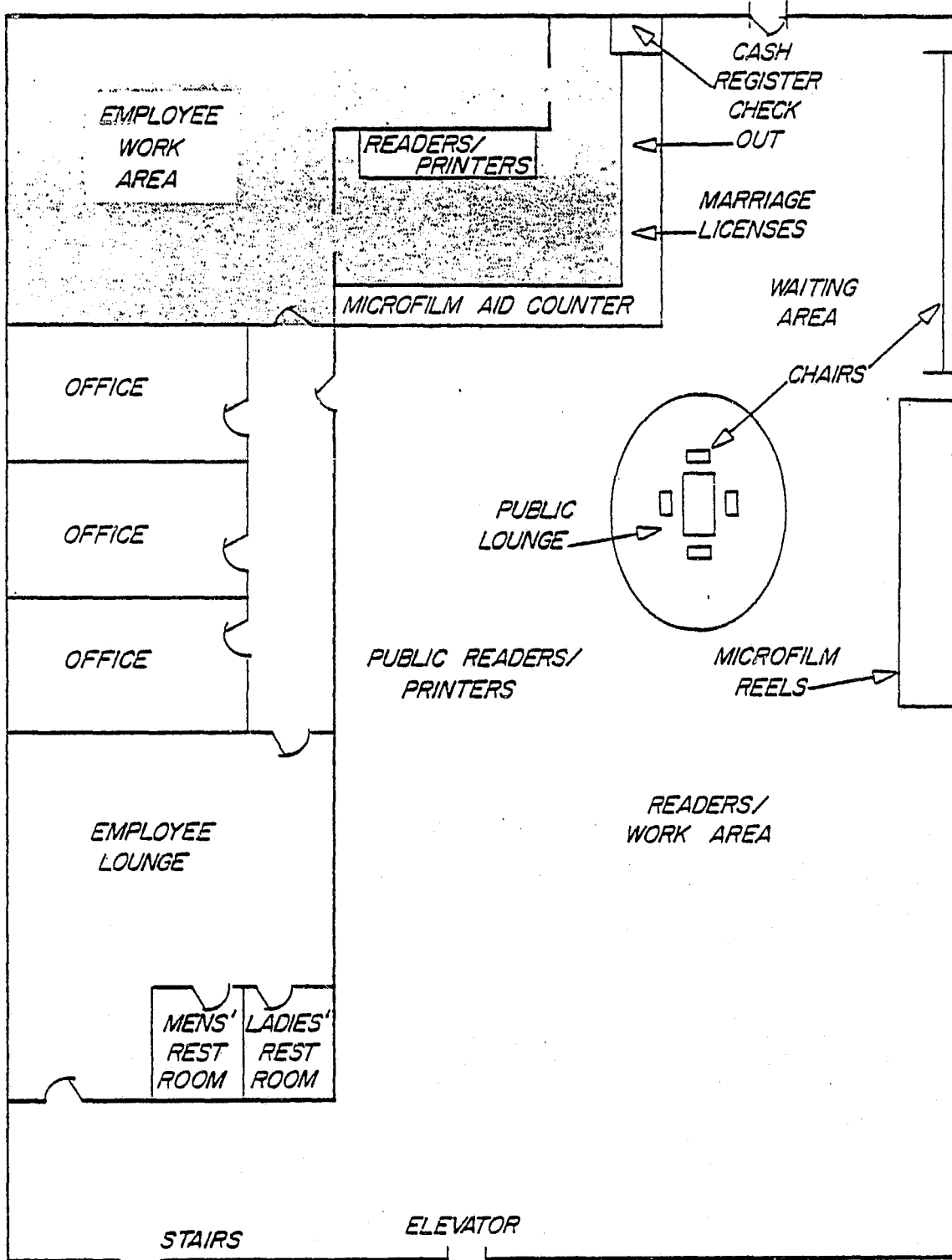
\* NEW POSITION 7/1/77

NOTE: The grade entries on the right-hand side of the box are the current grades, shown only for those grades which are recommended to be changed.

APPENDIX B

Recommended Office Layout - First Floor Room 136

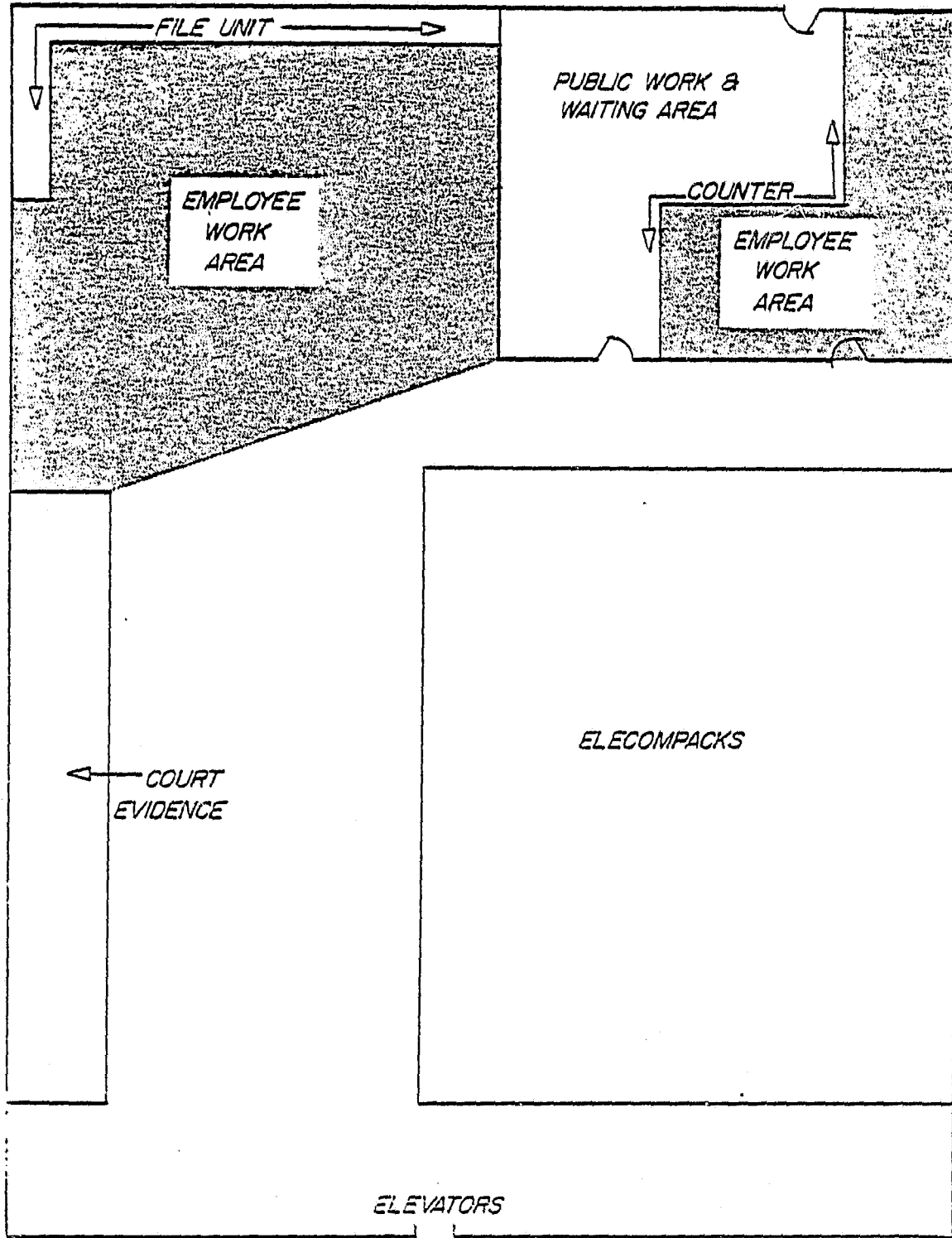
Clerk of the Circuit Court  
Recommended Office Layout - First Floor Room 136



APPENDIX C

Recommended Office Layout - Second Floor 233

Clerk of the Circuit Court  
Recommended Office Layout - Second Floor 233



APPENDIX D

Information Needed for Jury System Evaluation

## INFORMATION NEEDED FOR JURY SYSTEM EVALUATION

### Jury Selection

- Number of names submitted by jury commissioners.
- For each term:
  - Number of names drawn (same as number of summonses issued).
  - Number of summonses delivered directly (i.e., in person to the prospective juror or to a member of his family).
  - Number of summonses posted at juror's address.
  - Number of summonses undelivered.
  - Number of jurors excused by a judge prior to term day, by reason for excuse.
  - Number of jurors who report on term day.
  - Number of jurors who will serve, but could not report on term day.

### Case Load

- For each day of term:
  - Number and type of cases set for trial.
    - jury
    - non-jury
  - Number and type of cases for which jurors are called, but no jury is empaneled (because case is settled just before court).
  - Number and type of cases in which jury is empaneled, then case settled quickly in court without jury consideration.
  - Number and type of cases heard with jury.

### Management of Jurors

- For each juror:
  - Number of times chosen for voir dire.

- Number of juries served on, by type of case.
- Previous jury experience.
  - Fairfax County
  - Elsewhere
- Amount of income lost, if any, due to jury service.

Utilization of Juror Time

- Times to be recorded for each case using a jury:
  - Time assembled in jury room.
  - Time assigned to courtroom.
  - Time voir dire<sup>1</sup> started.
  - Time voir dire ended.
  - Time trial started.
  - Time trial ended or jurors dismissed.
  - Number of times sent from courtroom by judge and duration of each such recess.

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<sup>1</sup>Jury Selection Process.