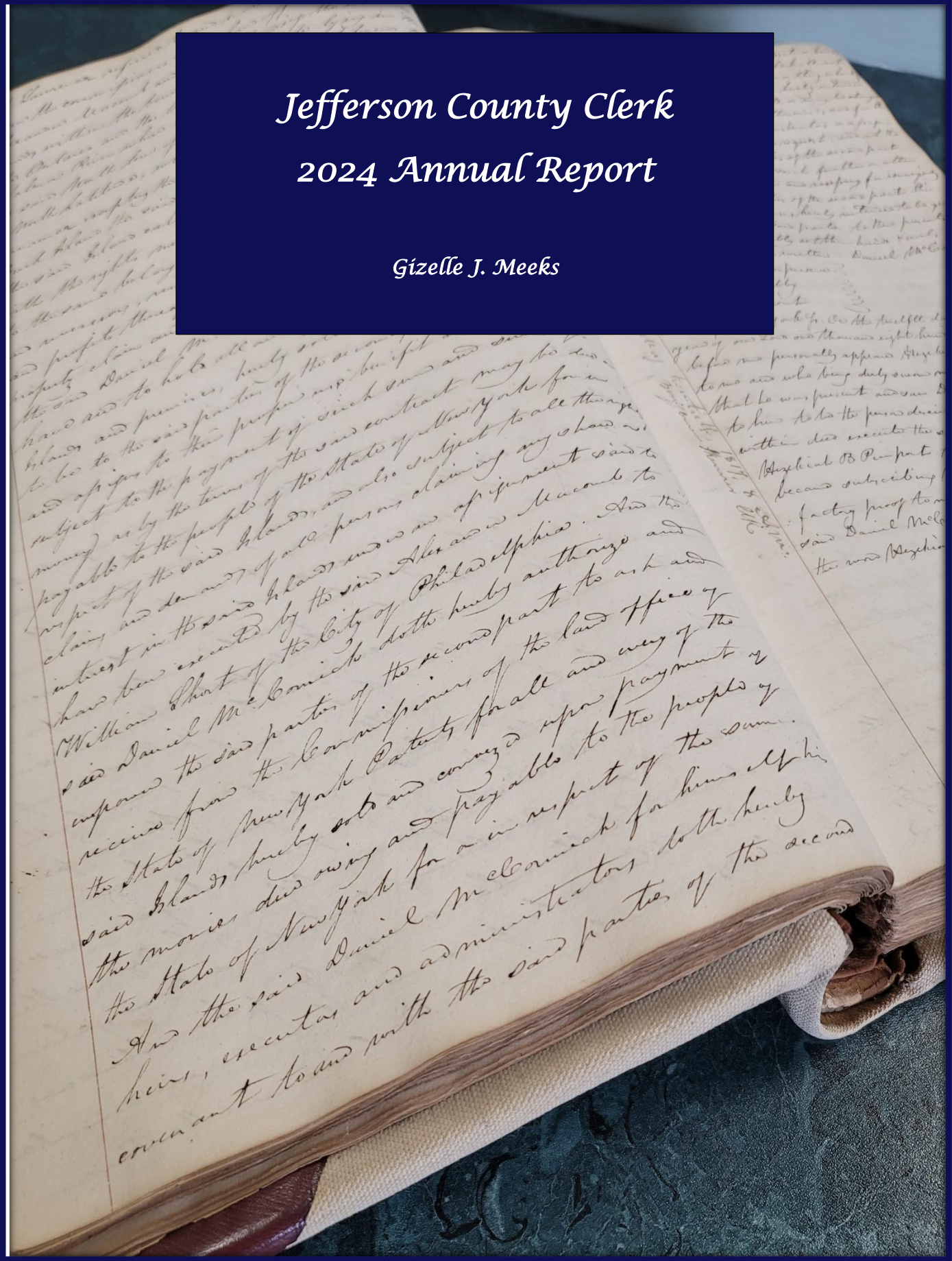


Jefferson County Clerk

2024 Annual Report

Gizelle J. Meeks





Jefferson County Clerk

Honorable Members of the Jefferson County Legislature
195 Arsenal Street
Watertown, NY 13601

Honorable Colleagues:

I hereby submit the 2024 Annual Report of the Jefferson County Clerk. The duties of the County Clerk are mandated by the New York State Constitution and federal, state, and local law. The dedicated staff works laboriously to carry out these duties and serve the public.

The County Clerk's Office is a state constitutional office that is the primary depositor for records created within the County. The County Clerk serves as the Clerk of the Corporation of Jefferson County and a registrar of mortgages, deeds, and all real property records within Jefferson County. The County Clerk also serves as Clerk of the Supreme and County Courts and is commissioned to collect all fees of the courts and protect, produce upon request, and preserve court records. Under Vehicle and Traffic Law, the County Clerk acts as an agent for the Commissioner of the New York State Motor Vehicles Department. In addition, the County Clerk serves as the Jefferson County Record Management Officer (RMO) and serves as an agent to the U.S. Dept of State Passport Agency.

The Jefferson County Clerk's Office collects and distributes monies for various state agencies. The County's share of these collections is submitted monthly to the County Treasurer with a report detailing the collections. The following pages detail the monies collected by the Jefferson County Clerk's Office and the Department of Motor Vehicle Office paid to the County Treasurer and disbursed to different agencies throughout the state.

As always, I aspire to continue providing outstanding services while always striving to do better than before. We will continue to work hard to serve the constituents of Jefferson County and hope to contribute even more to the overall fund balance for the County in 2025.

As always, should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me anytime.

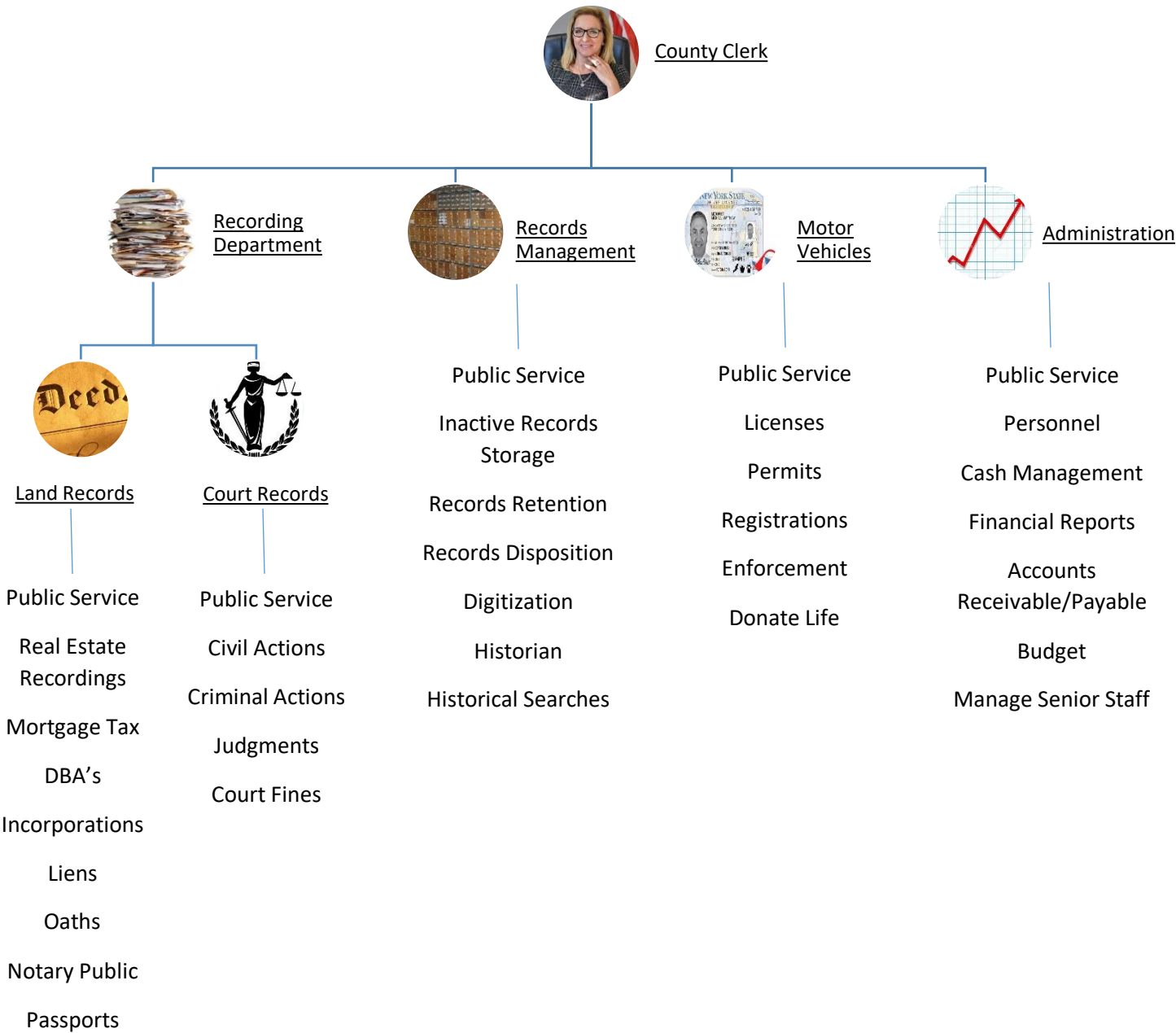
Respectfully Submitted,

Hon. Gizelle J. Meeks
Jefferson County Clerk

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Jefferson County Clerk Organizational Chart



Statement of All Funds Collected and Disbursed

	Jefferson County	Towns	NYS	Total Rec'd
Mortgage Tax	\$ 390,516.72	\$ 1,782,886.86	\$ 740,081.49	\$ 2,913,485.07
Real Estate Transfer Tax	\$ 4,098.00	\$ -	\$ 1,917,681.95	\$ 1,921,779.95
NYS ORPS	\$ 32,481.00	\$ -	\$ 505,644.00	\$ 538,125.00
Court Fees	\$ 130,655.25	\$ -	\$ 1,444,187.98	\$ 1,574,843.23
DWI Fines (Probation)	\$ 15,747.99	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,747.99
Cul Ed./Records Management	\$ 15,494.00	\$ -	\$ 294,753.05	\$ 310,247.05
Notary ¹	\$ 3,460.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,460.00
County Clerk Fees ²	\$ 856,729.51	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 856,729.51
Department of Motor Vehicles ³	\$ 811,924.75	\$ -	\$ 2,636,782.19	\$ 3,448,706.94
Totals:	\$ 2,261,107.22	\$ 1,782,886.86	\$ 7,539,130.66	\$ 11,583,124.74

¹ Includes \$240.00 for December notaries, payment received January 15, 2025

² Includes \$643.00 for December incorporations, payment received January 10, 2025

³ Includes \$26,385.66 in DMV online revenue that was received January 23, 2025

County Clerk Fees Breakdown

Copy Fees	\$ 41,218.78
E-Commerce Subscriptions	\$ 73,741.50
Cover Page Fees	\$ 52,765.00
Filing Fees	\$ 43,428.00
Recording Fees	\$ 593,351.72
Miscellaneous	\$ 3,677.00
Overages	\$ 3,152.58
Passport Fees	\$ 15,925.00
Photo Fee	\$ 6,395.00
UCCs	\$ 15,080.00
Bank Account Interest	\$ 7,994.93
Total:	\$ 856,729.51

Expenses by Sub-Department

1410 - County Clerk Expenses

Personal Services	\$	376,653.95
Office Expenses *	\$	130,501.82
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$	222,443.89
Subtotal	\$	729,599.66

* This includes our document management system of \$114,000.00

1415 - DMV Expenses

Personal Services	\$	612,808.69
Office Expenses	\$	6,156.83
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$	425,424.13
Subtotal	\$	1,044,389.65

* Change in DMV Expense is from the addition of a DMV Deputy

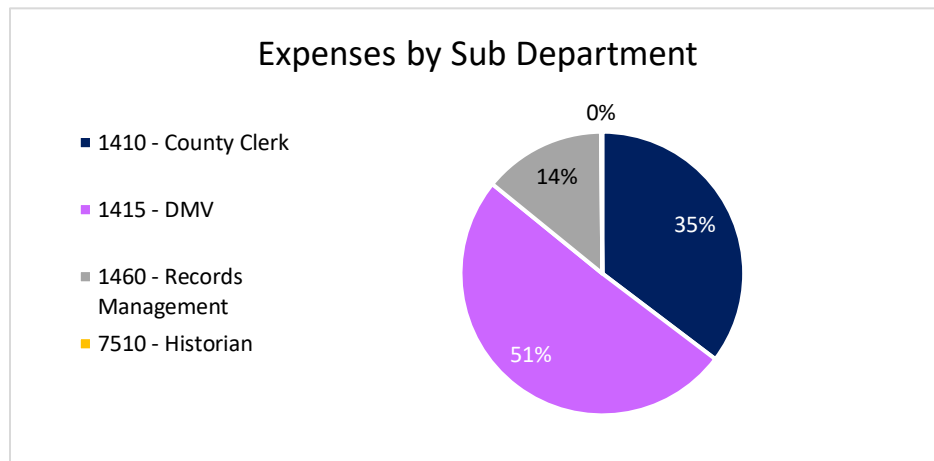
1460 - Records Management Expenses

Personal Services	\$	175,284.18
Office Expenses	\$	7,410.84
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$	106,085.22
Subtotal	\$	288,780.24

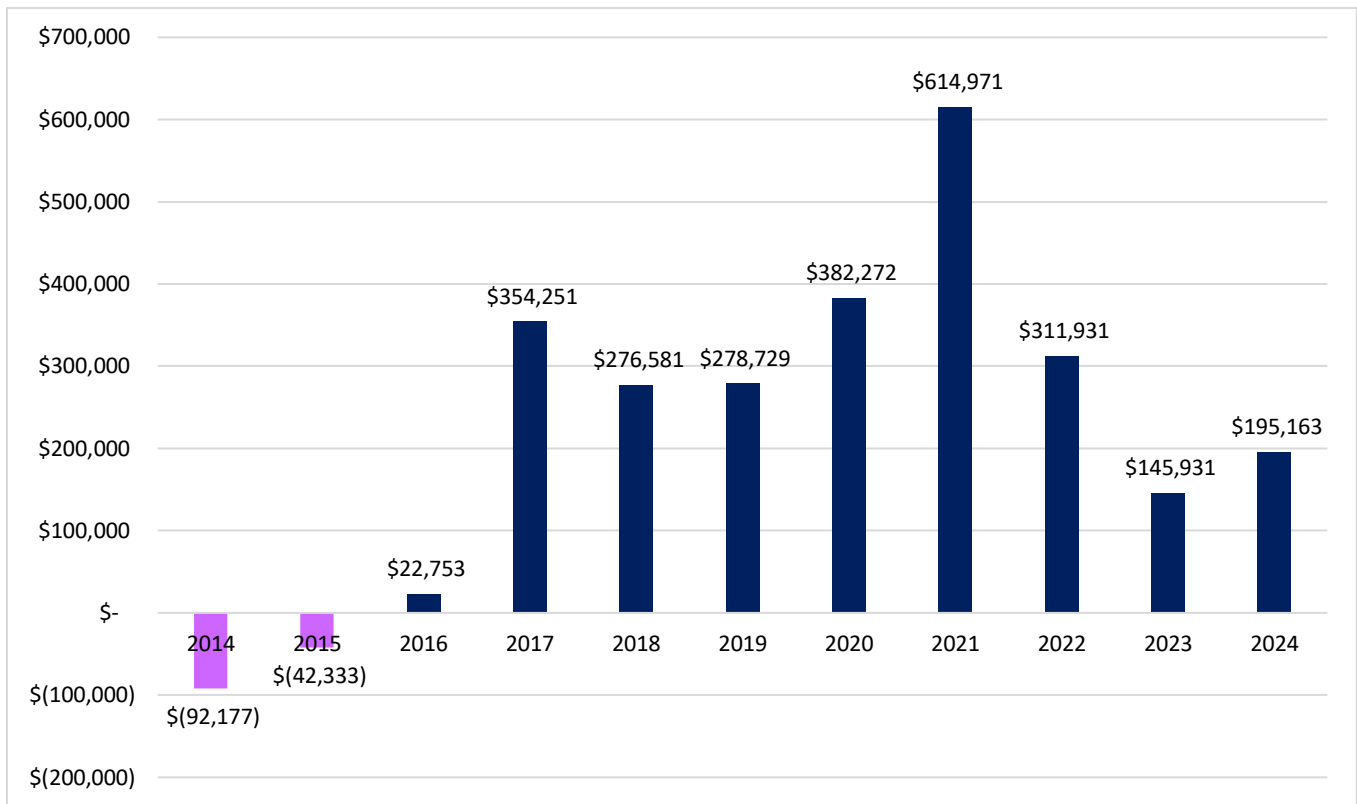
7510 - Historian Expenses

Personal Services	\$	1,969.71
Office Expenses	\$	-
Retirement/Insurance/SS/Workers Comp	\$	1,204.67
Subtotal	\$	3,174.38

Total County Clerk Expenses 2024:	\$	2,065,943.93
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End of Year Fund Balance 2014-2024



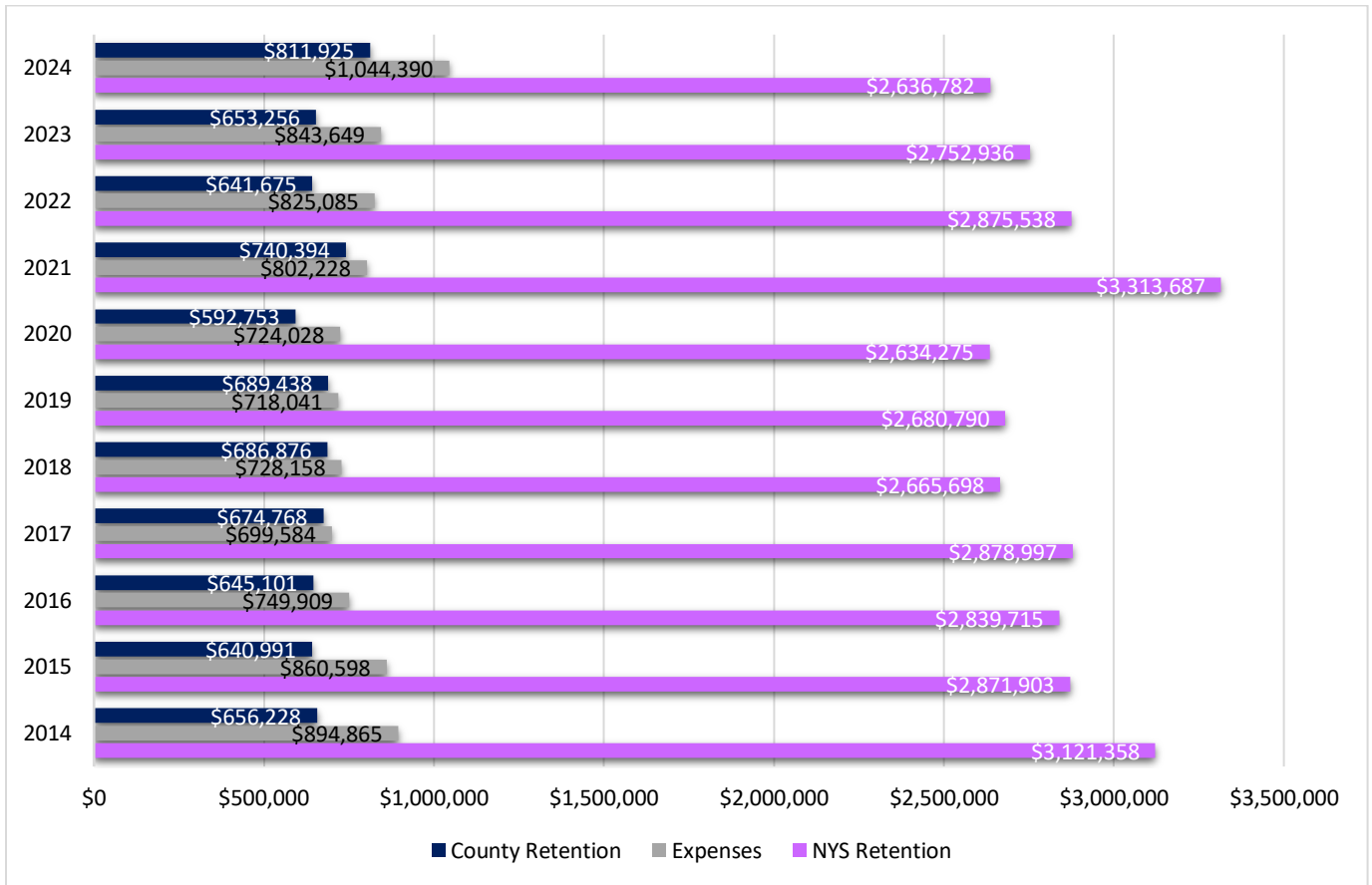
Fund Balance – General Information

The graph above shows that the Jefferson County Clerk's Office contributed \$195,163.29 to the fund balance for the year 2024. Inflation and high-interest rates negatively impacted real property and motor vehicle sales, however due to the increase in matrimonial actions as well as the increased retention of DMV online revenue we saw an increased Fund Balance of \$41,083.29 over what was originally predicted. In addition, the increase in personal services and office expenses stems from contractual changes. The Jefferson County Clerk's Office operated without any cost to taxpayers.

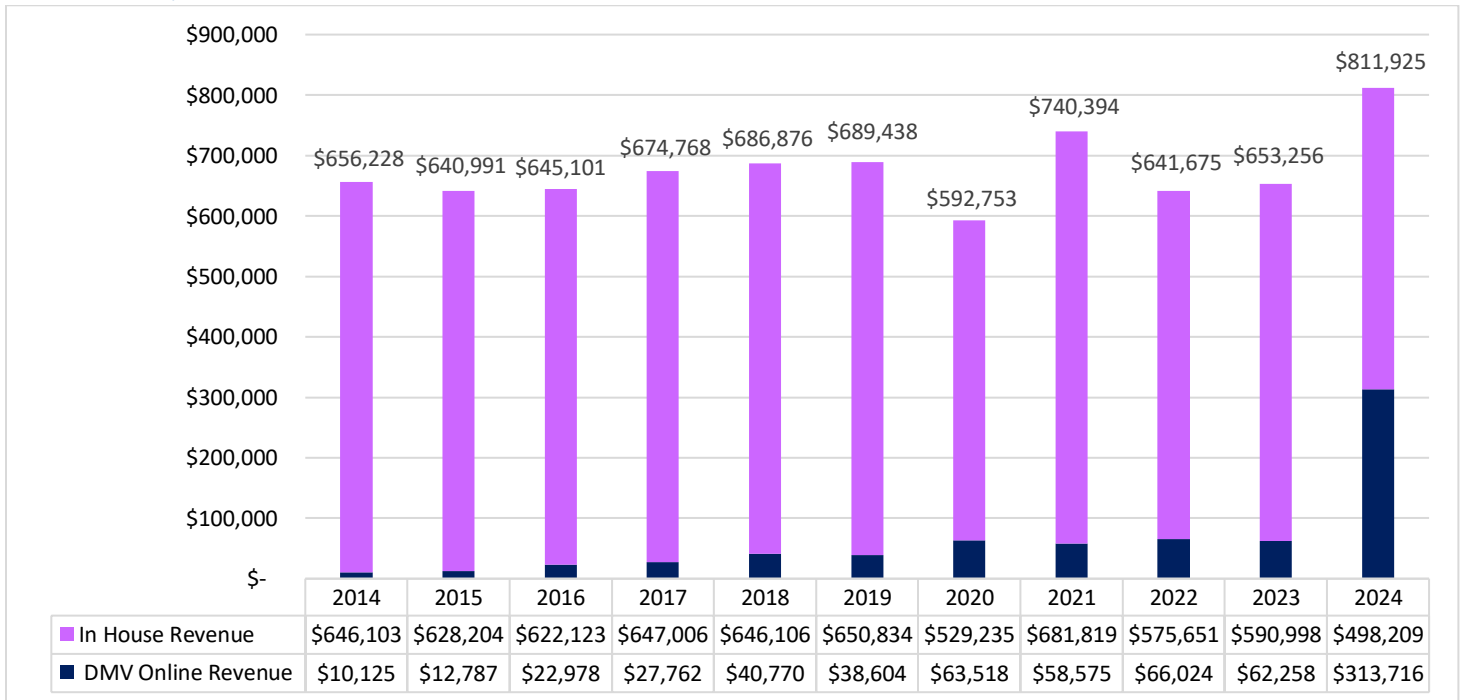
Department of Motor Vehicles

2024 DMV county revenue increased slightly, due to the change in online revenue to 10.75% of ALL online transactions. Previously the County Clerk’s office only kept 3.25% of online transactions after the state hit a threshold of \$965,703.75. In-House revenue decreased due to the increase in online activity as well as the economy.

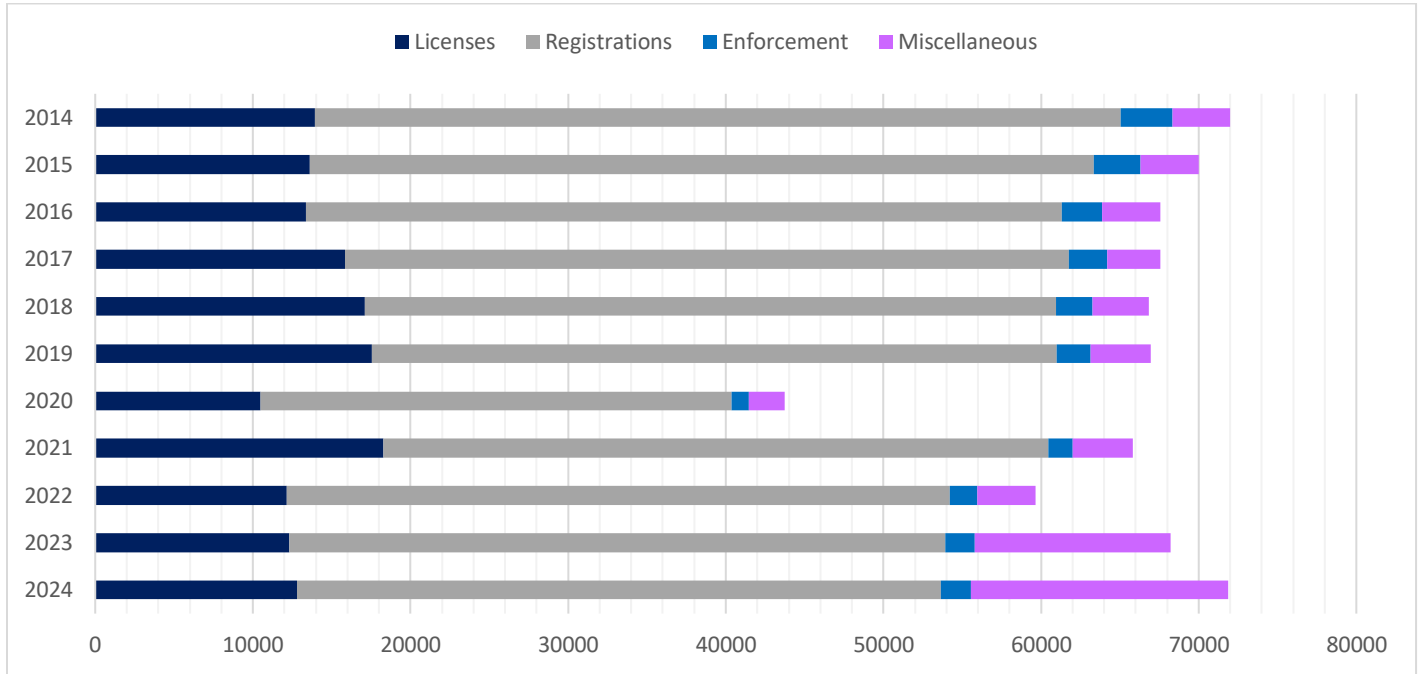
Overall Revenues and Expenses 2014-2024:



DMV County Revenue Breakdown – Online Revenue vs. In-House:



Total Number of DMV Transactions 2014-2024

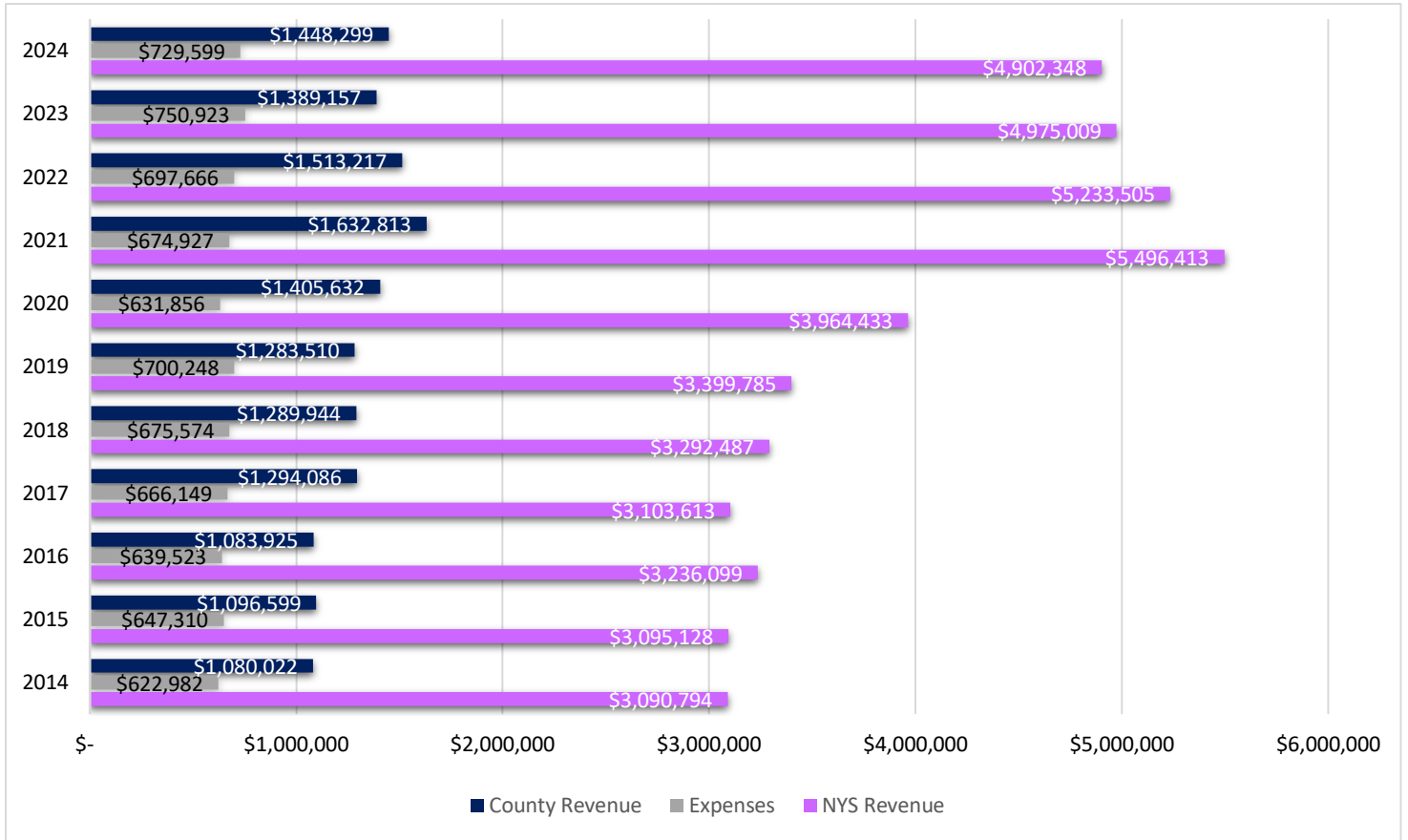


DMV – 2024 Highlights

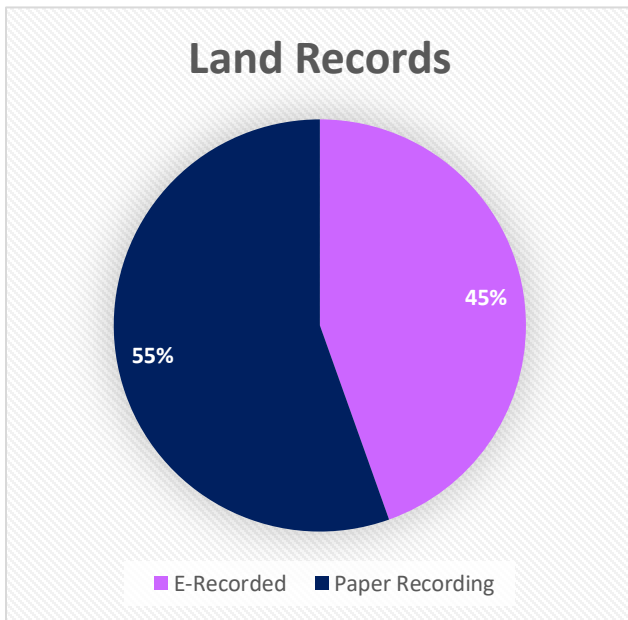
- Revenue is up by 21.66% over FY 2023.
- Revenue is 7.03% lower than original estimates.
- Revenue from online transactions increased by \$251,458.00 from last year – an increase of 133.76%.
- The total number of transactions processed increased by 3663 from last year – an increase of 5.23%.
- The new addition of the DMV Deputy County Clerk resulted in an increase in DMV expenses.
- DMV will continue to operate on an appointment-recommended basis; however, in 2024, we accommodated on average 1580 walk-ins each month for a total of 18,990 this year.

Recording Department

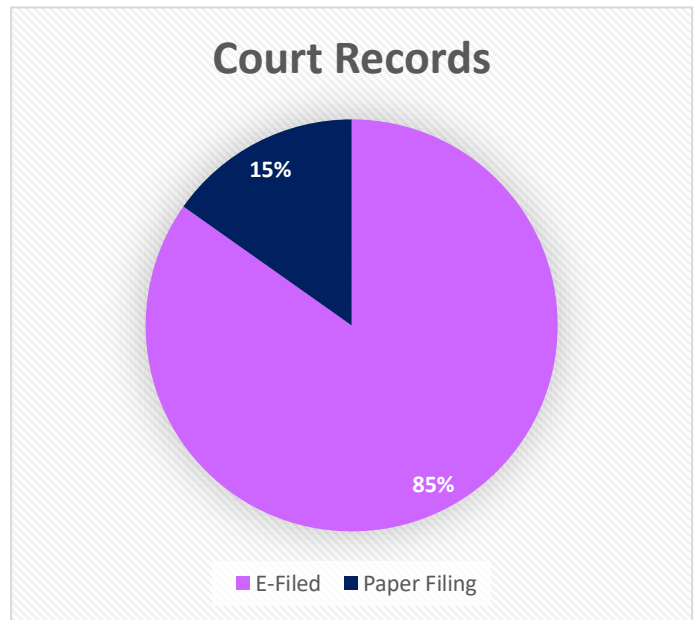
Overall Revenues and Expenses 2014-2024



Percentage of Total Documents Recorded or Filed Electronically



E-Recording is NOT required by the submitter.

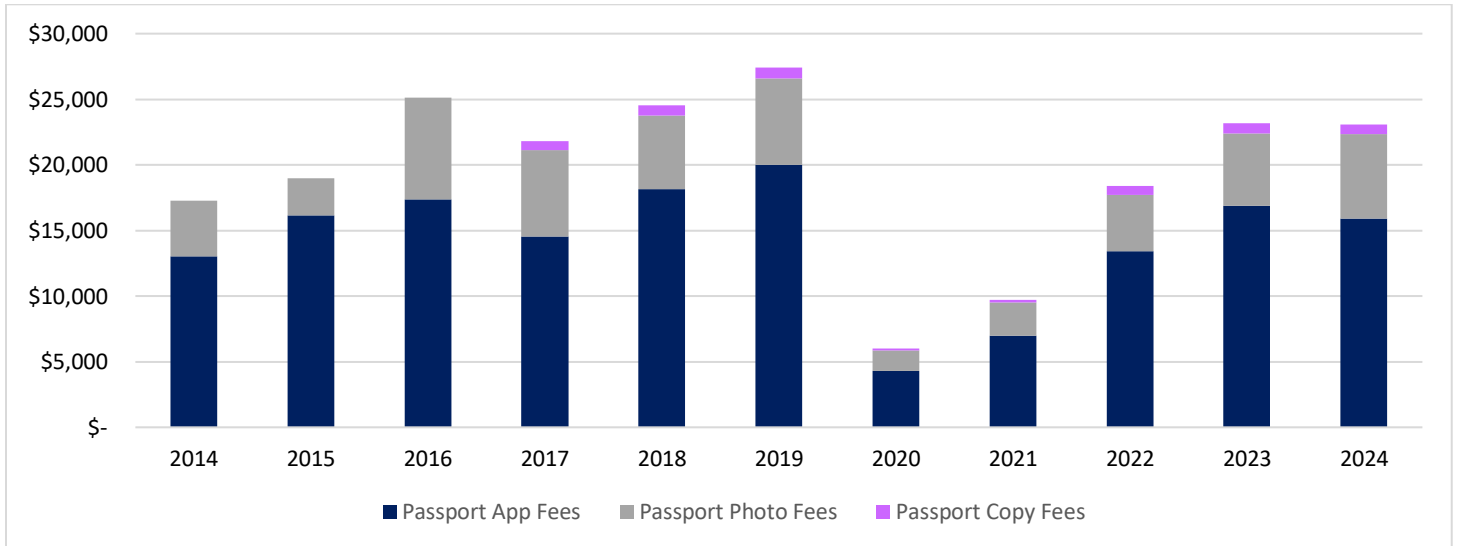


E-Filing is MANDATED for most case types.

Basic Mortgage Tax Collected for Each Town - 2024



Passport Revenue 2014-2024



Recording Department – 2024 Highlights

- Revenue increased \$59,148.00 over last year – an increase of 4.17%.
- Revenue is 0.19% higher than original estimates.
- Total Mortgage Tax collected is down \$177,342.31 from last year – a decrease of 5.91%.
 - .75% is collected on the amount of each mortgage.
 - .25% is paid to New York State
 - .50% is paid to the Towns of Jefferson County

Records Management

Totals by Department

Records Management Annual Report - 2024

Requests		Transfers		Destruction	
Administration	0.00	Administration	25.00	Administration	8.00
Board of Elections	0.00	Board of Elections	3.00	Board of Elections	1.00
Buildings & Grounds	0.00	Buildings & Grounds	0.00	Buildings & Grounds	0.00
Code Enforcement	16.00	Code Enforcement	0.00	Code Enforcement	8.00
Community Services	1.00	Community Services	36.00	Community Services	47.00
County Attorney	16.00	County Attorney	7.00	County Attorney	0.00
County Clerk	104.00	County Clerk	9.00	County Clerk	74.00
District Attorney	29.00	District Attorney	0.00	District Attorney	0.00
DSS/County Home	0.00	DSS/County Home	0.00	DSS/County Home	0.00
Dog Control	0.00	Dog Control	0.00	Dog Control	0.00
Employment & Training	0.00	Employment & Training	0.00	Employment & Training	24.00
General Public	311.00	General Public	0.00	General Public	0.00
Highway	3.00	Highway	0.00	Highway	16.00
Human Resources	1.00	Human Resources	0.00	Human Resources	5.00
Information Services	0.00	Information Services	0.00	Information Services	0.00
Insurance	0.00	Insurance	2.00	Insurance	44.00
Medical Examiner	15.00	Medical Examiner	0.00	Medical Examiner	0.00
Office for the Aging	0.00	Office for the Aging	0.00	Office for the Aging	0.00
Planning	0.00	Planning	0.00	Planning	0.00
Probation	44.00	Probation	0.00	Probation	3.00
Public Defender	45.00	Public Defender	50.00	Public Defender	0.00
Public Health	0.00	Public Health	0.00	Public Health	133.00
Purchasing	11.00	Purchasing	20.00	Purchasing	7.00
Real Property	0.00	Real Property	0.00	Real Property	0.00
Sheriff	18.00	Sheriff	0.00	Sheriff	6.00
Treasurer	0.00	Treasurer	0.00	Treasurer	3.00
Veterans Services	0.00	Veterans Services	0.00	Veterans Services	0.00
Total:	614.00	Total:	152.00	Total:	379.00

Records Management – General Information

- The County Clerk is the Records Management Officer for Jefferson County
- Records Management is responsible for managing records for all County departments in accordance with the New York State Department of Archives retention schedule.
- Increased digitization is resulting in fewer requests, fewer transfers, and more destruction across all departments.
 - Since 2014, the County Clerk’s Office has destroyed 1,566 boxes of records due to digitization, which allows valuable space in our inactive records center to be utilized for historical and permanent records.

Potential Revenue Sources

Revenue Source	Potential Annual Revenue
*Imposition of Local Mortgage Tax	\$740,081.00
*Increase of Real Estate Transfer Tax	\$960,890.00
**Imposition of County Passenger Vehicle Use Tax	\$521,755.00

*Potential Revenue based on 2024 Actual Revenues

**Potential Revenue based on Current Registration Information available at data.ny.gov

Local Mortgage Tax

What Would Change: Currently $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1% is collected on the amount of mortgage. This would increase to 1%.

Who Does it Affect: New mortgages. Affects taxpayers maybe 1-2 times in a lifetime. Most borrowers are not even aware of this fee as it is often included in closing costs.

Counties with Local Mortgage Tax: 29 (Only 6 Counties, which includes Jefferson County, are left at .75%)

Note: The allocation of this additional revenue is decided by the Board of Legislators.

Mortgage Amount	Current Tax .75%	New Tax 1.0%	Difference
\$100,000.00	\$750.00	\$1,000.00	\$250.00
\$250,000.00	\$1,875.00	\$2,500.00	\$625.00

Local Real Estate Transfer Tax

What Would Change: Currently \$4/\$1,000 is collected on consideration of the sale. This would increase by \$2 which would be retained by Jefferson County.

Who Does it Affect: Purchaser(s) of new property. Affects taxpayers maybe 1-2 times in a lifetime. Most borrowers are not even aware of this fee as it is often included in closing fees.

Counties with Local Real Estate Transfer Tax: (Not all are the same rate) – (Columbia, Essex, Broome, Madison, Tompkins)

10

Sale Price	Current Tax	New Tax	Difference
\$100,000.00	\$400.00	\$600.00	\$200.00
\$250,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$500.00

Passenger Vehicle Use Tax

<https://dmv.ny.gov/registration/registration-fees-use-taxes-and-supplemental-fees-passenger-vehicles>

What Would Change:

Passenger Vehicle ≤ 3500 lbs. = \$10.00 per two-year registration

Passenger Vehicle > 3500 lbs. = \$20.00 per two-year registration

Who Does it Affect: All registrations of **passenger** vehicles with Jefferson County Address. (All other classes including Commercial are exempt from this additional fee.)

How Many Other Counties Have it – 39

Note: We get this \$\$ no matter where they register (Online or other DMV Office.)

Vehicle	Current 2yr Reg.	New 2yr Reg.	Difference
2020 Hyundai (3126 lbs.)	\$50.00	\$60.00	\$10.00
2017 Chevy 1500 (5276 lbs.)	\$79.00	\$99.00	\$20.00