

Priority: Accountability
Program Offer Type: Existing Operating
Related Programs:

Lead Agency: County Attorney
Program Contact: Agnes Sowle

Program Characteristics:

Executive Summary

This office reviews the legal aspects of County government operations, defends claims against the County, and assists with Federal State and County requirements. The County Attorney helps with risk management, provides legal training, and strives to provide clients with appropriate advice before legal issues become legal problems.

Program Description

The County Attorney's Office prepares and reviews legal documents including contracts, ordinances, resolutions, Board orders, Chair executive rules, bonds and others. It provides legal advice and counsel to the Board, the Chair, the Sheriff, the Auditor, the county departments, offices, advisory boards, commissions and committees. It prepares formal written opinions deemed necessary by the County Attorney regarding significant interpretations of federal and state laws, the Charter, ordinances and other documents. It represents the County and its elected officials and employees in all appropriate legal matters including defense of claims against the County and initiation of claims on the County's behalf.

Program Justification

The County Attorney's Office assists the County's accountability both externally and internally. It helps the County maintain the perception of trust and confidence by providing its elected officials and employees with legal information and advice to help them operate in compliance with the law. It protects the County from the financial consequences of accidental losses and preserves the County's assets and public service capabilities from loss, destruction and depletion. It also helps to restore the general fund by initiating collection actions when appropriate. Currently our attorney cost is approximately 1/3 of the hourly rate of outside counsel. 92.5% of our clients indicate that our attorneys helped them meet their objectives ethically.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	Previous Year Actual (FY04-05)	Current Year Purchased (FY05-06)	Current Year Estimate (FY05-06)	Next Year Offer (FY06-07)
Output	Attorney Direct Service Hours	21,533	21,500	19,800	21,500
Outcome	Preserve & increase County resources by reducing loss from claims liability (\$)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Output	% of attorney hours performing legal consultation and training	55%	0%	50%	50%
Quality	% of clients who rated services as satisfied or very satisfied	95%	0%	0%	95%

Performance Measure - Description

- *88% of attorney hours are in direct service of client matters. An additional 12% is expended in administrative functions and professional development, including the mandatory continuing legal education required for licensure.
- *Current year estimate lowered due to staff vacancies.
- *Outcome is a new measure for FY 06-07.
- *Direct service hours are generally about 50% legal consultation, including document review and training, and 50% litigation. Theoretically, an increase in consultation will decrease hours required for litigation either because fewer lawsuits are filed or because they are more easily defended.
- *Quality measure will be reported annually beginning FY 06-07.

Legal/Contractual Obligation

The office of the County Attorney is mandated by Ordinance (MCC 7.200)

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2006	2006	2007	2007
Personnel	\$0	\$2,100,921	\$0	\$2,221,420
Contracts	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$20,000
Materials & Supplies	\$0	\$111,500	\$0	\$116,000
Internal Services	\$0	\$376,383	\$0	\$314,153
Subtotal: Direct Exps:	\$0	\$2,603,804	\$0	\$2,671,573
Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Support	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal: Other Exps:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total GF/non-GF:	\$0	\$2,603,804	\$0	\$2,671,573
Program Total:	\$2,603,804		\$2,671,573	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.70
Program Revenues				
Fees, Permits & Charges	\$0	\$2,603,804	\$0	\$2,671,573
Program Revenue for Admin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$0	\$2,603,804	\$0	\$2,671,573

Explanation of Revenues

The County Attorney's office does not generate revenues.

Significant Program Changes

Last year this program was: #10008, County Attorney
No significant program changes are planned or anticipated.