

Lead Agency: County Attorney

Program Contact: Chip Lazenby

Program Offer Type: Existing Operating

Related Programs:

Program Characteristics:

Executive Summary

The Office of County Attorney's mission is to provide cost effective legal advice and representation. The Office reviews and advises on the legal aspects of county government operations, defends claims against the County and its employees, and assists with Federal, State, and County legal requirements. The County Attorney collaborates with risk management, provides legal training and strives to provide clients with appropriate advice before legal issues become legal problems.

Program Description

The Office of County Attorney prepares and reviews legal documents including contracts, Ordinances, Resolutions, Board Orders, Executive Rules, Administrative Procedures, bonds and others. It provides legal advice and counsel to the Board, the Chair, the Sheriff, the Auditor, County Departments and Divisions, 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. The Office controls and supervises all civil actions and legal proceedings in the the County is a party or has a legal interest. The Office represents and defends the County and its officials and employees in legal matters as appropriate. The Office will initiate, defend, appear or appeal any legal action, matter or proceeding in any court or tribunal and as requested by the Board.

The recent increases in the available damages under the Tort Claims Act, and the possibility of liability in excess of the cap has resulted in increased potential liability. Our Office has continued success in resolving cases through zealous advocacy, motions practice, and at trial.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	Previous Year Actual (FY09-10)	Current Year Purchased (FY10-11)	Current Year Estimate (FY10-11)	Next Year Offer (FY11-12)
Output	Attorney Direct Service Hours	24,500	24,500	26,980	25,000
Outcome	Client satisfaction- Attorneys help clients achieve objectives	98.0%	98.0%	96.0%	97.0%
Efficiency	Percentage of attorney time dedicated to direct client services	94.0%	94.0%	94.0%	95.0%
Input	Number of tort claims received	127	180	180	190

Performance Measure - Description

The number of attorney direct service hours represents attorney time dedicated to litigation, legal consultation, legal document preparation and review, and client training. Direct service hours exclude time spent on professional development, administrative, clerical, or office related tasks. Office attorneys dedicate the vast majority of their time providing direct services; only 2-4% of attorney time is spent on non-direct service tasks.

A tort claim is a notice of intent to bring a lawsuit for damages against the County or its employees. There is an upward trend of submitted claims which requires increased allocation of County Attorney resources to defend.

Legal/Contractual Obligation

Multnomah County Code Chapter 25 established the Office of County Attorney and charges the County Attorney to be the Chief Legal Officer of the County.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2011	2011	2012	2012
Personnel	\$0	\$3,091,375	\$0	\$3,163,244
Contracts	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$25,000
Materials & Supplies	\$0	\$116,000	\$0	\$157,393
Internal Services	\$0	\$453,201	\$0	\$404,006
Total GF/non-GF:	\$0	\$3,680,576	\$0	\$3,749,643
Program Total:	\$3,680,576		\$3,749,643	
Program FTE	0.00	22.80	0.00	22.80
Program Revenues				
Fees, Permits & Charges	\$0	\$3,680,576	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$0	\$3,680,576	\$0	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

Funding for the Office of County Attorney is generated through a portion of the liability insurance rate on County payroll expenses.

Significant Program Changes

Last year this program was: #10014, County Attorney's Office
No significant changes.