



San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

NEWS RELEASE

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CITY ATTORNEY JAN GOLDSMITH REDUCES OUTSIDE LEGAL DEFENSE COSTS BY MORE THAN HALF

San Diego, CA: The San Diego City Attorney's Office has slashed spending on outside counsel to defend the City from lawsuits by an average of nearly 60 percent in the past two years.

The office is on pace to spend \$2.8 million in outside counsel defense costs in 2011, about 10 percent less than the \$3.1 million spent last year. Overall, average annual spending on outside legal defense fees was \$6.8 million from 2004 to 2009. City Attorney Jan Goldsmith took office in December 2008.

"This progress is a result of the City Council, Mayor and me having confidence in the quality of legal work done in our office," said Goldsmith. "The practice used to be to farm out cases as the general rule. Today, we rarely farm out defense of the City. Our office can handle it."

"What's more, we have not added any new outside counsel to defend the City in 2011," Goldsmith said. "So, these costs involve the pre-existing cases and the pipeline of new outside counsel cases has been closed thus far."

Goldsmith thanked Investigative Newsource for pointing out the significant decrease in its ongoing analysis of departmental costs. Typically, such numbers aren't analyzed by this office until year's end.

The new policy under Goldsmith is that the office will only hire outside counsel when in-house lawyers lack a specific expertise to handle a particular case or in instances when manpower is an issue or there is a conflict of interest.

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