City Attorney



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City Attorney



Description

The City Attorney's Office protects the people of San Diego by serving as chief legal counsel to the City of San Diego's elected officials and operational departments; prosecuting and defending civil cases involving the City; and as the City's prosecutor by holding accountable those who violate local and state laws.

The Office is divided into six divisions:

The Civil Advisory Division serves as general counsel to the City of San Diego. This Division advises the City Council, Mayor, and all City departments on all civil matters involving the City, including contracts, personnel matters, and City governance. The Assistant City Attorney for Council Relations and Specialized Services and her team work directly with City Councilmembers and independent departments to accomplish their priorities. The Assistant City Attorney for Mayoral Departments and her team work directly with the Mayor and City department directors on day-to-day operational issues.

The Civil Litigation Division defends and prosecutes more than 200 new civil lawsuits involving the City and its officials and employees each year. Its attorneys hold contractors accountable, protect City assets from frivolous lawsuits, and identify legal issues early to minimize liability and keep important City projects on track. It also houses specialty programs, including the City Attorney's Gun Violence Response Unit, which secures Gun Violence Restraining Orders to prevent gun violence by those who pose a risk to themselves and others.

The Criminal Division prosecutes criminal misdemeanors and Municipal Code violations committed within the City's jurisdiction and assists victims of crime in navigating the criminal justice system.

The Community Justice Division protects the quality of life in our communities by enforcing laws relating to health and safety, substandard housing, nuisance, and zoning. The Division also manages diversion and collaborative court programs intended to prevent recidivism by offering offenders education, treatment, and employment opportunities in lieu of criminal prosecution. These programs

include the Community Justice Initiative and the Prosecution and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Services (PLEADS) program.

The Administration Division, led by the City Attorney's General Counsel, manages the Office's personnel, budgeting, accounting, contracts, information technology, recruitment, training, and hiring. The Division includes the Workers Compensation Unit and a team of employment and labor attorneys who advise the administration on human resource and collective bargaining matters.

Your Safe Place (YSP), a Family Justice Center, is a division of the City Attorney's Office that provides free, confidential, and comprehensive services to anyone who has experienced domestic violence, family violence, elder abuse, sexual assault, or sex trafficking. The team at YSP works with dedicated community partners and volunteers to provide judgment-free services that empower clients to become survivors and move forward with their lives. YSP's services include personal safety planning, housing support and financial security, protection from gun violence, legal and immigration services, domestic violence restraining orders, mental health counseling, forensic examinations, sex trafficking-specific services, military advocacy, and personalized wardrobes.

The City Attorney directly manages all Assistant City Attorneys, the Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, the Communications Chief, Chief of Policy and Legislative Affairs, and the Senior Chief Deputy City Attorney who supervises the Affirmative Civil Enforcement (ACE) Unit.

The vision is:

To stay engaged in the lives of San Diegans so that we can prioritize community needs.

The mission is:

- To protect San Diego by keeping our communities healthy and safe.
- To protect taxpayers by safeguarding the City's limited resources and providing its officials with solid legal advice and day-today guidance.
- To protect our natural resources, our quality of life, and our most vulnerable residents

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Protect our most vulnerable citizens with effective programs that target domestic violence, human trafficking, elder abuse, sex crimes, hate crimes, and gun violence.

- We look forward to launching a game-changing program to prevent homelessness among the survivors of domestic violence by opening a new shelter designed to create a supportive environment for survivors and their families. This new shelter will mark a major milestone in our commitment to provide end-to-end services for the victims of domestic violence as they rebuild their lives.
- Support victims of domestic violence and human trafficking by increasing victim services programs at YSP, expanding outreach efforts, and reaching vulnerable populations by removing cultural, geographic, and language barriers.
- Create a sexual assault center at YSP to expand services related to sexual assault, sex trafficking, youth programming for children/teens, LGBTQIA+ community, court support, Native Americans, and other programming.
- Strengthen support for the victims of domestic crimes by providing services such as court accompaniment and copies of criminal protective orders (restraining orders) to victims more quickly and reliably.

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• Improve communication with domestic abuse clients by partnering with the San Diego District Attorney's (SDCDA) office to acquire a new Case Management System for use by the Office's Criminal Division.

Goal 2: Improve public safety and further reduce gun violence through targeted enforcement and training.

- Expand the success of the office's Gun Violence Response Unit by strengthening partnerships with the U.S. Attorney's Office, the California Attorney General's Office, the SDCDA's Office, the California Legislature, the San Diego Superior Court, and the San Diego Police Department.
- Provide targeted resources that further our efforts to secure life-saving GVROs and to interact with community members who have suffered from gun violence and other trauma.
- Increase our Office's non-law enforcement gun violence intervention opportunities through victim services.
- Lead implementation of state legislation designed to prevent the presence of concealed weapons in sensitive public areas, which was recently passed and is currently under review by the Court system.

Goal 3: Strengthen City governance through improved transparency.

• Work with the Administration to create an Office of Transparency to improve the City's response to Public Records Act requests.

Goal 4: Expand equity within the City Attorney's Office and across the City.

- Continue to lead by example within the legal community by working aggressively to diversify our workforce, including a continued commitment to participate in the City's successful Employ and Empower program for management interns.
- Improve recruitment and retention of a diverse, highly qualified workforce.
- Use the Office's civil enforcement powers through the ACE Unit to obtain justice for victims of wage theft, consumer fraud, employment misclassification, and other crimes that impact vulnerable populations.

Goal 5: Preserve City funds by seeking additional external funding while seeking savings and efficiencies internally in order to deliver taxpayers more value for their tax dollar.

- Work with City departments to prevent foreseeable lawsuits through the identification and mitigation of recurring issues.
- Champion ethical reforms to ensure transparency in City decisions and expenditures and to help City decision-makers better assess risk. Such reforms include the expansion of ex parte disclosure requirements, conflict checks for board appointments, revisions to the lobbying ordinance, and stronger oversight by the Ethics Commission.
- Develop and implement programs to keep people out of the criminal justice system by addressing the root causes of their behavior.
- Continue to expand the PLEADS program to divert people struggling with drug addiction from the criminal justice system and connects them with support services, providing significant cost savings for taxpayers. Explore a similar program for those experiencing homelessness.
- Secure appropriate staffing levels for the Civil Litigation Division so that it can defend the City against an expanding volume of increasingly complex lawsuits without reliance on outside counsel.
- Protect taxpayers by taking proactive steps to reduce litigation costs.

Budget Equity Impact Statement

Equity Highlights

Examples from the current fiscal year.

- The Office dedicates more than \$17.0 million over 20% of its base budget to address inequities and disparities in the communities we serve.
- Once again, this year, our Office led the state in obtaining gun violence restraining orders necessary to disarm dangerous individuals. In recognition of this leadership, state leaders asked our Office to launch an expanded training program to help protect those living in communities traditionally underserved by law enforcement on the issue of gun violence prevention. The Affirmative Civil Enforcement Unit has initiated civil actions to address environmental justice, patient dumping, wage theft, and consumer fraud. This year, our Office ensured the distribution of funds from the \$46.5 million settlement we achieved on behalf of workers at the supermarket giant Instacart. The workers had been unfairly classified as independent contractors and deprived of millions in overtime pay and other benefits. More than 300,000 workers around the state were impacted.
- The Criminal and Community Justice divisions have developed units and programs targeting domestic violence and sex crimes in conjunction with services to help victims of these crimes; enforcing standards to protect low-income elderly and dependent adults in need of housing and medical intervention; addressing substandard housing while providing relocation assistance to victims; leading prosecutorial efforts to hold accountable those who commit hate crimes against protected individuals; working proactively to develop collaborative court programs that offer alternatives to the criminal justice system; and so much more. Our Office recently took part in a joint operation with the SD Police Department's Vice Unit to close down a massage parlor that served as a front for illegal prostitution and also appears to have engaged in human trafficking, although the full investigation into this matter is ongoing.

Budget Equity Lens Summary

Ongoing Operations

Is there an opportunity to adjust the department's ongoing operations to address a disparity? **Yes**

The City Attorney's Office has long prioritized addressing inequities and disparities within the City using the Office's civil and criminal law enforcement assets to assist in achieving equitable outcomes for communities of concern. Some examples of such budgetary investments include: \$1.5 million to staff the Affirmative Civil Enforcement Unit. \$262,000 to staff the Criminal Division's LIFT Lifesaving Interventions for Treatment/Conservatorship Unit. \$900,000 to staff the Gun Violence Response Unit. \$5.5 million to staff the Domestic Violence and Sex Crimes Unit. \$1.7 million to staff Your Safe Place (YSP). \$3.6 million to staff both participation in the Unsafe Facilities Task Force and the Office's Substandard Housing Unit. \$1.4 million to staff Office prosecutorial efforts to stop hate crimes. \$2.1 million to staff our partnership with the collaborative courts program. The Office regularly assesses its deployment of assets to adjust as necessary.

Budget Adjustment(s)

Do the Budget Adjustments address a disparity?

Yes

On their face, the requested budget adjustments are not applicable to the budget equity lens process. However, virtually all requests are tied to the existing base budget equity impact, as noted: Addition of 1.00 Program Coordinator for YSP, \$164,635 – supporting implementation of sexual assault center. Addition of 2.00 Victim Services Coordinators, Criminal Division and YSP, currently supplemental, \$144,252 – augments budgeted personnel of the critical life-line DV Unit. Addition of 1.00 Program Manager, \$217,976 to support the Gun Violence Response Unit.

Department Summary

	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2024-2025
	Actual	Budget	Adopted	Change
FTE Positions (Budgeted)	403.73	406.73	423.53	16.80
Personnel Expenditures	\$ 70,994,570	\$ 77,763,560	\$ 79,178,306	\$ 1,414,746
Non-Personnel Expenditures	6,972,126	6,045,674	6,346,765	301,091
Total Department Expenditures	\$ 77,966,696	\$ 83,809,234	\$ 85,525,071	\$ 1,715,837
Total Department Revenue	\$ 4,105,272	\$ 4,122,347	\$ 5,981,103	\$ 1,858,756

General Fund

Department Expenditures

	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2024-2025
	Actual	Budget	Adopted	Change
Civil Advisory	\$ 22,118,981	\$ 24,354,080 \$	26,663,780 \$	2,309,700
Civil Litigation	16,369,839	18,426,765	18,777,621	350,856
Community Justice	7,689,901	8,635,924	7,989,159	(646,765)
Criminal Litigation	18,339,236	19,673,134	19,426,435	(246,699)
Management/Administration	11,958,237	11,055,656	10,087,843	(967,813)
Your Safe Place	1,490,501	1,663,675	2,580,233	916,558
Total	\$ 77,966,696	\$ 83,809,234 \$	85,525,071 \$	1,715,837

Department Personnel

	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	FY2025 Adopted	FY2024-2025 Change
Civil Advisory	89.35	94.35	107.12	12.77
Civil Litigation	88.35	86.35	86.35	0.00
Community Justice	43.48	44.48	41.48	(3.00)
Criminal Litigation	133.55	134.55	135.58	1.03
Management/Administration	36.00	34.00	37.00	3.00
Your Safe Place	13.00	13.00	16.00	3.00
Total	403.73	406.73	423.53	16.80

Significant Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Salary and Benefit Adjustments	0.00 \$	1,330,102	\$-
Adjustments to reflect savings resulting from vacant			
positions for any period of the fiscal year, retirement			

positions for any period of the fiscal year, retirement contributions, retiree health contributions, and labor negotiations.

Significant Budget Adjustments

Significant Budget Adjustments	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Support for Civil Advisory - Engineering & Capital Projects Addition of 2.00 Deputy City Attorneys, one-time non- personnel expenditures, and associated revenue to support the Civil Advisory Division's work with the Engineering & Capital Projects Department for the Capital Improvements Program.	2.00	660,072	657,464
Employ and Empower Program Support Addition of 7.55 Management Intern - Hourly and associated revenue to support the Employ and Empower Program.	7.55	299,557	299,560
Non-Discretionary Adjustment Adjustment to expenditure allocations that are determined outside of the department's direct control. These allocations are generally based on prior year expenditure trends and examples of these include utilities, insurance, and rent.	0.00	273,007	-
Support for Consumer Protection Addition of 1.00 Senior City Attorney Investigator and 1.00 City Attorney Investigator 2 and associated revenue to support consumer protection.	2.00	260,020	260,042
Support for Your Safe Place – A Family Justice Center Addition of 3.00 Victim Services Coordinators, one-time non-personnel expenditures, and associated revenue to support the Family Justice Center.	3.00	258,846	258,039
Support for Gun Violence Restraining Orders Addition of 1.00 Program Manager and associated revenue to support gun violence restraining order programs.	1.00	217,976	217,131
Support for Your Safe Place – A Family Justice Center Addition of 1.00 Program Coordinator, one-time non- personnel expenditures, and associated revenue to support the implementation of a sexual assault center at Your Safe Place.	1.00	167,135	166,520
Case Management System Support Addition of one-time non-personnel expenditures for annual license renewal fees.	0.00	91,000	-
Non-Standard Hour Personnel Funding Funding allocated according to a zero-based annual review of hourly funding requirements.	0.00	58,977	-
Support for Information Technology Adjustment to expenditure allocations according to an annual review of information technology funding requirements.	0.00	57,584	-

Significant Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Support for Your Safe Place - A Family Justice Center Addition of non-personnel expenditures associated with security services at Your Safe Place.	0.00	18,000	-
Support for Civil Advisory Addition of 0.25 Deputy City Attorney to make this partially budgeted position whole.	0.25	13,773	-
Support for Management and Administration Division Addition of 1.00 Account Clerk and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures to support the department's accounts payable and accounts receivable work.	1.00	5,413	-
Transfer of Resource Access Program Transfer of 1.00 Program Manager from the Office of the City Attorney to the Fire-Rescue Department associated with the Resource Access Program.	(1.00)	(135,135)	-
One-Time Additions and Annualizations Adjustment to reflect one-time revenues and expenditures, and the annualization of revenues and expenditures, implemented in Fiscal Year 2024.	0.00	(160,000)	-
Operational Efficiency One-time reduction of personnel expenditures due to an anticipated delay in hiring for any vacancies that may occur in Fiscal Year 2025.	0.00	(1,700,490)	-
Total	16.80 \$	1,715,837 \$	1,858,756

Expenditures by Category

	-	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Budget	FY2025 Adopted	FY2024-2025 Change
PERSONNEL					
Personnel Cost	\$	43,535,018	\$ 49,769,280	\$ 51,844,796	\$ 2,075,516
Fringe Benefits		27,459,551	27,994,280	27,333,510	(660,770)
PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL		70,994,570	77,763,560	79,178,306	1,414,746
NON-PERSONNEL					
Supplies	\$	261,692	\$ 345,517	\$ 352,617	\$ 7,100
Contracts & Services		3,568,156	2,418,733	2,738,437	319,704
External Contracts & Services		2,647,221	1,491,080	1,527,080	36,000
Internal Contracts & Services		920,935	927,653	1,211,357	283,704
Information Technology		3,015,143	3,082,396	3,075,980	(6,416)
Energy and Utilities		53,080	48,904	47,607	(1,297)
Other		74,056	147,124	129,124	(18,000)
Capital Expenditures		-	3,000	3,000	-
NON-PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL		6,972,126	6,045,674	6,346,765	301,091
Total	\$	77,966,696	\$ 83,809,234	\$ 85,525,071	\$ 1,715,837

Revenues by Category

	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2024-2025
	Actual	Budget	Adopted	Change
Charges for Services	\$ 4,067,999	\$ 3,768,847	\$ 5,627,603	\$ 1,858,756
Fines Forfeitures and Penalties	1,300	300,000	300,000	-
Licenses and Permits	1,466	3,500	3,500	-
Other Revenue	37,108	-	-	-
Rev from Other Agencies	(2,601)	50,000	50,000	-
Total	\$ 4,105,272	\$ 4,122,347	\$ 5,981,103	\$ 1,858,756

Personnel Expenditures

Job		FY2023	FY2024	FY2025			
Number	Job Title / Wages	Budget	Budget	Adopted	Sala	ry Range	Total
	s, and Wages	Ŭ				, ,	
20000011	Account Clerk	1.00	1.00	2.00	\$ 46,777 -	56,281	101,088
20000012	Administrative Aide 1	2.00	2.00	2.00	55,036 -	66,266	130,213
20000024	Administrative Aide 2	0.00	0.00	1.00	63,360 -	76,360	63,360
20001076	Assistant City Attorney	5.00	5.00	5.00	123,203 -	491,871	1,400,463
20001154	Assistant for Community Outreach	2.00	2.00	2.00	36,814 -	235,656	340,670
20000041	Assistant Management Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	66,179 -	80,424	80,424
20000050	Assistant Management Analyst	2.00	2.00	0.00	66,179 -	80,424	-
20000119	Associate Management Analyst	4.00	4.00	4.00	80,424 -	97,203	352,841
20000171	Auto Messenger 1	2.00	2.00	2.00	36,814 -	42,517	79,331
20001070	City Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	238,479 -	238,479	238,479
20000610	City Attorney Investigator	25.00	25.00	26.00	90,911 -	110,028	2,790,915
90000610	City Attorney Investigator - Hourly	0.90	0.90	0.90	90,911 -	110,028	81,820
20000539	Clerical Assistant 2	17.00	17.00	11.00	44,505 -	53,638	563,918
20001159	Confidential Secretary to the City Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	36,814 -	163,775	125,233
20000351	Court Support Clerk 1	16.00	15.00	21.00	46,865 -	56,412	1,020,384
20000353	Court Support Clerk 2	21.00	22.00	22.00	49,049 -	59,231	1,251,971
20001117	Deputy City Attorney	171.25	173.25	175.50	90,417 -	281,482	30,796,306
90001117	Deputy City Attorney - Hourly	0.98	0.98	0.98	90,417 -	281,482	182,230
20001258	Deputy City Attorney - Unrepresented	6.00	6.00	6.00	90,417 -	281,482	1,330,446
20001168	Deputy Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	72,886 -	268,057	187,496
20000924	Executive Assistant	1.00	1.00	1.00	63,557 -	76,906	76,906
20001220	Executive Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	72,886 -	268,057	230,646
20000290	Information Systems Analyst 2	2.00	2.00	2.00	81,997 -	99,082	195,761
20000293	Information Systems Analyst 3	1.00	1.00	1.00	90,015 -	108,805	108,805
20000377	Information Systems Technician	1.00	1.00	1.00	64,584 -	77,846	77,846

Personnel Expenditures

	lei Expenditures	5//2022	51/2024	EVODOE			
Job		FY2023	FY2024	FY2025		_	
Number	Job Title / Wages	Budget	Budget	Adopted		ry Range	Total
90001128	Legal Intern - Hourly	3.25	3.25	3.25	52,633 -	64,016	171,056
20000587	Legal Secretary 2	35.00	36.00	36.00	78,435 -	94,865	3,262,347
90000587	Legal Secretary 2 - Hourly	0.35	0.35	0.35	78,435 -	94,865	27,452
20000911	Librarian 3	1.00	1.00	1.00	82,062 -	99,585	99,585
90001073	Management Intern - Hourly	0.00	0.00	7.55	36,814 -	45,925	277,948
20000756	Office Support Specialist	3.00	3.00	2.00	45,969 -	55,342	107,292
20000614	Paralegal	22.00	22.00	22.00	85,711 -	103,408	2,195,910
20000680	Payroll Specialist 2	2.00	2.00	2.00	54,075 -	65,305	115,828
20001141	Principal Assistant to the City Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	40,944 -	248,983	144,021
20000747	Principal City Attorney Investigator	1.00	1.00	1.00	109,700 -	132,881	132,882
20000741	Principal Clerk	1.00	1.00	1.00	58,750 -	71,094	71,094
20000380	Principal Legal Secretary	1.00	1.00	2.00	90,714 -	109,329	200,043
20000063	Principal Paralegal	1.00	- ²³ 1.00	1.00	104,085 -	125,169	125,169
20001234	Program Coordinator	3.00	3.00	4.00	36,814 -	214,004	578,218
20001222	Program Manager	4.00	4.00	4.00	72,886 -	268,057	617,885
20000933	Senior City Attorney Investigator	5.00	5.00	6.00	99,672 -	120,799	701,855
20000935	Senior City Attorney Investigator	1.00	1.00	1.00	99,672 -	120,799	120,799
20000927	Senior Clerk/Typist	9.00	9.00	9.00	52,633 -	63,469	554,511
20000843	Senior Legal Secretary	7.00	7.00	7.00	86,410 -	104,129	719,665
20000015	Senior Management	1.00	1.00	1.00	88,289 -	106,773	105,171
20000015	Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	00,209	100,775	103,171
20000845	Senior Paralegal	5.00	5.00	5.00	94,363 -	113,633	560,211
20000916	Senior Public Information	1.00	1.00	0.00	84,026 -	101,535	
	Officer						156 506
21000776	Senior Victim Services Coordinator	0.00	0.00	2.00	66,179 -	80,424	156,596
20000970	Supervising Management Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	94,669 -	114,682	114,682
20001057	Victim Services Coordinator Adjust Budget To Approved Levels	9.00	9.00	12.00	56,398 -	67,906	776,249 (1,719,952)
	Bilingual - Regular						107,744
	Budgeted Personnel Expenditure Savings						(1,604,131)
	Chief Attorney Pay						249 774
	Lead/Supervising Attorney Pay						248,774 111,442
	Master Library Degree						4,979
	Other Certification Pays						5,206
	Overtime Budgeted						10,512
	Sick Leave - Hourly						1,499
	Standby Pay						5,501
	Standby Fay						5,501

Personnel Expenditures

Job		FY2023	FY2024	FY2025		
Number	Job Title / Wages	Budget	Budget	Adopted	Salary Range	Total
	Termination Pay Annual					331,825
	Leave					
	Vacation Pay In Lieu					597,376
FTE, Salari	es, and Wages Subtotal	403.73	406.73	423.53	\$	51,844,796

	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Budget	FY2025 Adopted	FY2024-2025 Change
Fringe Benefits				
Employee Offset Savings	\$ 2,649,961	\$ 319,274	\$ 315,097	\$ (4,177)
Flexible Benefits	5,009,096	5,139,354	5,439,683	300,329
Long-Term Disability	215,496	172,187	188,978	16,791
Medicare	672,884	709,476	749,491	40,015
Other Post-Employment Benefits	2,179,277	2,157,079	1,622,097	(534,982)
Retiree Medical Trust	68,028	80,752	88,587	7,835
Retirement 401 Plan	255,596	314,692	345,410	30,718
Retirement ADC	14,189,725	16,773,653	16,228,468	(545,185)
Retirement DROP	54,150	57,064	64,790	7,726
Risk Management Administration	531,278	488,095	543,313	55,218
Supplemental Pension Savings Plan	965,344	1,021,069	1,043,600	22,531
Unemployment Insurance	54,953	55,505	53,792	(1,713)
Workers' Compensation	613,763	706,080	650,204	(55,876)
Fringe Benefits Subtotal	\$ 27,459,551	\$ 27,994,280	\$ 27,333,510	\$ (660,770)
Total Personnel Expenditures			\$ 79,178,306	



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