

City Attorney



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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 on behalf of the People of the State of California, by holding accountable those who commit crimes against the public health and safety and violate other 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 Council members 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 keep important City projects on track.

The Criminal Division prosecutes criminal misdemeanors and infractions committed within the City's jurisdiction and assists victims of crime in navigating the criminal justice system. Its Gun Violence Response Unit manages the City Attorney's Gun Violence Restraining Order program to prevent predictable gun violence by those who pose a risk to themselves and others.

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 courts programs that divert offenders from the criminal justice system into education, treatment, and employment opportunities. These programs include the Community

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Justice Initiative, Prosecution and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Services (PLEADS), and the San Diego Misdemeanant At-Risk Track (S.M.A.R.T.) program.

The Administration Division, managed by the City Attorney's General Counsel, is responsible for the Office's personnel management, budgeting, accounting, information technology, recruitment, training, hiring, and contract management, and oversees the Office's Chief Diversity Officer. The Division includes a team of employment and labor attorneys providing advisory services regarding City-wide human resource and collective bargaining matters.

Your Safe Place - 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 Your Safe Place (YSP) works with dedicated community partners and volunteers to provide services in a judgment-free manner that empowers 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, assistance obtaining domestic violence restraining orders, mental health counseling, forensic examinations, sex trafficking-specific services, military advocacy, personalized wardrobes, and overnight essentials.

The City Attorney manages all Assistant City Attorneys, the Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, the Chief of Staff, and the Chief Deputy City Attorneys who manage the Worker Compensation Section and the Affirmative Civil Enforcement 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 limited resources and providing City officials with solid legal advice and day-to-day guidance, and to protect our natural resources, our quality of life and our most vulnerable residents

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Protect City operations, businesses, and residents by providing timely legal services in response to needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic, through work on City policies, Executive Orders, Emergency Ordinances, and enforcement of health orders.

- Advise the City on all manner of COVID-19 related issues, including vaccination requirements, access to and new uses for City facilities, citizen access to public meetings, preventing evictions, addressing increases in the population of unhoused residents, delays and non-compliance with contracted services and the delivery of purchased goods, staffing shortages in City departments, laws regulating restaurants and food delivery, and changes in the City's infrastructure and office space needs.
- Work with mayoral departments to hold accountable those who violate health and safety laws, create nuisances, provide substandard housing, and defy zoning laws.

Goal 2: Secure appropriate staffing levels for the Civil Advisory Division to reflect the legislative and policy priorities of the City Council, Mayor, and City departments.

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Goal 3: *Protect taxpayers by securing appropriate staffing levels for the Civil Litigation Division to defend the City against an expanding volume of increasingly complex lawsuits without reliance on outside counsel.*

Goal 4: *Secure appropriate staffing levels for Your Safe Place to address the growing need for services due to COVID-related stressors such as job loss and lockdowns.*

Goal 5: *Protect our most vulnerable residents with effective programs that target domestic violence, human trafficking, elder abuse, sex crimes, hate crimes, and gun violence.*

- Expand the success of the office's Gun Violence Response Unit through proactive outreach to communities impacted by gun violence and by capitalizing on partnerships with the U.S. Attorney's Office, the California Legislature, the San Diego Superior Court, and the San Diego Police Department.
- Support victims of domestic violence and human trafficking by increasing victim services programs at Your Safe Place, expanding outreach efforts, and removing service barriers to reach additional vulnerable populations.
- Lead a regional response to situations involving the abuse of elders and dependent adults, including those living in substandard housing or suffering from Alzheimer's Disease and dementia-related conditions.
- Conduct community outreach and explore alternative reporting mechanisms to address the underreporting of hate crimes.

Goal 6: *Develop and implement programs to keep people out of the criminal justice system by addressing the root causes of their behavior.*

- Seek compassionate and appropriate solutions and treatment placements for vulnerable individuals whose health and safety are at risk because they cannot care for their personal needs, including food, shelter, and medical services, through referrals to Adult Protective Services, the County's Public Guardian, and the like.
- Offer homeless offenders the opportunity to secure housing, support services, and treatment in lieu of prosecution, fines, and a criminal record.
- Continue to expand the PLEADS program, which diverts people struggling with drug addiction from the criminal justice system and connects them with support services, providing significant cost savings for taxpayers.
- Increase training, community outreach, and public awareness on the issue of substandard housing and nuisance properties while aggressively investigating and holding accountable property owners, managers, and landlords who exploit and prey on vulnerable populations.

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Department Summary

	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	FY2022-2023 Change
FTE Positions (Budgeted)	386.73	389.73	403.73	14.00
Personnel Expenditures	\$ 59,785,578	\$ 62,875,251	\$ 68,441,444	\$ 5,566,193
Non-Personnel Expenditures	3,756,511	5,924,084	6,464,486	540,402
Total Department Expenditures	\$ 63,542,089	\$ 68,799,335	\$ 74,905,930	\$ 6,106,595
Total Department Revenue	\$ 4,124,393	\$ 3,910,296	\$ 3,748,965	\$ (161,331)

General Fund

Department Expenditures

	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	FY2022-2023 Change
Civil Advisory	\$ 17,193,473	\$ 18,363,492	\$ 20,452,213	\$ 2,088,721
Civil Litigation	14,437,266	15,804,422	16,420,193	615,771
Community Justice	6,041,481	6,591,973	7,373,630	781,657
Criminal Litigation	16,638,267	17,660,631	17,252,986	(407,645)
Family Justice Center	861,810	1,029,908	1,695,893	665,985
Management/Administration	8,369,793	9,348,909	11,711,015	2,362,106
Total	\$ 63,542,089	\$ 68,799,335	\$ 74,905,930	\$ 6,106,595

Department Personnel

	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	FY2022-2023 Change
Civil Advisory	84.35	83.35	89.35	6.00
Civil Litigation	85.10	86.35	88.35	2.00
Community Justice	40.48	39.48	43.48	4.00
Criminal Litigation	130.80	134.55	133.55	(1.00)
Family Justice Center	9.00	9.00	13.00	4.00
Management/Administration	37.00	37.00	36.00	(1.00)
Total	386.73	389.73	403.73	14.00

Significant Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Restoration of Citywide Reduction Restoration of personnel expenditures associated to citywide reduction in Fiscal Year 2021.	0.00	\$ 2,368,376	\$ -
Salary and Benefit Adjustments Adjustments to reflect savings resulting from vacant positions for any period of the fiscal year, retirement contributions, retiree health contributions, and labor negotiations.	0.00	1,377,230	-

Significant Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Support for the Conservancy and Treatment Unit Addition of 2.00 Deputy City Attorneys, 1.00 Program Manager, and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures to support the Conservancy and Treatment Unit.	3.00	546,316	-
Family Justice Center Software Maintenance Addition of non-personnel expenditures to maintain systems and upgrade the intake system software in the Family Justice Center.	0.00	471,817	-
Support for the Short-Term Rental Ordinance Addition of 1.00 Deputy City Attorney, 1.00 City Attorney Investigator, 1.00 Legal Secretary 2, and associated non-personnel expenditures to support the enforcement of the Short-Term Rental Ordinance.	3.00	397,065	-
Support for Information Technology Adjustment to expenditure allocations according to a zero-based annual review of information technology funding requirements.	0.00	200,971	-
Real Estate Legal Support Addition of 1.00 Deputy City Attorney and associated non-personnel expenditures to provide legal assistance to the Department of Real Estate and Airport Management.	1.00	193,129	-
Support for Economic Development Addition of 1.00 Deputy City Attorney and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures to support the Public Finance Unit for Economic Development matters.	1.00	193,129	-
Support for Housing and Homelessness Addition of 1.00 Deputy City Attorney and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures to support housing and homelessness matters.	1.00	193,129	-
Support for the Gun Violence Restraining Order Addition of 1.00 Deputy City Attorney and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures and revenue to support the Gun Violence Retraining Orders (GVRO) training grant.	1.00	186,225	90,000
Community Outreach for the Family Justice Center Addition of 1.00 Assistant for Community Outreach and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures to support the Family Justice Center.	1.00	157,206	-
Family Justice Center Victim Services Coordinators Addition of 2.00 Victim Services Coordinators and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures and revenue to support the Family Justice Center.	2.00	149,232	37,303
Supplemental Position Addition of 1.00 Paralegal and associated one-time non-personnel expenditures to support the Civil Litigation Division.	1.00	99,504	-
Non-Standard Hour Personnel Funding Funding allocated according to a zero-based annual review of hourly funding requirements.	0.00	31,786	-

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Significant Budget Adjustments

	FTE	Expenditures	Revenue
Non-Discretionary Adjustment	0.00	(173,886)	-
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.			
One-Time Additions and Annualizations	0.00	(284,634)	-
Adjustment to reflect one-time revenues and expenditures, and the annualization of revenues and expenditures, implemented in Fiscal Year 2022.			
Revised Recognized Obligation Payment Revenue	0.00	-	(108,634)
Revenue adjustment to reflect revised Recognized Obligation Payment revenue projections.			
Revised Centre City Development Corporation Revenue	0.00	-	(180,000)
Revenue adjustment to reflect revised Centre City Development Corporation revenue projections.			
Total	14.00 \$	6,106,595 \$	(161,331)

Expenditures by Category

	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	FY2022-2023 Change
PERSONNEL				
Personnel Cost	\$ 35,974,769	\$ 36,415,090	\$ 42,959,385	\$ 6,544,295
Fringe Benefits	23,810,809	26,460,161	25,482,059	(978,102)
PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL	59,785,578	62,875,251	68,441,444	5,566,193
NON-PERSONNEL				
Supplies	\$ 186,044	\$ 371,627	\$ 376,913	\$ 5,286
Contracts & Services	1,614,105	2,524,090	2,378,609	(145,481)
Information Technology	1,855,262	2,839,210	3,511,998	672,788
Energy and Utilities	43,562	44,733	46,842	2,109
Other	57,538	141,424	147,124	5,700
Capital Expenditures	-	3,000	3,000	-
NON-PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL	3,756,511	5,924,084	6,464,486	540,402
Total	\$ 63,542,089	\$ 68,799,335	\$ 74,905,930	\$ 6,106,595

Revenues by Category

	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	FY2022-2023 Change
Charges for Services	\$ 3,425,437	\$ 3,448,162	\$ 3,395,465	\$ (52,697)
Fines Forfeitures and Penalties	619,458	300,000	300,000	-
Licenses and Permits	1,804	3,500	3,500	-
Other Revenue	57,401	-	-	-
Rev from Money and Prop	(905)	-	-	-
Rev from Other Agencies	15	158,634	50,000	(108,634)
Transfers In	21,183	-	-	-
Total	\$ 4,124,393	\$ 3,910,296	\$ 3,748,965	\$ (161,331)

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Personnel Expenditures

Job Number	Job Title / Wages	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	Salary Range	Total
FTE, Salaries, and Wages						
20000011	Account Clerk	1.00	1.00	1.00	\$ 36,705 - 44,178	\$ 42,632
20000012	Administrative Aide 1	2.00	2.00	2.00	45,269 - 54,528	107,147
20001076	Assistant City Attorney	5.00	5.00	5.00	88,489 - 353,387	1,123,500
20001154	Assistant for Community Outreach	1.00	1.00	2.00	34,070 - 184,017	247,805
20000041	Assistant Management Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	54,456 - 66,197	66,197
20000050	Assistant Management Analyst	2.00	2.00	2.00	54,456 - 66,197	130,077
20000119	Associate Management Analyst	4.00	4.00	4.00	66,197 - 79,990	264,327
20000171	Auto Messenger 1	2.00	2.00	2.00	32,760 - 36,705	73,410
20001070	City Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	225,074 - 225,074	225,074
20000610	City Attorney Investigator	24.00	24.00	25.00	74,819 - 90,530	2,207,093
90000610	City Attorney Investigator	0.90	0.90	0.90	74,819 - 90,530	67,338
20000539	Clerical Assistant 2	18.00	17.00	17.00	36,630 - 44,147	719,693
20001159	Confidential Secretary to the City Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	34,070 - 127,867	98,280
20000351	Court Support Clerk 1	15.00	16.00	16.00	38,563 - 46,414	686,046
20000353	Court Support Clerk 2	21.00	21.00	21.00	40,353 - 48,729	995,346
20001117	Deputy City Attorney	161.25	164.25	171.25	74,707 - 223,796	26,076,437
90001117	Deputy City Attorney	0.98	0.98	0.98	74,707 - 223,796	145,558
20001258	Deputy City Attorney - Unrepresented	6.00	6.00	6.00	74,707 - 223,796	1,044,123
20001168	Deputy Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	56,929 - 209,339	191,777
20000924	Executive Assistant	1.00	1.00	1.00	52,792 - 63,852	63,852
20001220	Executive Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	56,929 - 209,339	176,984
20000290	Information Systems Analyst 2	2.00	2.00	2.00	66,845 - 80,773	161,546
20000293	Information Systems Analyst 3	1.00	1.00	1.00	73,375 - 88,725	88,725
20000377	Information Systems Technician	1.00	1.00	1.00	52,652 - 63,447	63,447
90001128	Legal Intern	3.25	3.25	3.25	43,286 - 57,473	140,679
20000587	Legal Secretary 2	34.00	34.00	35.00	64,527 - 78,034	2,544,405
90000587	Legal Secretary 2	0.35	0.35	0.35	64,527 - 78,034	22,584
20000911	Librarian 3	1.00	1.00	1.00	70,866 - 85,994	85,994
20000614	Paralegal	21.00	21.00	22.00	70,540 - 85,097	1,806,587
20000680	Payroll Specialist 2	2.00	2.00	2.00	46,697 - 56,380	95,908
20001141	Principal Assistant to the City Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	34,070 - 194,434	145,236
20000747	Principal City Attorney Investigator	1.00	1.00	1.00	90,254 - 109,322	109,322
20000741	Principal Clerk	1.00	1.00	1.00	50,742 - 61,372	61,372
20000380	Principal Legal Secretary	1.00	1.00	1.00	74,645 - 89,965	89,965
20000063	Principal Paralegal	1.00	1.00	1.00	85,622 - 102,995	102,995
20001234	Program Coordinator	3.00	3.00	3.00	34,070 - 167,127	369,948
20001222	Program Manager	3.00	3.00	4.00	56,929 - 209,339	489,510
20000933	Senior City Attorney Investigator	5.00	5.00	5.00	82,010 - 99,400	495,509

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Personnel Expenditures

Job Number	Job Title / Wages	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	Salary Range	Total
20000935	Senior City Attorney Investigator	1.00	1.00	1.00	82,010 - 99,400	99,400
20000927	Senior Clerk/Typist	9.00	9.00	9.00	43,718 - 52,745	450,504
20000843	Senior Legal Secretary	7.00	7.00	7.00	71,113 - 85,670	596,692
20000015	Senior Management Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	72,664 - 87,865	86,547
20000845	Senior Paralegal	5.00	5.00	5.00	77,628 - 93,473	444,976
20000916	Senior Public Information Officer	1.00	1.00	1.00	66,845 - 80,773	80,773
20000970	Supervising Management Analyst	1.00	1.00	1.00	79,751 - 96,633	96,633
20001057	Victim Services Coordinator	7.00	7.00	9.00	45,269 - 54,528	474,563
20000756	Word Processing Operator	3.00	3.00	3.00	38,188 - 45,963	127,992
	Adjust Budget To Approved Levels					(43,767)
	Bilingual - Regular Budgeted Personnel					39,312
	Expenditure Savings					(2,099,306)
	Chief Attorney Pay					241,946
	Lead/Supervising Attorney Pay					77,261
	Master Library Degree					4,300
	Overtime Budgeted					10,512
	Sick Leave - Hourly					1,499
	Vacation Pay In Lieu					643,120
FTE, Salaries, and Wages Subtotal		386.73	389.73	403.73		\$ 42,959,385

	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Adopted	FY2022-2023 Change
Fringe Benefits				
Employee Offset Savings	\$ 282,380	\$ 305,569	\$ 301,282	\$ (4,287)
Flexible Benefits	5,158,749	5,207,379	5,098,404	(108,975)
Long-Term Disability	164,323	151,873	146,973	(4,900)
Medicare	542,191	546,472	611,892	65,420
Other Post-Employment Benefits	2,366,267	2,233,219	2,139,539	(93,680)
Retiree Medical Trust	49,594	52,328	64,287	11,959
Retirement 401 Plan	35,526	37,406	78,637	41,231
Retirement ADC	12,084,577	14,398,703	13,490,972	(907,731)
Retirement DROP	68,462	78,307	62,670	(15,637)
Risk Management Administration	389,604	386,471	438,331	51,860
Supplemental Pension Savings Plan	2,347,379	2,547,628	2,565,487	17,859
Unemployment Insurance	55,553	55,275	53,332	(1,943)
Workers' Compensation	266,203	459,531	430,253	(29,278)
Fringe Benefits Subtotal	\$ 23,810,809	\$ 26,460,161	\$ 25,482,059	\$ (978,102)
Total Personnel Expenditures			\$ 68,441,444	