

Law Department

Peter S. Holmes, City Attorney

Civil Division, (206) 684-8200; Criminal Division, (206) 684-7757

<http://www.seattle.gov/law/>

Department Overview

The Law Department serves as counsel to the City's elected officials and agencies, and as the prosecutor in Seattle Municipal Court. The Seattle City Attorney, Peter S. Holmes, is a nonpartisan elected official.

The Department provides legal advice to City officials to help them achieve their goals, represents the City in litigation, and protects the public health, safety, and welfare of the community by prosecuting violations of City criminal and civil ordinances and state law. The four department divisions are Administration, Civil, Criminal, and Precinct Liaison.

The **Administration Division** provides executive leadership, communications, and operational support for the entire department. It is comprised of the executive leadership team for the department, human resources, finance, media relations, and information technology staff.

The **Civil Division** provides legal counsel and representation to the City's elected and appointed policymakers in litigation at all levels of county, state, federal courts, and administrative agencies. The Civil Division is organized into the following six specialized areas of practice: Employment, Environmental Protection, Land Use, Government Affairs, Torts, and Utilities & Contracts.

The **Criminal Division** prosecutes misdemeanor crimes in Seattle Municipal Court, provides legal advice to City clients on criminal justice matters, monitors state criminal justice legislation of interest to the City, and participates in criminal justice policy development and management of the criminal justice system. In addition, the Criminal Division operates a Victims of Crime program which assists crime victims in obtaining restitution. The Criminal Division is comprised of a Trial Support Team, Domestic Violence Unit, Appellate/Filing Unit, Specialty Courts Unit (Mental Health, Community Court, Veterans' Court, DUI, and Infractions Program), and two trial teams.

The **Precinct Liaison** attorneys work in each of the City's five police precincts, providing legal advice to police and other City departments. In helping to address a variety of neighborhood and community problems, these attorneys coordinate with the Civil and Criminal divisions to ensure a consistent, thorough and effective approach to solving issues of concern to the community.

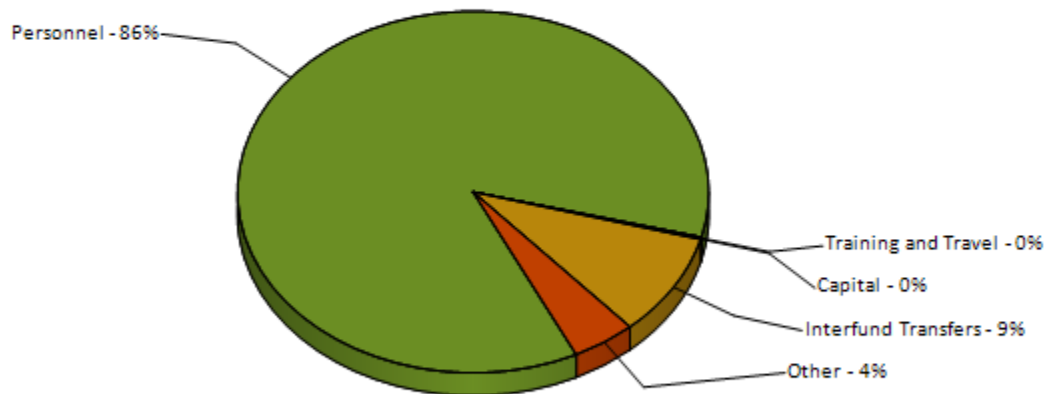
Law Department

Budget Snapshot

Department Support	2013 Actual	2014 Adopted	2015 Adopted	2016 Endorsed
General Fund Support	\$20,002,099	\$22,384,092	\$23,697,337	\$23,906,239
Total Operations	\$20,002,099	\$22,384,092	\$23,697,337	\$23,906,239
Total Appropriations	\$20,002,099	\$22,384,092	\$23,697,337	\$23,906,239
Full-time Equivalent Total*	159.10	167.60	173.60	173.60

* FTE totals are provided for information purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here.

2015 Adopted Budget - Expenditure by Category



Budget Overview

The Law Department is currently located in two different buildings with its Civil Division in City Hall and its Criminal Division located in the Seattle Municipal Tower (SMT). Precinct Liaison staff are stationed in Seattle Police Department facilities. In 2015, the Law Department will move into new offices in the Columbia Center across the street from SMT and City Hall. This move will allow the Law Department to have both its Civil Division and its Criminal Division in the same building for the first time in many years. It will also give the Law Department enough room to adequately house all of its employees. The department has been managing growth by converting conference rooms, libraries and other shared space into offices and cubicles to accommodate new staff. The Law Department expects to move into the new space in April of 2015.

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The 2015 Adopted and Endorsed Budget also adds two new attorney positions to provide legal advice to the Mayor and to the Seattle Police Chief. Staffing these positions in the Law Department will allow for quality, objective legal advice that is based in City-wide policy, practices and interests. In addition, a legal assistant position supporting the legal advisor to the police Chief will transfer from SPD to the Law Department.

City Council Changes to Proposed Budget

Council added \$300,000 to the Law Department budget funding a market adjustment to Civil Division attorney salaries. The Council also approved a one-time reduction of 0.6% in General Fund support to the department's 2015 Proposed Budget. This change was made only to departments receiving more than \$10 million in General Fund support.

Incremental Budget Changes

Law Department

	2015		2016	
	Budget	FTE	Budget	FTE
Total 2014 Adopted Budget	\$ 22,384,092	167.60	\$ 22,384,092	167.60
Baseline Changes				
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	\$ 306,828	0.00	\$ 343,425	0.00
Supplemental Budget Changes and Position Reconciliation	\$ 0	2.00	\$ 0	2.00
Proposed Changes				
Office Relocation	\$ 300,000	0.00	\$ 191,000	0.00
Seattle Police Department Legal Advisor	\$ 145,677	1.00	\$ 145,677	1.00
Transfer Legal Assistant from Seattle Police Department to Law	\$ 80,560	1.00	\$ 80,560	1.00
Mayor's Office Legal Advisor	\$ 186,951	1.00	\$ 186,951	1.00
Proposed Technical Changes				
Citywide Training and Travel Reallocation	-\$ 2,458	0.00	-\$ 2,458	0.00
Position Reclassification Costs	\$ 25,000	0.00	\$ 25,000	0.00
Position Transfers Within Law	\$ 0	0.00	\$ 0	0.00
Expiring Agreement for Alaska Way Viaduct Work	-\$ 85,000	0.00	-\$ 85,000	0.00
Addition of Paralegal for Duwamish Allocation Project	\$ 0	1.00	\$ 0	1.00
Final Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	\$ 190,861	0.00	\$ 336,992	0.00
Council Changes				
Fund Market Adjustment for Civil Division Attorney Salaries	\$ 300,000	0.00	\$ 300,000	0.00
One-time Appropriation Reduction	-\$ 135,174	0.00	\$ 0	0.00

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Total Incremental Changes	\$ 1,313,245	6.00	\$ 1,522,147	6.00
2015 Adopted/2016 Endorsed Budget	\$ 23,697,337	173.60	\$ 23,906,239	173.60

Descriptions of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline Changes

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - \$306,828

Citywide technical adjustments made in the "Baseline Phase" reflect changes due to inflation, central cost allocations, retirement, healthcare, workers' compensation, and unemployment costs. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Supplemental Budget Changes and Position Reconciliation/2.00 FTE

This adjustment reflects changes made through supplemental budget legislation since the last Adopted Budget. Supplemental budget legislation is developed by the Executive and adopted by the City Council four times a year to provide for corrections to the Adopted Budget, unforeseen changes in circumstance, new funding opportunities or new policy priorities. This increase of 2.0 FTE captures an assistant city attorney add from the first quarter of 2012, and the transfer of a supported employee from Human Resources in 2013.

Proposed Changes

Office Relocation - \$300,000

In 2014, the City Council approved a lease for office space in the Columbia Center. The Law Department is currently located in two different buildings with its Civil Division in City Hall and its Criminal Division located in the Seattle Municipal Tower. The move will consolidate the Law Department divisions into one building with more square footage to accommodate staff, conference rooms and libraries. The Department's space allocation costs will increase by \$300,000 in 2015 and by \$191,000 in 2016. The 2015 cost is higher because Law will pay for two months in Columbia Center while still paying for their current City Hall and SMT space. In 2016 the department will only pay for space in Columbia Center.

Seattle Police Department Legal Advisor - \$145,677/1.00 FTE

This adjustment reflects the movement of a Legal Advisor from Seattle Police Department to Law Department to work on discipline and employment related work. Use of an Assistant City Attorney in Law Department ensures attorney-client confidentiality of workload. This is a net-zero Citywide transaction with an equivalent position and funding reduction in the SPD Budget.

Transfer Legal Assistant from Seattle Police Department to Law - \$80,560/1.00 FTE

This position supports the SPD legal advisor and other attorney-client privileged legal needs in the police department related to discipline and employment.

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Mayor's Office Legal Advisor - \$186,951/1.00 FTE

This position will provide confidential, attorney-client privileged legal advice to the Mayor. An emergency position was created in 2014 and a qualified candidate hired. This incumbent will transfer to the new position in 2015.

Proposed Technical Changes

Citywide Training and Travel Reallocation - (\$2,458)

This adjustment makes small reductions to training and travel budget appropriations Citywide. The Budget reallocates these funds to a new Centralized Management and Leadership Development program in the Department of Human Resources. More information on the new training program can be found in the Department of Human Resources budget section.

Position Reclassification Costs - \$25,000

In 2014, six legal support positions were reclassified or promoted from legal assistant and paralegal positions into new senior positions. This increase will fund those reclassifications.

Position Transfers Within Law

Three positions will transfer within the Law Department. An IT specialist will move from the Criminal Division to the Administrative Division where the department IT staff is budgeted. An Executive Assistant will move from the Administrative Division to the Criminal Division to support the Criminal Division Chief. Last, an attorney working on vice and narcotics cases, including drug forfeiture, will move from the Criminal Division to the Precinct Liaison Division. There is an overlap of case work between this position and the Precinct Liaison positions. These transfers do not have a financial impact.

Expiring Agreement for Alaska Way Viaduct Work - (\$85,000)

The Law Department and Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) had executed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to fund an attorney/staff for work related to the Alaska Way Viaduct. The MOA ends in December of 2014 and will not be renewed. This action reduces the Law Department's budget authority to reflect the end of the agreement.

Addition of Paralegal for Duwamish Allocation Project/1.00 FTE

This change adds a paralegal to assist with the Duwamish Allocation Project which reviews documents and records to determine what portion of the \$400 million remedy for reducing contamination in the waterway will be paid by Seattle City Light (SCL) and Seattle Public Utility (SPU). The paralegal is a four year term-limited position. The team reviews and organizes hundreds of thousands of documents for relevance to the project, and the paralegal will assist with this review. This change does not include appropriation authority for the cost of the position. Law Department will bill the cost directly to the project.

Final Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - \$190,861

Citywide technical adjustments made in the "Proposed Phase" reflect changes due to inflation, central cost allocation, retirement, healthcare, workers' compensation, and unemployment costs. These adjustments reflect updates to preliminary cost assumptions established in the "Baseline Phase."

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Council Changes

Fund Market Adjustment for Civil Division Attorney Salaries - \$300,000

This item adds \$300,000 to fund attorney salary increases in the Civil Division. The department requested \$860,000 in the 2014 budget process. This was the amount identified in a Department of Personnel study needed to bring attorneys up to the market median salary. The Council funded \$425,000 in the 2014 Adopted Budget. This additional funding provides a base increase of \$725,000 for Civil Division salary increases.

One-time Appropriation Reduction - (\$135,174)

This Council item reflects a one-time across-the-board reduction in appropriations for all departments receiving more than \$10 million in General Fund support. This reduction is equivalent to 0.6% of the General Fund appropriation included in the 2015 Proposed Budget.

City Council Provisos

There are no Council Provisos.

Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	Summit Code	2013 Actual	2014 Adopted	2015 Adopted	2016 Endorsed
Administration Budget Control Level	J1100	1,956,703	2,198,827	2,507,713	2,435,819
Civil Budget Control Level	J1300	11,106,426	12,627,503	13,495,324	13,665,415
Criminal Budget Control Level	J1500	6,491,082	6,992,410	7,003,388	7,105,462
General Fund Supported BCLs					
Precinct Liaison Attorneys Budget Control Level	J1700	447,888	565,352	690,912	699,543
Department Total		20,002,099	22,384,092	23,697,337	23,906,239
Department Full-time Equivalents Total*		159.10	167.60	173.60	173.60

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Appropriations By Budget Control Level (BCL) and Program

Administration Budget Control Level

The purpose of the Administration Budget Control Level is to provide the financial, technological, administrative and managerial support for the Department.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Program Expenditures	Actual	Adopted	Adopted	Endorsed
Administration	1,956,703	2,198,827	2,507,713	2,435,819
Total	1,956,703	2,198,827	2,507,713	2,435,819
Full-time Equivalents Total*	13.80	15.30	15.30	15.30

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Civil Budget Control Level

The purpose of the Civil Budget Control Level is to provide legal advice to the City's policy-makers, and to defend and represent the City, its employees, and officials before a variety of county, state, federal courts, and administrative bodies.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Program Expenditures	Actual	Adopted	Adopted	Endorsed
Civil	11,106,426	12,627,503	13,495,324	13,665,415
Total	11,106,426	12,627,503	13,495,324	13,665,415
Full-time Equivalents Total*	83.80	88.80	93.80	93.80

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Criminal Budget Control Level

The purpose of the Criminal Budget Control Level includes prosecuting ordinance violations and misdemeanor crimes, maintaining case information and preparing effective case files for the court appearances of prosecuting attorneys, and assisting and advocating for victims of domestic violence throughout the court process.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Program Expenditures	Actual	Adopted	Adopted	Endorsed
Criminal	6,491,082	6,992,410	7,003,388	7,105,462
Total	6,491,082	6,992,410	7,003,388	7,105,462
Full-time Equivalents Total*	57.50	59.50	59.50	59.50

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Precinct Liaison Attorneys Budget Control Level

The purpose of the Precinct Liaison Budget Control Level is to support a program where attorneys work in each of the City's five precincts, providing legal advice to police and other City departments. In helping to address a variety of neighborhood and community problems, the precinct liaison attorneys coordinate with the Civil and Criminal divisions with the goal of providing a consistent, thorough and effective approach.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Program Expenditures	Actual	Adopted	Adopted	Endorsed
Precinct Liaison Program	447,888	565,352	690,912	699,543
Total	447,888	565,352	690,912	699,543
Full-time Equivalent Total*	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00

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