

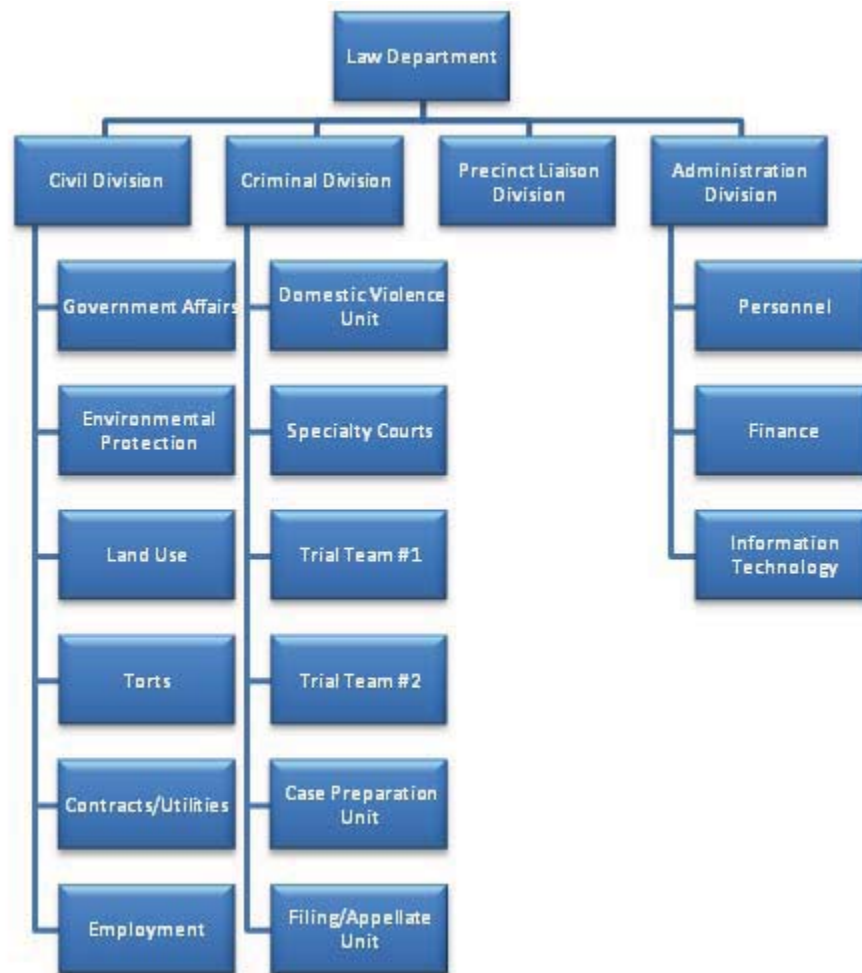
Law Department

Peter S. Holmes, City Attorney

Department Information Line: Civil Division, (206) 684-8200;

Criminal Division, (206) 684-7757

On the Web at: <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. Peter S. Holmes, the Seattle City Attorney, 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 Liaisons.

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The Administration Division provides executive leadership, communications, and operational support for the entire department. It is comprised of executives, 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 in Seattle Municipal Court misdemeanor crimes punishable by up to 364 days in jail, 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 Case Prep Unit, 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.

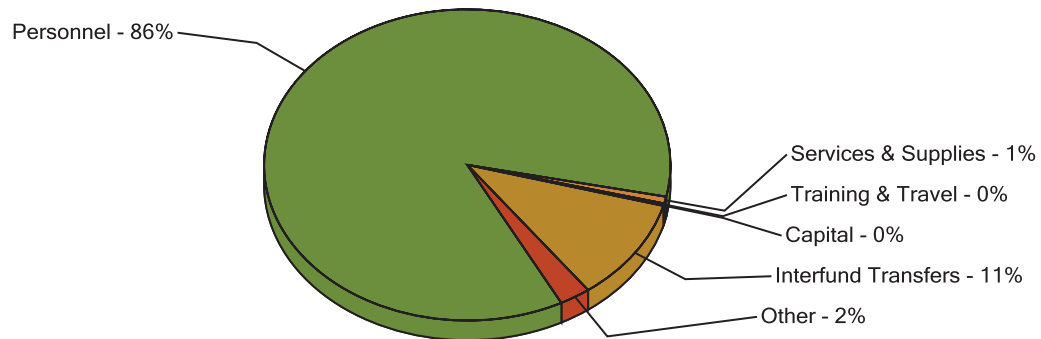
Budget Snapshot

Department Support	2011 Actual	2012 Adopted	2013 Adopted	2014 Endorsed
General Fund Support	\$17,615,216	\$19,188,666	\$20,421,422	\$21,025,560
Total Operations	\$17,615,216	\$19,188,666	\$20,421,422	\$21,025,560
Total Appropriations	\$17,615,216	\$19,188,666	\$20,421,422	\$21,025,560
Full-time Equivalent Total*	155.10	160.60	159.10	159.10

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

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2013 Adopted Budget - Expenditure by Category



Budget Overview

General Fund budget pressures continue to require creative budget strategies. In the 2013 Adopted and 2014 Endorsed budgets the Law Department has identified nearly \$450,000 in savings and funding enhancements that will improve the ability of the Law Department to handle workload in a cost-effective manner. Reductions include the consolidation of part-time positions to save on benefits costs, the elimination of vacant positions, and capturing salary savings from staff turnover.

The Budget also contains three General Fund neutral additions. In 2011, two attorneys and a support staff position were added to the Law Department to bring police action cases in-house. In mid-2012, the Law Department added a third attorney. Police action cases involve lawsuits against the City and police officers which allege damages as a result of police actions. Previously, these cases had been handled by outside legal counsel, costing the City approximately \$1.8 million annually. As a result of handling these cases with in-house attorneys, the Law Department generated savings to the City's Police Action Judgment and Claims Subfund. The 2013 Adopted and 2014 Endorsed budgets continue funding for the position that was added in mid-2012. The cost of this position is offset by savings in the Police Action Judgment and Claims Subfund, making this a General Fund neutral transaction. Funding for the three positions added in 2011 remain in the Law Department's base budget, as well.

Through the Judgment and Claims Subfund, the Law Department pays outside vendors to assist in information technology and electronic records management litigation support. A part-time Information Technology Systems Analyst is added to the Law Department, to allow the Law Department to handle this work in-house at a lower cost. The cost of this position is offset by a reduction in the Judgment and Claims Subfund making this another General Fund neutral transaction.

Finally, a technical change moves funding for an existing Assistant City Attorney housed in the Law Department's Torts Civil Division from the Judgment and Claims Subfund to the Law Department operating budget. This position

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has been funded from Judgment and Claims since 2003 when it was established to handle overflow Torts cases rather than sending them to outside counsel.

City Council Changes to Proposed Budget

Council provided an ongoing appropriation of \$60,000 to fund more frequent updates to the Municipal Code and improve the web interface.

Incremental Budget Changes

Law Department

	2013		2014	
	Budget	FTE	Budget	FTE
Total 2012 Adopted Budget	\$ 19,188,667	160.60	\$ 19,188,667	160.60
Baseline Changes				
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	\$ 1,404,562	0.00	\$ 2,066,406	0.00
Proposed Policy Changes				
Technology Staffing	\$ 62,734	0.50	\$ 65,244	0.50
Add Police Action Attorney	\$ 123,885	0.00	\$ 135,911	0.00
Change Market Adjustment	-\$ 150,000	0.00	-\$ 153,000	0.00
Staffing Consolidations and Savings	-\$ 296,024	-2.00	-\$ 314,247	-2.00
Funding Transfer from Judgment and Claims	\$ 166,633	0.00	\$ 172,176	0.00
Proposed Technical Changes				
Final Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	-\$ 139,035	0.00	-\$ 195,597	0.00
Council Phase Changes				
Fund Upgrade to Municipal Code Publication Services	\$ 60,000	0.00	\$ 60,000	0.00
Total Incremental Changes	\$ 1,232,755	-1.50	\$ 1,836,893	-1.50
2013 Adopted/2014 Endorsed Budget	\$ 20,421,422	159.10	\$ 21,025,560	159.10

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Descriptions of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline Changes

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - \$1,404,562

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

Proposed Policy Changes

Technology Staffing - \$62,734/.50 FTE

The Law Department IT staff of 3.0 FTE provides account setup and desktop support for over 200 workstations and manages approximately 15 applications and databases. In addition, they support the searching and compiling of electronic records related to public records requests and litigation. Due to increasing demand for electronic records, the Law Department has utilized outside vendors to handle some of this workload at a cost of about \$85,000 per year. Adding a 0.5 FTE Information Technology System Analyst position will allow the Law Department to bring this work in house, saving the City money in its Judgment and Claims fund.

Add Police Action Attorney - \$123,885

In 2011, two attorneys and support staff were added to the Law Department to bring in-house a portion of the police action cases handled by outside counsel. This staffing change proved to be very successful since the billing rate for a City attorney is far less than that of private law firm attorneys. Significant savings has been generated in the Police Action Judgment and Claims Subfund. An additional attorney position is proposed with funding transferred from this Judgment and Claims Subfund.

Change Market Adjustment - (\$150,000)

To meet reduction targets, the Law Department proposes to reduce the market adjustment awarded to the Assistant City Attorney discretionary pay system. The 2013 Adopted Budget included a 3.3% market adjustment. In order to trim personnel costs without layoffs, the market adjustment is reduced from 3.3% to 1.7%.

Staffing Consolidations and Savings - (\$296,024)/(2.00) FTE

Four vacant part-time positions will be combined to create 2.0 FTE, resulting in benefit cost savings. With staff retirements, the department anticipates salary savings with new hires starting at a lower pay level. The Department will also eliminate two vacant attorney positions in the Criminal and Civil Divisions. Last, the Department has committed to purchasing software in 2012 for the Criminal Division that will streamline the discovery process and automate the tracking and distribution of discovery to the Court and defense attorneys, resulting in \$10,000 in savings annually.

Funding Transfer from Judgment and Claims - \$166,633

The cost of a Law Department attorney in the Civil Division has been routinely charged to the Judgment and Claims Subfund. In this budget-neutral action, the funding for this position is shifted from the Judgment and Claims Subfund to the Law Department's operating budget.

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Proposed Technical Changes

Final Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - (\$139,035)

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

Council Phase Changes

Fund Upgrade to Municipal Code Publication Services - \$60,000

The Law Department contracts with a vendor to maintain an official monthly updated version of the Municipal Code. The Clerk's Office updates the online version of the Code as needed to provide the most recent changes to City staff and the public. This additional appropriation will eliminate the need for these parallel systems. The Department will consider potential vendors who can update the Code more often and improve the web interface for all users.

City Council Provisos

There are no Council provisos.

Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	Summit Code	2011 Actual	2012 Adopted	2013 Adopted	2014 Endorsed
Administration Budget Control Level	J1100	1,607,212	1,718,188	1,953,005	2,012,668
Civil Budget Control Level	J1300	9,994,829	10,677,827	11,394,926	11,733,147
Criminal Budget Control Level	J1500	6,013,174	6,289,652	6,547,298	6,736,334
General Fund Supported BCLs					
Precinct Liaison Attorneys Budget Control Level	J1700	0	503,000	526,193	543,411
Department Total		17,615,216	19,188,666	20,421,422	21,025,560
Department Full-time Equivalent Total*		155.10	160.60	159.10	159.10

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

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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.

Program Expenditures	2011 Actual	2012 Adopted	2013 Adopted	2014 Endorsed
Administration	1,607,212	1,718,188	1,953,005	2,012,668
Total	1,607,212	1,718,188	1,953,005	2,012,668
Full-time Equivalents Total*	13.30	13.30	13.80	13.80

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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.

Program Expenditures	2011 Actual	2012 Adopted	2013 Adopted	2014 Endorsed
Civil	9,994,829	10,677,827	11,394,926	11,733,147
Total	9,994,829	10,677,827	11,394,926	11,733,147
Full-time Equivalents Total*	82.30	84.80	83.80	83.80

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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.

Program Expenditures	2011 Actual	2012 Adopted	2013 Adopted	2014 Endorsed
Criminal	6,013,174	6,289,652	6,547,298	6,736,334
Total	6,013,174	6,289,652	6,547,298	6,736,334
Full-time Equivalents Total*	59.50	58.50	57.50	57.50

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Precinct Liaison Attorneys Budget Control Level

The purpose of the Precinct Liaison Program 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.

Program Expenditures	2011 Actual	2012 Adopted	2013 Adopted	2014 Endorsed
Precinct Liaison Program	0	503,000	526,193	543,411
Total	0	503,000	526,193	543,411
Full-time Equivalents Total*	0.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

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