

# County Attorney

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Office of the County Attorney is to act as the chief legal officer of Montgomery County government and to conduct all its legal business.

## BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total approved FY10 Operating Budget for the Office of the County Attorney is \$5,224,980, a decrease of \$455,880 or 8.0 percent from the FY09 Approved Budget of \$5,680,860. Personnel Costs comprise 89.9 percent of the budget for 72 full-time positions and three part-time positions for 39.3 workyears. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 10.1 percent of the FY10 budget.

## LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULT AREAS

While this program area supports all eight of the County Result Areas, the following are emphasized:

❖ **A Responsive, Accountable County Government**

## DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This table presents the department's headline measures or submeasures that relate to multiple programs including projections from FY09 through FY11. These estimates reflect funding based on the FY09 savings plan, the FY10 budget, and funding for comparable service levels in FY11.

Measure	Actual FY07	Actual FY08	Estimated FY09	Approved FY10	Projected FY11
<b>Headline Measures</b>					
Appeals won	15	17	TBD	TBD	TBD
Average Internal Customer Satisfaction Rating - General and Timeliness <sup>1</sup>	3.2	3.6	TBD	TBD	TBD
Debt Collection (\$)	8,161,451	23,799,532	TBD	TBD	TBD
Appeals lost	0	2	TBD	TBD	TBD
Subrogation (\$)	133,091	88,165	TBD	TBD	TBD
Code Enforcement (\$)	580,961	399,451	TBD	TBD	TBD
Forfeitures (\$)	0	45,825	TBD	TBD	TBD
Number of Termination of Parents Rights (TPR's) granted	16	71	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total judgements plus settlements (\$)	6,261,531	1,636,309	TBD	TBD	TBD
Countywide Worker's Compensation cost (\$)	10,699,000	13,963,000	7,993,000	TBD	TBD

<sup>1</sup> Internal Customer Satisfaction Survey Results (Scale of 1 to 4: 3 = Satisfied; 4 = Very Satisfied)

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INITIATIVES

- ❖ **Through January 2009, the Collection Unit has registered \$17.6 million in net deposits from debts owed to the County. This already exceeds the forecasted amount of \$8 million for all of FY09. The increase in funds collected can be directly associated to greater efficiencies within the Unit.**
- ❖ **Installed the first County on-line check deposit scanning workstation with the help of PNC Bank. The Debt Collection Unit is now able to deposit checks via the new scanning device and transmit funds electronically to PNC Bank. This avoids delays in check deposits.**
- ❖ **Productivity Improvements**
  - **In FY07, the office purchased a work management system to replace the database used for the attorneys' calendars and work schedules. In FY10, changes to the user interface will be made to facilitate accurate data collection on case disposition and close-out and to add customized reports.**
  - **Until recently, the Office of the County Attorney utilized a pool system to provide secretarial support to the attorneys outside of the HHS Division. Based on a widespread recognition that this system led to underutilization of secretarial resources, the pool system was dismantled and attorneys are now assigned a specific secretary. The new assignment system has been generally successful and well-received by the**

## PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Dennis Via of the Office of the County Attorney at 240.777.6715 or Helen P. Vallone of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2755 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

### Insurance Defense Litigation

Provides legal defense for cases involving Montgomery County and fourteen local government Self-Insurance Fund participants (including such entities as the Montgomery County Board of Education, City of Rockville, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Montgomery College and the Housing Opportunities Commission) and all of their employees. The attorneys appear regularly before State and Federal courts in Maryland and the District of Columbia for trials and oral arguments and before the Workers' Compensation Commission. These cases involve litigation in the following areas: common law torts; Police civil rights claims; Other Federal and State civil rights - constitutional torts; Americans with Disabilities Act; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Workers' Compensation; and employment discrimination.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY07	Actual FY08	Estimated FY09	Approved FY10	Projected FY11
Last settlement amount offered by plaintiff	157,456,145	526,357,993	TBD	TBD	TBD
Last settlement amount offered by County	5,930,954	1,272,850	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total number of settlements	45	39	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total settlements paid <sup>1</sup>	6,222,627	1,577,413	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total number of judgements	7	8	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total judgements paid (\$)	38,904	56,896	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total judgements plus settlements (\$)	6,261,531	1,636,309	TBD	TBD	TBD
Cases received	749	667	TBD	TBD	TBD
Worker's Compensation hearings	2,054	2,217	TBD	TBD	TBD
Cases closed	1,049	815	TBD	TBD	TBD
Countywide Worker's Compensation cost (\$)	10,699,000	13,963,000	7,993,000	TBD	TBD
Countywide Worker's Comp cost per \$100 of payroll	2.64	2.29	2.38	TBD	TBD

<sup>1</sup> This unusually high FY07 settlement amount corresponds to a single civil rights case (in which Local Government Tort Liability limits do not apply) where the settlement was for several million dollars

FY10 Approved Changes	Expenditures	WYs
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>185,650</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY09 Personnel Costs	-160,420	0.0
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	50,210	0.0
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>75,440</b>	<b>0.0</b>

### Health and Human Services

The attorneys in this division act as counsel and give legal advice to the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Office of the Director and Management Services, Adult Mental Health, Aging and Disability Services, Children, Youth and Family Services, Child Welfare Services, Crisis, Income and Victim Services, Emergency Services and Public Health Services. The attorneys also represent Child Welfare Services in the Juvenile Court, in cases involving child abuse and child neglect, and Aging and Disability Services in the Circuit Court, in adult guardianship cases.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY07	Actual FY08	Estimated FY09	Approved FY10	Projected FY11
Number of Children in Need of Assistance (CINA) or Guardianship Hearings	1,712	2,284	TBD	TBD	TBD
Number of new CINA petitions filed	276	255	TBD	TBD	TBD
Number of CINA cases closed	267	234	TBD	TBD	TBD
Number of new Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petitions filed	44	59	TBD	TBD	TBD
Number of Termination of Parents Rights (TPR's) granted	16	71	TBD	TBD	TBD
Number of New Adoption petitions filed	23	16	TBD	TBD	TBD
Number of Adoptions granted	21	22	TBD	TBD	TBD

FY10 Approved Changes	Expenditures	WYs
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>1,008,980</b>	<b>7.3</b>

	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>WYs</b>
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	27,330	0.3
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>1,036,310</b>	<b>7.6</b>

## **Finance and Procurement**

Acts as counsel and gives legal advice to the County Executive, County Council, and to several County departments, agencies, boards, and commissions. The Division represents the County Government in tax and procurement matters before State, Federal, and local administrative agencies and courts; drafts and reviews agreements, legislation, regulations, and other legal documents; conducts negotiations; and prepares and issues legal opinions.

<b>FY10 Approved Changes</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>WYs</b>
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>758,530</b>	<b>5.0</b>
Shift: Assistant County Attorney III in the Division of Finance and Procurement to Capital Improvements Program (CIP) in the Department of General Services	-140,840	-1.0
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	-27,570	1.0
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>590,120</b>	<b>5.0</b>

Notes: Decrease in expenditures and workyears are related to a department reorganization.

## **Human Resources and Appeals**

Attorneys act as counsel and give legal advice to the following agencies: Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, Ethics Commission, Board of Investment Trustees, Office of Human Resources, Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, Office of Public Information, Department of Transportation (Transit Services Division, Taxicab Unit), Human Rights Commission, Board of Appeals, and the Police Department (Internal Affairs Division). Attorneys also defend or prosecute contested cases involving the County, Self-Insurance Fund agencies, and their employees, while pending before State and Federal appellate courts.

<b>Program Performance Measures</b>	<b>Actual FY07</b>	<b>Actual FY08</b>	<b>Estimated FY09</b>	<b>Approved FY10</b>	<b>Projected FY11</b>
Appeals won	15	17	TBD	TBD	TBD
Appeals lost	0	2	TBD	TBD	TBD

<b>FY10 Approved Changes</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>WYs</b>
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>748,120</b>	<b>5.0</b>
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	69,640	-1.0
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>817,760</b>	<b>4.0</b>

## **Zoning, Land Use and Economic Development**

Represents and advises the County Executive, the County Council, and various County departments, including the Department of General Services, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Public Libraries. Represents and advises agencies and commissions, including the Historic Preservation Commission, the Revenue Authority, Community Use of Public Facilities, and the Cable Compliance Commission. Advises the County Executive and County Council regarding telecommunications and cable matters. Represents the County with respect to land acquisitions and real estate transactions. Represents the County before Federal, State, and administrative courts. Drafts legal opinions and amendments to the County code and County regulations.

<b>FY10 Approved Changes</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>WYs</b>
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>498,810</b>	<b>3.7</b>
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	29,010	0.5
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>527,820</b>	<b>4.2</b>

Notes: Increase in workyear is related to a reorganization.

## **Public Interest Litigation**

The Division provides litigation and other legal services to County agencies and departments in support of their mission to promote general welfare and protect vulnerable citizens. The Division acts as counsel and gives legal advice to the Police Department, the Departments of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Environmental Protection, Permitting Services, Consumer

Affairs, and Recreation. It also provides counsel to the Office of Landlord and Tenant Affairs, the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Inspector General's Office. The program represents these entities in contested cases before County Board of Appeals and in both State and Federal courts. The program also drafts and reviews agreements, legislation, regulations and other legal documents. Attorneys from the program conduct negotiations, issue legal opinions, and testify before public bodies. It is primarily responsible for the processing and prosecution of code enforcement violations from all departments, agencies, boards and commissions which are presented in the District Court of Maryland. The Debt Litigation or Collection Unit collects all monies owed to Montgomery County that have been referred to the County Attorney, including past due real property taxes, personal property taxes, code enforcement judgments, subrogation claims, bounced checks, unpaid fines, and miscellaneous amounts billed by the County.

<b>Program Performance Measures</b>	<b>Actual FY07</b>	<b>Actual FY08</b>	<b>Estimated FY09</b>	<b>Approved FY10</b>	<b>Projected FY11</b>
Debt Collection (\$)	8,161,451	23,799,532	TBD	TBD	TBD
Subrogation (\$)	133,091	88,165	TBD	TBD	TBD
Code Enforcement (\$)	580,961	399,451	TBD	TBD	TBD
Forfeitures (\$)	0	45,825	TBD	TBD	TBD

<b>FY10 Approved Changes</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>WYs</b>
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>1,496,550</b>	<b>13.5</b>
Decrease Cost: Retirement Incentive Program (RIP) Savings	-20,330	0.0
Decrease Cost: Part-Time Assistant County Attorney III	-49,930	-0.5
Decrease Cost: Lapse Assistant Count Attorney III	-147,360	-1.0
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	-180,370	-1.0
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>1,098,560</b>	<b>11.0</b>

Notes: Decrease in workyears and expenditures is related to a reorganization.

## Support Services

Provide administrative, research, and technical guidance and support to the other programs within the Department. The program is designed to allow for an equitable distribution of work assignments, to cross-train staff, and to evaluate fairly the performance of the program staff. The program provides administrative support to the Risk Management Fund, and revenue support to the Risk Management Fund, Revenue Authority, and Solid Waste Fund.

<b>FY10 Approved Changes</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>WYs</b>
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>331,810</b>	<b>4.3</b>
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	-233,680	-1.8
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>98,130</b>	<b>2.5</b>

Notes: Decrease in workyear and expenditures is related to a reorganization.

## Administration

Provides internal personnel, financial, and operational management for the Office of the County Attorney.

<b>Program Performance Measures</b>	<b>Actual FY07</b>	<b>Actual FY08</b>	<b>Estimated FY09</b>	<b>Approved FY10</b>	<b>Projected FY11</b>
Average Internal Customer Satisfaction Rating - General and Timeliness <sup>1</sup>	3.2	3.6	TBD	TBD	TBD

<sup>1</sup> Internal Customer Satisfaction Survey Results (Scale of 1 to 4: 3 = Satisfied; 4 = Very Satisfied)

<b>FY10 Approved Changes</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>WYs</b>
<b>FY09 Approved</b>	<b>652,410</b>	<b>4.0</b>
Increase Cost: Service Increment	74,150	0.0
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment	22,830	0.0
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY09 Operating Expenses	11,730	0.0
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustments	3,290	0.0
Decrease Cost: Abolish Principal Administrative Aide	-58,320	-1.0
Miscellaneous adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program	274,750	2.0
<b>FY10 Approved</b>	<b>980,840</b>	<b>5.0</b>

Notes: Increase in workyear and expenditures is related to a reorganization.

## BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY08	Budget FY09	Estimated FY09	Approved FY10	% Chg Bud/App
<b>COUNTY GENERAL FUND</b>					
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
Salaries and Wages	3,809,666	4,082,080	3,815,630	3,697,060	-9.4%
Employee Benefits	1,063,857	1,113,700	1,034,650	1,000,590	-10.2%
<b>County General Fund Personnel Costs</b>	<b>4,873,523</b>	<b>5,195,780</b>	<b>4,850,280</b>	<b>4,697,650</b>	<b>-9.6%</b>
Operating Expenses	693,735	485,080	666,550	527,330	8.7%
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	—
<b>County General Fund Expenditures</b>	<b>5,567,258</b>	<b>5,680,860</b>	<b>5,516,830</b>	<b>5,224,980</b>	<b>-8.0%</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>					
Full-Time	70	71	71	72	1.4%
Part-Time	5	5	5	3	-40.0%
Workyears	44.8	42.8	42.8	39.3	-8.2%
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Child Welfare FFP Federal Reimbursement	0	338,960	338,960	338,960	—
Revenue Authority Reimb. for Legal Services	0	74,050	45,630	45,630	-38.4%
County Attorney Collection Fee	0	18,990	18,990	18,990	—
County Code Subscription Fee	72,739	92,000	75,000	75,000	-18.5%
<b>County General Fund Revenues</b>	<b>72,739</b>	<b>524,000</b>	<b>478,580</b>	<b>478,580</b>	<b>-8.7%</b>

## FY10 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	WYs
<b>COUNTY GENERAL FUND</b>		
<b>FY09 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION</b>	<b>5,680,860</b>	<b>42.8</b>
<b><u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u></b>		
Increase Cost: Service Increment [Administration]	74,150	0.0
Increase Cost: Annual Maintenance for Software Support	27,230	0.0
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment [Administration]	22,830	0.0
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY09 Operating Expenses [Administration]	11,730	0.0
Increase Cost: Group Insurance Adjustment	7,210	0.0
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustments [Administration]	3,290	0.0
Decrease Cost: Allocation of Savings Associated with MC311 Efficiencies	-9,000	0.0
Decrease Cost: Additional Lapse Savings	-16,120	0.0
Decrease Cost: Retirement Incentive Program (RIP) Savings [Public Interest Litigation]	-20,330	0.0
Decrease Cost: Part-Time Assistant County Attorney III [Public Interest Litigation]	-49,930	-0.5
Decrease Cost: Abolish Principal Administrative Aide [Administration]	-58,320	-1.0
Shift: Assistant County Attorney III in the Division of Finance and Procurement to Capital Improvements Program (CIP) in the Department of General Services [Finance and Procurement]	-140,840	-1.0
Decrease Cost: Lapse Assistant Count Attorney III [Public Interest Litigation]	-147,360	-1.0
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY09 Personnel Costs [Insurance Defense Litigation]	-160,420	0.0
<b>FY10 APPROVED:</b>	<b>5,224,980</b>	<b>39.3</b>

## PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY09 Approved		FY10 Approved	
	Expenditures	WYs	Expenditures	WYs
Insurance Defense Litigation	185,650	0.0	75,440	0.0
Health and Human Services	1,008,980	7.3	1,036,310	7.6
Finance and Procurement	758,530	5.0	590,120	5.0
Human Resources and Appeals	748,120	5.0	817,760	4.0
Zoning, Land Use and Economic Development	498,810	3.7	527,820	4.2
Public Interest Litigation	1,496,550	13.5	1,098,560	11.0
Support Services	331,810	4.3	98,130	2.5
Administration	652,410	4.0	980,840	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,680,860</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>5,224,980</b>	<b>39.3</b>

## CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY09		FY10	
		Total\$	WYs	Total\$	WYs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Board of Appeals	County General Fund	82,180	0.5	86,970	0.5
Board of Investment Trustees	BIT 457 Deferred Comp. Plan	66,190	0.5	68,140	0.5
Cable Television	Cable Television	93,600	0.5	95,470	0.5
CIP	CIP	197,240	2.0	197,310	2.0
Finance	County General Fund	166,700	1.0	164,450	1.0
Finance	Self Insurance Internal Service Fund	2,176,410	18.6	2,398,660	19.0
Health and Human Services	County General Fund	170,590	2.2	170,590	2.2
Housing and Community Affairs	County General Fund	41,410	0.5	44,030	0.5
Housing and Community Affairs	Montgomery Housing Initiative	163,320	1.0	177,610	1.0
Human Resources	Employee Health Benefit Self Insurance Fund	7,290	0.1	7,070	0.1
Human Resources	Employee Retirement System	51,030	0.3	74,420	0.5
Intergovernmental Relations	County General Fund	25,160	0.3	27,810	0.3
Parking District Services	Bethesda Parking District	11,560	0.1	12,510	0.1
Parking District Services	Silver Spring Parking District	34,670	0.2	37,550	0.2
Permitting Services	Permitting Services	153,570	1.0	168,710	1.0
Solid Waste Services	Solid Waste Collection	31,240	0.3	37,790	0.3
Solid Waste Services	Solid Waste Disposal	105,300	0.7	113,360	0.7
Technology Services	County General Fund	109,600	1.0	121,050	1.0
Total		3,687,060	30.8	4,003,500	31.4