

# County Attorney

**Department Purpose:** The Office of the County Attorney is responsible for the representation of the Board of County Commissioners, Constitutional Officers, and all of the departments, divisions, regulatory boards, and advisory boards of county government in all legal matters relating to their official responsibilities. The Office of the County Attorney is also responsible for the prosecution and defense of all civil actions for and on behalf of county government and reviews all ordinances, resolutions, contracts, bonds, and other written instruments.

**Executive Summary:** The Office of the County Attorney budget is essentially unchanged. Over 90% of the budget is utilized for personnel. The only other significant line-item expense is \$200,000 appropriated annually for outside counsel that may be required where specialty legal expertise may be needed or a conflict of interest may be present. The amount expended varies from year to year.

Potential impacts to consider moving forward are:

- Current and upcoming events will likely lead to increased legal and/or litigation issues. The COVID-19 pandemic may yield litigation related to business closures, personnel-related issues, FMLA expansion, and delay in county construction projects.
- Additional litigation is expected when the COVID-19 related moratorium on foreclosures is lifted, as the County is frequently named as a defendant in foreclosure actions due to liens for various government-related issues.
- A recent increase in personnel-related matters/disciplinary actions is expected to continue.
- A potential change to a third-party administrator for workers' compensation could result in additional time incurred by the County Attorney's Office in workers' compensation litigation. Currently, the County Attorney's Office has direct access to case files and adjusters.
- The Florida Bar has increased the number of continuing legal education (CLE) credits required per attorney per reporting period by three. This results in additional costs to the office in FY22 and beyond.

## Staffing Summary

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>33.0</b>

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## Budget Summary

	<b>FY18 Actual</b>	<b>FY19 Actual</b>	<b>FY20 Actual</b>	<b>FY21 Budget</b>	<b>FY21 Estimate</b>	<b>FY22 Request</b>	<b>Budget to Budget Change</b>	<b>Budget to Budget % Change</b>
Personal Services	4,387,681	4,589,883	4,878,220	5,104,080	4,714,160	5,224,290	120,210	2.36%
Operating Expenses	326,840	336,869	412,351	414,210	362,590	382,400	(31,810)	-7.68%
Capital Outlay	24,239	4,018	16,395	38,950	29,610	22,260	(16,690)	-42.85%
<b>Expenditures Total</b>	<b>4,738,760</b>	<b>4,930,770</b>	<b>5,306,966</b>	<b>5,557,240</b>	<b>5,106,360</b>	<b>5,628,950</b>	<b>71,710</b>	<b>1.29%</b>

The County Attorney budget is funded by the General Fund. Total expenditures are increasing by \$71,110 or 1.3% to \$5.6M in FY22.

- Personal services are increasing commensurate with all other departments based on inflationary increases.
- Operating expenditures are reduced by \$31,810 or 7.7% due to the completion in FY21 of a multi-year initiative to replace outdated furniture.
- Capital outlay is decreased by \$16,690 or 42.8% in FY22 due to fewer computer replacements in FY22 based on the BTS replacement plan.

### Attachments:

- Organizational Chart