

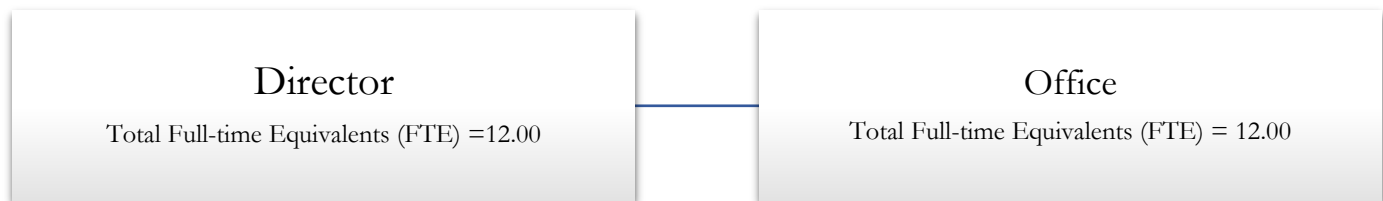
LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

»» **County Attorney’s Office**
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LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

» County Attorney's Office Organizational Chart



LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

County Attorney's Office **Executive Summary**

The County Attorney's Office provides legal services and advice to the Board of County Commissioners, the County Administrator, County departments, and certain boards, committees, councils, and workgroups organized under the Board of County Commissioners, unless they are separate legal entities or have their own legal counsel, and as otherwise directed by the Board. The Office also reviews and drafts contracts, bond documents, ordinances, resolutions, and other written instruments.

Highlights

The County Attorney's Office provides legal support to Leon County Government in a variety of areas, including the following litigation matter:

- Leon County is a plaintiff in the multidistrict opioid litigation against multiple opioid manufacturers, distributors, and retailers. The complaints include allegations of the manufacturer defendants' false, deceptive, and unfair marketing of opioids, as well as the distributor defendants' unlawful distribution of opioids. The Board has approved numerous settlement agreements, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Florida governing how the settlement proceeds will be distributed among the State and local governments. Numerous settlement payments will be paid out over 18 years, with use restricted to abatement and treatment of opioid use disorders and other limited uses. When possible, the outside multidistrict litigation counsel is paid through an attorney fund established at a national level, but a percentage of the local government distribution may also be used to fund attorneys' fees. The Board has entered into funding agreements with Big Bend Community Based Care, LLC, d/b/a Northwest Florida Health Network, DISC Village, Inc., and the Leon County Sheriff's Office for the provision of substance abuse treatment and ancillary services for individuals with opioid and substance use disorders. Funds have also been used to purchase EMS equipment to address opioid use disorders. In addition, outside counsel investigated and researched the role that pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) played in contributing to the opioid crisis and found that their failure to take action to slow distribution of opioid pills into communities across the country directly contributed to fueling the opioid crisis. This litigation is currently ongoing. As of May 2026, Leon County has received \$4,171,855 in settlement funds.

The Office also provides legal research, review, drafting assistance, counsel, and training, and recently:

- Provided legal review and negotiation of over 20 different agreements necessary for the implementation and hosting of the 2026 World's Cross Country Championship.
- Provided HIPAA and Public Records training in July 2025 and May of 2026 to incoming EMTs and Paramedics for the Emergency Medical Services Division, and a Public Records Lunch n' Learn presentation to County staff in April 2026, and a programmatic specific Public Records presentation to Library staff in May of 2026.
- Worked closely with Human Resources to update their policies to ensure changes to disaster pay, parental leave, and the tuition reimbursement programs were successfully updated.
- Provided legal research and guidance regarding open carry laws in Florida.
- Assisted multiple departments (Public Works, DSEM, Procurement and OMB) regarding preparation and implementation of the Board's recently adopted School Zone Speed Detection System Program.
- Provided legal counsel to the Citizen Charter Review Committee.

Real Estate Transactions and Right-of-Way Acquisition, including:

- Assisting staff with the continued sale of County-owned real property appropriate for use as affordable housing, resulting in significant proceeds to the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County to be used for affordable housing.
- Preparing a resolution adopting an inventory list of all real property within Leon County to which the County holds fee simple title that is appropriate for use as affordable housing.
- Reviewing lease agreements for County-owned properties, such as the Leon County Government Annex and the Lake Jackson Town Center.
- Providing pre-suit negotiation and acquisition of easements, fee parcels, and other right-of-way needed for the County's capital improvement projects, including the Woodville septic-to-sewer projects, Crowder Road Intersection Improvement Project at U.S. 27, and various sidewalk projects including Safe Routes to School Program areas.
- Assisting with the implementation of the Board's private-to-public dirt road and private road repaving policies.

Procurements, Transactions, and Assessments, including:

- Provided legal input and guidance on the streamlining of the procurement process.
- Procurement of Canyon Creek Sidewalk Project.
- Procurement of Fire Service Consultant.
- Procurement for the Old St. Augustine Road Sidewalk Construction Project.

- Procurement of Nonresidential Real Estate Services.
- Procurement of Structural Engineering Professional Services.

In the past 12 months, the County Attorney's Office has responded to over 1,967 requests for legal advice or assistance, including reviewing, preparing, and/or signing ordinances, resolutions, proclamations, agenda items, and contracts; advice regarding various housing, land use, and other real estate documents, as well as employment, procurement, and litigation documents; and responding to public records requests and advertising public hearings. Included in this number are 361 agreements, 292 agenda items, 433 public records requests, 53 resolutions, 15 ordinances, and 22 policies. The County Attorney's Office provided legal support to the Planning Department for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan cycle and the Department of Development Support and Environmental Management in the approval of all Land Development Code revisions and applications for development approvals. The County Attorney's Office also represents Leon County in pre-submittal and Application Review Meetings and before the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Commission, the Board of Adjustment and Appeals, the Code Enforcement Board, and the Development Review Committee. Office personnel have assisted with significant revisions to the Code of Laws concerning school zone automated speed enforcement, animal control, and code enforcement procedures, as well as amendments to various elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Honors received this year: Chasity O'Steen served Chair-Elect of the City, County & Local Government Law Section of The Florida Bar, served as Chair of the Section's 49th Annual Conference, and is the incoming Chair of the Section. Mrs. O'Steen also served as Secretary of the Continuing Legal Education Committee of The Florida Bar and is the incoming Co-Chair of the Section. Mrs. O'Steen continues to serve on the Board of Directors of the Florida Association of County Attorneys and received the Tallahassee Bar Association's 2026 Martha Barnett Women Lawyers of Achievement Award in 2026.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

 County Attorney's Office

Budgetary Costs		FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
		Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
Personnel Services		1,714,421	1,933,122	1,929,567	-	1,929,567	1,982,693
Operating		218,723	456,639	456,070	-	456,070	456,070
Total Budgetary Costs		1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763
Appropriations		FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
		Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
County Attorney		1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763
Total Budget		1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763
Funding Sources		FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
		Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
001 General Fund		1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763
Total Revenues		1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763
Staffing Summary		FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
		Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
County Attorney		11.00	12.00	12.00	-	12.00	12.00
Total Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)		11.00	12.00	12.00	-	12.00	12.00

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

County Attorney's Office

County Attorney's Office (001-120-514)

Goal	The goal of the County Attorney's Office is to provide high quality legal representation on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, all departments and divisions under the Board, the County Administrator, Leon County employees in their employment capacity, and certain other boards and officials of Leon County as directed by the Board of County Commissioners (collectively, clients).
Core Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advise, counsel, and provide legal opinions to clients. 2. Represent clients and supervise outside counsel in litigation matters before the courts. 3. Represent clients before administrative agencies such as the Code Enforcement Board, Nuisance Abatement Board, Planning Commission, and Board of Adjustment and Appeals. 4. Represent clients and supervise work of insurer's counsel in employment related matters before agencies such as the Florida Commission on Human Relations, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Agency for Work Force Innovation. 5. Research and drafting of legal documents such as contracts, ordinances, resolutions, and policies for Board consideration. 6. Review documentation relating to subdivision approval, including plats, maintenance agreements, and homeowners' association documents. 7. Prepare and review legal advertisements relating to the adoption of ordinances and certain meetings of the Board of County Commissioners. 8. Review business impact estimates. 9. Represent the County in negotiating real estate contracts. 10. Commence eminent domain lawsuits on behalf of Leon County, when necessary. 11. Represent the County in road widening projects and drainage improvement projects. 12. Provide legal education seminars to Senior Management and other staff.
Statutory Responsibilities	Applicable portions of various Florida Statutes, including, but not limited to, Chapter 73, Eminent Domain; Chapter 74, Proceedings Supplemental to Eminent Domain; Chapter 112, Public Officers and Employees; Chapter 119, Public Records; Chapter 125, County Government; Chapter 127, Right of Eminent Domain to Counties; Chapter 129, County Annual Budget; Chapter 159, Bond Financing; Chapter 162, County or Municipal Code Enforcement; Chapter 163, Intergovernmental Programs; Chapter 200, Determination of Millage; Chapter 218, Financial Matters Pertaining to Political Subdivisions; Chapter 255, Public Property and Publicly Owned Buildings; Chapter 287, Procurement of Personal Property and Services; Chapter 401, Part III, Medical Transportation Services..
Advisory Board	None

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

 County Attorney's Office

County Attorney (001-120-514)

Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Personnel Services	1,714,421	1,933,122	1,929,567	-	1,929,567	1,982,693
Operating	218,723	456,639	456,070	-	456,070	456,070
Total Budgetary Costs	1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763

Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
001 General Fund	1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763
Total Revenues	1,933,144	2,389,761	2,385,637	-	2,385,637	2,438,763

Staffing Summary	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
County Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Deputy County Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Assistant County Attorney	3.00	4.00	4.00	-	4.00	4.00
Senior Assistant County Attorney	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Legal Administrator	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Paralegal	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Sr Paralegal	2.00	2.00	2.00	-	2.00	2.00
Legal Records Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Total Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	11.00	12.00	12.00	-	12.00	12.00

The major variances for the FY 2027 County Attorney budget are as follows:

Decreases to Program Funding:

1. Costs associated with staff turnover offset by increased costs associated with the offset by increased costs associated with the County's portion of retirement rates passed by the Florida Legislature, health insurance premium rates, workers' compensation costs, and funding for 4% raises for all employees.