



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
GENERAL COUNSEL DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Duties & Responsibilities

The Oregon Department of Justice, established by state statute in 1891, pursues and achieves justice by supporting healthy and safe communities throughout Oregon. With nine divisions, and 21 total offices around the state, the Department of Justice is dedicated to the rule of law and serving the people of Oregon and its government. The Department of Justice is the largest law firm in the State of Oregon.

Administered by the Oregon Attorney General, the Department of Justice is committed to providing the most effective legal services to state government, and upholding laws that protect consumers and all Oregonians. DOJ also protects and supports Oregon families and children through child advocacy and child support services. In addition to these core functions, the agency also aids and compensates victims of crime, defends civil rights, enforces environmental protections, and supports the state's prosecutors and law enforcement agencies.

APPELLATE DIVISION

The Appellate Division generally is responsible for representing the state's interests in all civil, criminal and administrative cases before all state and federal appellate courts. Under supervision of the Solicitor General, division attorneys articulate and defend the state's laws and legal policies in written briefs and oral arguments before the Oregon Court of Appeals and Oregon Supreme Court; and the U.S. Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of the United States. The Appellate Division also supports district attorneys by providing advice and training on legal issues and creating and maintaining a set of legal publications on various subjects of criminal law.

DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT

The Division of Child Support administers the federal child support program for the state of Oregon, providing child support services to Oregon's citizens. Services include locating absent parents, establishing paternity, establishing child and medical support orders, modifying and enforcing support orders, and receiving and distributing child and medical support payments. Child support services are provided to all parents regardless of income. The Division of Child Support maintains local branches around the state and works in partnership with county district attorneys' offices to deliver child support services through the Oregon Child Support Program. The program collects and distributes more than \$360 million in child support annually, a vital component to ensuring the well-being of Oregon families.

CIVIL ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

The Civil Enforcement Division is responsible for civil law enforcement statewide. The Division handles much of the “plaintiffs” work undertaken by the Department of Justice. The Charitable Activities Section enforces laws regarding charitable trusts and solicitations and regulates bingo and raffle operations. The Civil Recovery Section is responsible for obtaining judgments and collecting debts owed to state agencies. It also provides legal services to the Child Support Division. The Financial Fraud/Consumer Protection Section protects Oregon consumers from predatory marketplace practices. Its responsibilities include enforcement of laws pertaining to antitrust, securities, civil racketeering, unlawful trade practices and charitable solicitations. The Medicaid Fraud Unit is part of a federally subsidized program for deterring fraud committed by Medicaid health care service providers. It detects and prosecutes cases of abuse or neglect in health care facilities receiving Medicaid funds. The Child Advocacy Section provides legal advice, juvenile court and administrative hearing representation to the Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Division and handles cases involving allegations of child abuse and neglect.

CRIME VICTIMS’ SERVICES DIVISION

The mission of the Crime Victims’ Services Division is to reduce the impact of crime on victims’ lives by supporting statewide victim services programs, promoting victims’ rights, and providing victims access to information and resources in a compassionate, responsive and dedicated manner. Much of this work involves acting as an administrative body monitoring dispersal and usage of funds for grants to a number of sources including Victim Assistance Programs (VAPs), Victims of Crime Act Assistance Programs (VOCA), Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Program (ODSVS), Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Intervention Programs (CAMI) and Violence Against Women Act Sexual Assault Services (VAWA). The Crime Victim Compensation Fund is the direct-services cornerstone of CVSD. This fund provides reimbursement payments to eligible victims of crime or to service providers (medical, funeral, counseling) on behalf of the victim independently from the restitution system. CVSD also facilitates collaboration among practitioners in the adult criminal justice and juvenile justice systems to ensure that crime victims’ constitutional rights are understood, honored, and enforced.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE DIVISION

The Criminal Justice Division is the Oregon Department of Justice’s primary crime fighting weapon. The Criminal Justice Division is divided into three sections: The Special Investigations and Prosecutions Section, the Organized Crime Section and the Criminal Intelligence Section. The Division provides investigative, trial and training support to Oregon’s District Attorney’s and law enforcement law enforcement agencies. In addition, the Division investigates and prosecutes organized crime, internet crimes against children, public corruption and human trafficking cases. The Division houses topical experts in DUI and Domestic Violence responsible for training prosecutors and law enforcement officials on all levels across the state. Finally, the Division leads or participates in several important criminal and anti-terrorism information sharing and analysis programs through its Oregon TITAN Fusion Center and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Investigation Service Center (HIDTA ISC).

GENERAL COUNSEL DIVISION

The General Counsel Division provides a broad range of legal services to state agencies, boards and commissions, including day-to-day legal advice necessary for the state's operation. Sections include Business Activities; Business Transactions; Government Services; Health and Human Services; Labor and Employment; Natural Resources; and Tax and Finance. The General Counsel Division is also responsible for the issuance of most formal Attorney General opinions and Chief Counsel letters of advice.

TRIAL DIVISION

The Trial Division defends the state, its agencies, employees, and elected and appointed officials in civil litigation brought in state and federal courts. The division also defends District attorneys in civil suits brought against them. The division includes four sections, each with a particular area of focus. The Civil Litigation Section handles a wide variety of cases that may be tried to a jury in state and federal courts. These cases fall into five general categories: torts, employment, commercial disputes, prisoner civil rights lawsuits and real estate condemnation. The Criminal and Collateral Remedies Litigation Section defends convictions secured by county district attorneys against collateral attacks brought by the convicted person. The Defense of Agency Orders Litigation Section defends state agency decisions when they are challenged in circuit court. The Special Litigation Unit handles complex class-action lawsuits, elections litigation and other high-profile or sensitive matters in which the state or its agencies may be plaintiffs or defendants.

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