



The Senate Committee on Finance

Budget Bulletin

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ATTORNEY GENERAL

The West Virginia Attorney General, as the principal legal officer of the state, represents the state’s interests in various legal proceedings. Patrick Morrissey has served as Attorney General since his election in 2012. The Office of the Attorney General has a total budget of \$6,648,045 in FY2020. Part of the office’s mission is to ensure the rights of the State and its citizens are protected in matters before the circuit court, the Supreme Court of Appeals, and all federal courts. The Office also represents the state in all criminal appeals.



MEDICAID FRAUD

Senate Bill 318, passed during the 2019 Legislative Session, transferred control of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit from DHHR to the Attorney General’s Office as of October 1, 2019. All employees of the Unit are transferred over to the AG’s Office. The Fiscal Note for the bill anticipates an increase in state revenues would be expected and a decrease in year over year costs.

ATTORNEY GENERAL FUNDING FY2020	
General Revenue.....	\$4,953,457
Special Revenue.....	\$1,694,588
Total:	\$6,648,045

STRUCTURE

Attorney General
Head of all Divisions

Total Employees: ~165
Attorneys: ~85

Administrative Division

Responsible for day-to-day operations of the office including handling personnel matters, managing constituent services, and implementing policies and procedures.

Client Services Division

Provides legal representation for the State, its officers, various agencies and boards, and the citizens of West Virginia.

Appellate Division

Represents the State and its citizens in matters before the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals and in the various federal courts. This Division also reviews federal legislation to determine where legal action is appropriate and provides written opinions from the Office. The Appellate Division also handles criminal appeals.

Consumer Protection and Anti-Trust

Civil Rights

Health and Human Resources

Court of Claims, Revenue, and Transportation

Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (new)

Education, Arts and Boards Division

SERVICES TO THE STATE

Consumer Protection and Antitrust

The AG's Office protects the public from unfair, deceptive, and fraudulent business practices. Settlements from these lawsuits pay the Office's legal costs and give restitution to the consumers harmed. Any remaining funds go to the State Treasury.

Elder Abuse Education and Prevention Unit

West Virginia has a significant population of people over 60 years of age. This program focuses on increasing recognition of elder abuse among the general public and increasing access to help for those being abused.

Cooperative Disability Unit

In partnership with the Social Security Administration, the Office investigates suspicious or questionable disability claims. By cutting down on fraud, the office saves money for the taxpayers.

Preventing Opioid Abuse

The AG's Office aggressively pursues convictions for those trafficking illegal opioids into the state. The Office has also settled multiple lawsuits with legal drug wholesalers totalling more than \$47 million. Multiple cases against others in the pharmaceutical supply chain are pending.

State's Rights

Another important role of the AG's Office is to protect the state's rights in relation to federal policy and regulation. For instance, the Office joined with 27 other states to challenge the EPA's regulation of coal-fired power plants. This lawsuit is still in the public comment period and has not yet been decided.