



# DEPARTMENT OF LAW

## FY 2023-24 FUNDING REQUEST

Philip J. Weiser  
Attorney General

Natalie Hanlon Leh  
Chief Deputy Attorney  
General

Tanja Wheeler  
Associate Chief Deputy  
Attorney General

Department of Law

January 11, 2024

The Department of Law, (often referred to as the Colorado Attorney General’s Office), which Attorney General Philip J. Weiser oversees, represents, and defends the legal interests of the State of Colorado, its peoples, and its sovereignty.

| FY 2023-24 Appropriation*  |               | FY 2024-25 Request**       |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Total Appropriation        | \$133,002,028 | Total Appropriation        | \$146,481,296 |
| General Fund               |               | General Fund               |               |
| Appropriation              | \$23,707,954  | Appropriation              | \$27,228,168  |
| Total Full Time Equivalent | 630.3         | Total Full Time Equivalent | 649.9         |
| Employees (FTE):           |               | Employees (FTE):           |               |

\*Joint Budget Committee Appropriations Report Fiscal Year 2023-24

\*\*November 1, 2023, budget request and January 2, 2024, Budget Amendment requests.

### Department of Law FY2023-24 Budget Requests:

- The Department of Law (“DOL”) requests \$593,966 Total Funds and 2.5 FTE to establish a specialized team for prosecution support in rural cases across the state. This request positions the Special Prosecutions Unit to better respond efficiently to executive orders appointing the Attorney General to serve under certain circumstances (i.e. district attorney resignations), provide additional resources and expertise dedicated to rural prosecution assistance, and address the number of open cases handled by the unit on an ongoing basis.
- The DOL request \$662,356 and 3.6 FTE to support department-wide program growth in an increasingly complex fiscal, legal, and policy environment. This expansion in size and responsibilities is increasing the need for additional support to the organization and associated accounting, procurement, human resources, and technology infrastructure. The requested staff will be essential in administering new requirements from recent legislation and statewide changes associated with collections responsibilities. This request will facilitate more efficient management of the state’s resources, increase the number of public solicitations, provide more accountability and transparency in job postings, and enhance the department’s technology capabilities. The Administration Section, in coordination with the Office of the Attorney General, performs the functions to support the nine sections, as well as the programs and processes directed by statute and rule to ensure the DOL’s business decisions are fiscally sound and aligned with state authoritative guidance.
- The DOL requests \$295,795 General Fund (1.8 FTE) for additional resources to assist with ongoing litigation and negotiation support associated with the State’s water decrees, as well as providing dedicated resources to address policy analysis, monitoring of governmental regulations and law changes, and provide for greater coordination on state water issues within the DOL and in

collaboration with tribal, state, and federal partners. The DOL supports state partners in their collaboration with other western states and federal agencies. These efforts include work related to nine Interstate Compacts, an international treaty with Mexico, and a number of programs that fulfill federal obligations and regulations. Additionally, the DOL advises on and represents state interests to ensure water is distributed fairly based on the prior appropriation doctrine to maximize the beneficial use of that water while avoiding injury to any vested water user or impairment to compacts, decrees, or agreements.

As climate change and population growth continue to impact Colorado's water obligations, the DOL's defense of Colorado's water rights is more critical than ever. And federal and regional actions have the potential to impact the Department's ability to defend Colorado water laws and our interstate obligations. The complexity, sensitivity, and magnitude of state water issues has increased the policy and litigation workloads, as well as the intensity of communications and requires a uniform and coordinated response from across state government.

- The DOL is making a \$0 dollar request to rename the Consumer Protection and Antitrust Line Item. The suggested new title is the "Consumer Protection, Antitrust, and Civil Rights" Line Item. Additionally, the DOL is requesting various funding to be moved from current budget line items to new line items to better reflect DOL Long Bill Funding with new management structures and program delivery. **This request will not increase any funding obligations of the DOL.**
- The DOL in coordination with the Governor's Office requests \$599,368 Total Funds and 3.7 FTE to allow the Attorney General to enter an agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office Colorado District to increase the number of attorneys prosecuting gun crimes in federal court.

**Department of Law FY2023-24 Nonpriority Budget Amendments (requests by other agencies that impact DOL funding):**

- The Department of Personnel and Administration is making a budget amendment request impacting each State Agency's Health, Life, Dental Insurance request. This request is an increase of \$722,663 Total Funds, of which \$179,2146 is General Fund for the DOL to accommodate changes to state paid insurance benefits.
- The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) is making a budget amendment request increasing its Legal Services budget line by \$1,256,400. This increase is to provide the DOL with the revenue and spending authority to address litigation costs associated with representing HCPF with active litigation with the Department of Justice.
- HCPF is making a budget amendment request increasing its Legal Services budget line by \$237,200. This increase is to provide the DOL with the revenue and spending authority to address increased legal needs of the HCPF.

*For more information about this Department and its programs, please call 720-508-6000 or visit, <https://coag.gov/>.*