

About the Office of the Attorney General

The Attorney General serves as the State of Florida's Chief Legal Officer, holding the position as a statewide elected office for a term of four years. The Attorney General leads the State's Department of Legal Affairs and appoints the Statewide Prosecutor. The fundamental bases of authority and listing of responsibilities of the Attorney General are codified in [Article IV of the Florida Constitution](#) and at [chapter 16, Florida Statutes](#). The Attorney General also serves as a member of the state Cabinet, as described at [Article IV, Section 4 of the Florida Constitution](#).

The Attorney General fulfills these constitutional and statutory duties through the work of the organizational units described below.

Antitrust Division

The Antitrust Division brings actions against individuals or entities that commit state or federal antitrust violations, such as bid-rigging, price-fixing, market or contract allocation, and monopoly-related actions. The Division works to stop violations that harm competition and adversely affect Floridians. Florida Statutes state that the Attorney General may seek the "full range of relief" under the Florida Antitrust Act, [chapter 542](#), which also provides the Attorney General with specific investigative authority. In addition, the Attorney General may pursue injunctive, monetary, and other remedies under the [Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act](#) on behalf of Floridians who have been injured by violations of unfair methods of competition, including antitrust laws.

Civil Litigation Division

The Civil Litigation Division provides statewide representation on behalf of the State, its agencies, officers, employees and agents, at the trial and appellate levels. The Division's clients include state officers and agencies from all three branches of state government. The Division's scope of representation is broad, as it handles defense of constitutional challenges to statutes, civil rights, employment discrimination, tort actions, contract disputes, eminent domain, forfeiture, prisoner litigation, declaratory judgment, charitable trusts, and class action suits.

Civil Legal Services Division

The Civil Legal Services Division provides statewide representation on behalf of the State, its agencies, officers, employees and agents, in administrative hearings and at the trial and appellate levels in state courts. The Administrative Law Bureau serves as counsel to professional and business licensing regulatory boards, the Florida Elections Commission, the Education Practices Commission, and other regulatory agencies and appointed commissions. The Division represents the Department of Revenue through its Child Support Enforcement Bureau, which also provides specific legal services under Florida Statutes in cases involving children who reside in Florida and elsewhere. The Ethics Bureau conducts investigations of violations ranging from erroneous financial disclosure filings to misuse of office for state and local government employees who are subject to the jurisdiction of the Florida Commission on Ethics, acting as Advocate for the Florida Commission on Ethics. The Revenue Litigation Bureau enforces and defends tax assessments the Department of Revenue issues.

Office of Civil Rights

The Office of Civil Rights files civil actions for damages and injunctive relief on behalf of the State under the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 in cases involving a pattern or practice of discrimination or in cases involving discrimination constituting an issue of great public interest. The Office works with the Florida Commission on Human Relations and other groups to enforce the provisions of the [Florida Fair Housing Act](#).

Consumer Protection Division

The Consumer Protection Division protects Florida consumers and businesses by pursuing individuals and entities that engage in deceptive or unfair practices in any trade or commerce. The Division often partners with other state attorneys general and state and federal enforcement agencies in joint enforcement efforts. The Division serves as the civil enforcement authority for all multi-circuit violations of the [Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act](#) and enforces several other related statutes, such as the civil provisions of the [Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act](#). Under such statutes, the Division investigates the conduct of “enterprises” engaged in patterns of illegal activities such as fraud, theft, and misleading advertising. In its work to prevent, identify, and prosecute fraudulent scams and conduct, the Division places special emphasis on protecting vulnerable populations such as seniors, military members and veterans. In addition to these duties, the Division also works with the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit to pursue certain cases under the [Florida False Claims Act](#) when such cases present consumer protection issues.

Criminal Appellate Division

The Criminal Appellate Division defends all direct criminal appeals and post-conviction appeals in the state appellate courts and defends state judgments and sentences in post-conviction matters throughout the federal district and appellate courts in all federal habeas corpus litigation. The Division also litigates cases involving civil rights actions under 42 United States Code § 1983 in state capital cases and extraordinary writs. The Division consists of Criminal Appeals Bureaus in the State’s appellate districts and a statewide Capital Appeals Bureau, through which the Division defends *all* criminal judgments and sentences imposed by state trial courts against all challenges filed by defendants. The Division may initiate appellate review in cases where adverse rulings occur against the State. The Division also responds to inquiries from State Attorney’s Offices and provides information concerning the protection of rights of all victims of crime.

Division of Victim Services and Criminal Justice Programs

The Division of Victim Services and Criminal Justice Programs provides services to crime victims and educates the public about crime prevention. The Division administers the [Crimes Compensation Trust Fund](#) to provide funding for services to victims of crimes and provides victim advocacy. The Division also administers the State’s federal grant under the Victims of Crime Act. Regarding crime prevention, the Division administers the [Florida Crime Prevention Training Institute](#), through which it provides training to law enforcement and local school districts, based on current trends and updated information it receives from surveys and data collection activities. The Division also administers the [Florida Crimes Compensation Act](#), the Address Confidentiality Program, the [Council on the Social Status of Black Men](#)

[and Boys](#), and the [Crime Stoppers Trust Fund](#). In addition, the Division fulfills the Attorney General's statutory responsibilities for victim assistance.

Lemon Law Division

The Lemon Law Division enforces manufacturers' compliance with Florida's motor vehicle Lemon Law, which covers defects or conditions that substantially impair the use, value, or safety of a new or demonstrator vehicle that are reported to the vehicle's manufacturer; it does *not* cover defects that result from accident, neglect, abuse, modification, or alteration by persons other than the manufacturer or its authorized agent. The Division provides a toll-free Lemon Law Hotline and a forum for resolution of disputes between consumers and manufacturers that arise under the Lemon Law. The Division also administers the Florida New Motor Vehicle Arbitration Board, determines whether certification of manufacturer-sponsored informal dispute resolution programs is appropriate and monitors the [Recreational Vehicle Mediation and Arbitration Program](#).

Medicaid Fraud Control Unit

Consistent with both federal and state law, the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigates fraud that providers and program administrators commit in connection with the Medicaid Program. The Unit investigates a wide range of health care providers in determining whether fraudulent billing for services not provided, overcharging for services provided, or billing for services not medically necessary has occurred. The Unit is responsible for investigating alleged physical abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of patients residing in health care facilities that receive payments under the Medicaid program. The Unit also litigates cases, as appropriate, under the [Florida False Claims Act](#). Attorneys in the unit may serve on behalf of the Unit or on behalf of Office of Statewide Prosecution, local State Attorney's Offices, or United States Attorney's Offices.

Office of Statewide Prosecution

The Office of Statewide Prosecution investigates and prosecutes multi-circuit criminal activity and assists state and local law enforcement in their efforts to combat organized crime. The Office works closely with statewide and local law enforcement agencies and, at times, federal authorities, to combat organized crime by proactive enforcement, educational and legislative approaches. The Office adopts priorities each year for certain types of criminal activity.

Office of the Solicitor General

The [Solicitor General](#) is responsible for handling the State's most sensitive and complex litigation, supervising the State's civil and criminal appeals, and advising the Attorney General, especially on amicus curiae matters and multi-state litigation.

Office of the Inspector General

The [Office of the Inspector General](#) provides a central point for coordination of and responsibility for activities that promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency. The Inspector General's duties are codified at [Section 20.055\(2\), Florida Statutes](#).

Independent Entities

Pursuant to Florida Statutes, both the [Florida Elections Commission](#) and the Florida Gaming Control Commission reside within the Office of the Attorney General. Although these commissions exist in the Office of the Attorney General for administrative purposes, they are not subject to the control of the Attorney General.

Certain other statutes establish, within the Department of Legal Affairs, the [Commission on the Status of Women](#), the [Statewide Council on Human Trafficking](#), and the [Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys](#).

Records Requests

Publications, documents, forms, or other records provided by the Department of Legal Affairs may be available on the Department of Legal Affairs website. In addition, any person may submit a request for a public record from the Office of the Attorney General's Custodian of Records, at the following address.

Director, Office of Public Records
107 West Gaines Street, Suite 228
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050
Tel: 850-414-3300
E-mail: PublicRecordsRequest@myfloridalegal.com

The Attorney General's Public Records Mediation Program assists in resolving disputes with local governments concerning public records. For additional information about Open Government and public records, please call 850-245-0140.

Department of Legal Affairs Clerk

The Department of Legal Affairs' Agency Clerk is Chrystal Harwood, Senior Management Analyst II, Civil Division, 107 West Gaines Street, Room 428B, Tallahassee, Florida 32301. The Agency Clerk is available at 850-414-3300 and at oag.civil.eserve@myfloridalegal.com.

Pursuant to [Section 20.05\(1\)\(b\)](#), Florida Statutes, the Agency Clerk for the Department of Legal Affairs is the authorized individual who may accept service of process upon the following:

- State of Florida
- State of Florida, Board of Trustees of Internal Improvement Trust Fund, in care of the Attorney General, Attorney General (individually or officially), Office of the Attorney General, Department of Legal Affairs
- Department of Legal Affairs Victims Compensation Trust Fund

If the service is attempted for another entity or individual, the Agency Clerk will decline acceptance and the process server either will be referred to the individual or to the General Counsel for the specified entity.

Certain documents may be filed at the address above or via electronic mail at oag.civil.eserve@myfloridalegal.com. The filing date for a document transmitted by electronic mail shall be the date the agency receives the complete document. Any document received by the office of the

agency clerk after 5:00 p.m. shall be filed as of 8:00 a.m. on the next regular business day. Service of process of a summons or complaint will not be accepted by electronic mail.

Further Information

The Department of Legal Affairs accepts filings during its normal operating hours. The Department is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Department is closed on state holidays.

Inquiries about requesting a variance from or waiver of an agency rule may be directed to the Agency Clerk.

Any person may request access to certain Department of Legal Affairs orders by contacting the Agency Clerk. Access to such records, however, is limited if an exemption applies.