Seatle City Council Select Budget Committee

Councilmember Budget Proposals| Tuesday, October 27, 2026

City Attorney's Office / Law Department (LAW)

Number	Title	Sponsor	Packet Page
LAW-001-A-1	Increase LAW by $1 million GF (2027) in flexible funding to support clearing the criminal case backlog	Foster	2
LAW-002-A-1	Increase LAW by $562,000 GF (2027) and $715,000 GF (2028) and 4.0 FTE Assistant City Prosecutors	Kettle	3
LAW-003-A-1	Increase LAW by $277,000 GF (2027) and $277,000 GF (2028) for toxicology testing support and witness travel	Kettle	5

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

LAW-001-A

Increase LAW by $1 million GF (2027) in flexible funding to support clearing the criminal case backlog

SPONSORS

Dionne Foster, Eddie Lin, Alexis Mercedes Rinck

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(1,000,000)	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(1,000,000)	$0

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This CBA would increase proposed appropriations to the criminal division of the City Attorney's Office by $1 million GF in 2027 (one-time) to help address the backlog in misdemeanor case clearances.

The City Attorney's Office has a backlog of approximately 5,000 open misdemeanor cases, approximately 33 percent of which are for cases involving domestic violence, elder abuse, assault with a sexual motivation, or stalking. The appropriation is intended as flexible support, above the current work force capability, on a short-term, temporary basis through outside legal counsel, contracted paralegal support, externs, Rule 9 interns, or any other use, to facilitate clearing the current backlog.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
LAW	Criminal	00100-BO-LW-J1500	2027		$1,000,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

LAW-002-A

Increase LAW by $562,000 GF (2027) and $715,000 GF (2028) and 4.0 FTE Assistant City Prosecutors

SPONSORS

Robert Kettle, Debora Juarez, Dan Strauss

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(561,784)	$(715,110)
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(561,784)	$(715,110)

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This CBA would increase appropriations to the Criminal Division of the City Attorney's Office by $562,000 in 2027 and $715,000 in 2028 and add 4.0 FTE Assistant City Prosecutors to increase capacity for criminal prosecutions and to support addressing the backlog of open misdemeanor case clearances.

Under the 2027-2028 Proposed Budget, the Criminal Division of the City Attorney's Office would have 82.0 FTE. These include prosecutors, paralegals, legal assistants, administrative support, and victim advocates. There is currently a backlog of approximately 5,000 open misdemeanor cases in court or awaiting a decision on filing charges. The addition of 4.0 Assistant City Prosecutor positions would increase capacity for prosecutions and help address the existing backlog.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONGOING

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
LAW	Criminal	00100-BO-LW-J1500	2027		$561,784
LAW	Criminal	00100-BO-LW-J1500	2028		$715,110

POSITIONS

Dept	BCL	Year	Position Title	Positions	FTE
LAW	00100-BO-LW-J1500	2027	City Prosecutor, Assistant-BU	4	4
LAW	00100-BO-LW-J1500	2028	City Prosecutor, Assistant-BU	4	4

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

LAW-003-A

Increase LAW by $277,000 GF (2027) and $277,000 GF (2028) for toxicology testing support and witness travel

SPONSORS

Robert Kettle, Debora Juarez, Dan Strauss

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(277,000)	$(277,000)
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(277,000)	$(277,000)

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This CBA would increase proposed appropriations to the Criminal Division of the City Attorney's Office by $277,000 GF in 2027 and by $277,000 GF in 2028 for toxicology testing support and witness travel to testify in prosecutions.

The 2025 Annual Report of the Seattle City Attorney's Office identifies (1) increasing average completion times for drug and alcohol toxicology reports, which are necessary for most driving under the influence prosecutions, and (2) victim/witness contact issues and lack of witness participation as factors contributing to the overall backlog in case clearances and in decisions to decline prosecution.

This year with passage Senate Bill 5880, which allows accredited private laboratories to conduct toxicology testing, the City Attorney can contract with private laboratories for toxicology reports.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONGOING

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
LAW	Criminal	00100-BO-LW-J1500	2027		$277,000
LAW	Criminal	00100-BO-LW-J1500	2028		$277,000