

City of Richmond

Administrative Manual

SUBJECT: Requests for Services from City Attorney's Office

SECTION: Legal/City Attorney

POLICY NUMBER: AP 250

INITIAL DATE PREPARED: August 25, 1999

LAST DATE REVISED: August 25, 1999

I. Purpose

To establish a uniform approach for providing legal support to various offices within the City of Richmond.

II. Policy

The City Attorney's duties under the City Charter include approval of the form and legality of contracts, representation of the City and its employees in litigation pertaining to matters within the jurisdiction of the City, and giving legal advice to the City Council on official matters. The City Attorney is the attorney and legal advisor of the City Council. The City Attorney shall give legal advice to the City Council, and upon request provide legal services within its jurisdiction on official matters to the City Manager and City staff. The City Manager and other departments of the City shall cooperate so that the City Attorney may provide effective, timely and cost effective services to the City, and to that end the City Attorney shall establish programs within the office of the City Attorney to ensure the provision of such services.

III. Procedure

In order to provide prompt and effective delivery of legal services, the City Attorney has established an Attorney Assignment Program ("Program") to provide legal services. The Program consists of the following:

- A. The City Attorney from time-to-time shall assign in writing a Primary and Secondary Attorney(s) in the City Attorney's office to each department, and for each major City activity or function. Names of the Primary and Secondary Attorney(s) assigned to various departments, and major activities and functions shall be provided to department directors and City Manager.

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- B. Requests for legal services shall be approved by the appropriate department director using the "Request for Legal Opinion and Funding Approval" form (Exhibit AP 250-1). The "Request for Legal Opinion and Funding Approval" form will be reviewed and approved by the Director of Finance to obtain funding approval for current fiscal year expenditures. If funding is not approved, the request will be returned to the department.
- C. Whenever possible, requests for legal services shall be in writing with all available relevant information attached. The level of urgency and deadlines for the request should be included in the request for legal services. Oral requests should be limited to instances in which it is not possible to submit the request in writing because of emergency or other unusual circumstances.
- D. Requests for legal services shall be made to the City Attorney. If it is necessary to make an oral request and the Primary Attorney is unavailable, the request may be made to an appropriate Secondary Attorney. No request for legal services shall be made to any outside attorney without the prior written consent of the City Attorney.
- E. Upon receipt of a request for legal services, the City Attorney will make an assignment of the request to an Assigned Attorney. An Assigned Attorney may be any attorney in the City Attorney's office, including the attorney making the assignment. In some instances, the Assigned Attorney will be supported by an outside lawyer or special counsel.
- F. In some limited emergency type instances, the above indicated response times may be too long to adequately respond to an immediate need for services. When such instances are identified, the City Attorney's office will attempt to respond to requests for such services in the most expeditious manner, which would normally involve giving such matters priority over other pending requests. Such priority handling situations will have to be strictly limited in order not to unduly jeopardize timely responses to already pending assignments.
- G. Achieving the goals and objectives of the Attorney Assignment Program will require

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mutual cooperative efforts by the City Attorney's office and other City elements. Early contact on an activity shall be determined by the City Attorney's office. Legal services are available to the extent of the office's resources, and the City Attorney will determine the order and priority of delivery of legal services. Outside legal services through special counsel may be made available only through the City Attorney.