

DEPARTMENT OF ATTORNEY GENERAL



BILL SCHUETTE, ATTORNEY GENERAL

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The Attorney General is a constitutional officer, the chief law enforcement officer of the state, and head of the Department of Attorney General, a department of the executive branch of Michigan state government. The Office of Attorney General predates statehood, having been established by an 1807 territorial act, and it has been preserved in every constitution of Michigan.

The Attorney General, the chief legal officer, is the lawyer for the state of Michigan. This elected state officer establishes the official legal position for the state, and renders opinions on questions of law when requested to do so by the governor, legislature, or any other state officer. The Attorney General provides legal counsel to the executive and legislative branches of government, and for each officer, department, board, and commission of state government. The AG provides legal representation in court actions and assists in the conduct of official hearings held by state agencies.

The Attorney General is also the lawyer for the people of the state of Michigan and may intervene in any lawsuit, criminal or civil, when the interests of the people of the state of Michigan so require. The AG advises and supervises prosecuting attorneys throughout Michigan. The Attorney General also possesses certain investigative powers, including the power to investigate allegations of election fraud and complaints for the removal of public officials. The Attorney General may also request grand jury investigations in criminal matters.

By virtue of the office, the Attorney General is a member of various state boards and commissions, including the State Administrative Board, the State Employees' Retirement Board, the Judges' Retirement Board, and the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards.

While the Attorney General is responsible for representing the interests of the state as a whole and its various state agencies and officials, there is no law that authorizes the Attorney General to provide legal services to private individuals or to appear in court on their behalf.

To assist in the many functions of the department, the Attorney General employs a staff of more than 250 assistant attorneys general, who must be members of the State Bar of Michigan and who are appointed under Michigan Civil Service Rules. In addition, the Attorney General has a staff of more than 150 investigators, secretaries, clerical personnel, and paralegals to assist in carrying out the mandate of the office. All of the legal work performed by the assistant attorneys general, including drafting of opinions and legal documents and representation of client agencies, is done in the name of the Attorney General and with the approval of the AG, or the approval of the AG's designee.

The department is organized into 3 bureaus: Criminal Justice, Consumer and Environmental Protection, and Solicitor General. Additionally, the department includes the Prosecuting Attorneys Coordinating Council, an autonomous entity, and the Attorney General serves on its Executive Committee.

The Attorney General maintains offices in Lansing and Detroit in addition to a branch office in Grand Rapids.

