

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

2014-15 Performance Report

Attorney General

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

It is the mission of the Office of Attorney General (OAG) to protect and defend the interests of Oklahomans and the State of Oklahoma by acting with excellence as its chief legal officer.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

Melissa Houston, First Assistant Attorney General (interim) and Chief of Staff, 405.522.4422

GOVERNANCE:

The Agency is directed by Oklahoma Attorney General E. Scott Pruitt.

GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:

The Office of Attorney General is led by the Attorney General, who is a statewide elected officer.

MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

The OAG has approval for several projects that will improve existing technologies and allow the OAG to better serve other agencies and the general public. Funding is in place and implementation of these projects should be completed soon provided IT resources are made available. These projects include a voice over IP telephone system and JustWare case management software.

CORE MISSION:

The core mission of the Office of the Attorney General is to provide legal services to the State of Oklahoma and its various agencies. This mission is often hindered by the substantial resources spent on private attorneys that could be redirected to increase the ability of the Office of the Attorney General to provide legal services to all state agencies. The Office of the Attorney General strives to provide an attractive alternative to the use of private attorneys.

PRIVATE ALTERNATIVES:

The Attorney General is the chief law officer of the State of Oklahoma and provides legal services to state agencies; however, many state agencies continue to utilize private attorneys for legal counsel. The Attorney General's Office has made it a priority to reduce the amount of taxpayer dollars spent on private attorney contracts by increasing the number of state agencies the office represents through the General Counsel and Litigation units. It should be the exception and not the rule that legal services be outsourced. Fiscal Year 2014 resulted in over \$200,000 in savings on contracted expenditures. The Attorney General has reduced overall spending on private attorney contracts by \$4.59 million during his first term.