



CITY OF DETROIT

MARY SHEFFIELD

COUNCIL PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Conrad Mallett, Corporation Counsel, Detroit Law Department

Through: [Click here to enter text.](#)

From: Council President Mary Sheffield submitting memorandum relative to

Date: 3/17/2023

RE: Law Department Budget Questions FY23-24

SUMMARY:

1. There are 112 proposed full time employee positions for the coming fiscal year. How many staffing vacancies does your department currently have? Is 112 the adequate number of full-time employees to fulfill the requirements of the Law Department? Relatively often, Council approves contracts for legal aid from private companies. Can we expect to see these outside counsel contracts more or less often in FY2024?
2. In terms of employee retention, what is the current turnover rate for full time employees? If necessary, are there plans this year to improve the Law Department's turnover rate? When was the most recent market study done to assess whether city attorneys are being competitively paid? If recently, please share the findings of this market study.
3. Please provide a status update on Right to Counsel and the Office of Eviction Defense. How many residents have used the legal representation that has been

made available to them? How much public outreach is done by the Law Department to ensure that residents know this assistance is available?

4. It has been agreed on by Council, Mayor Duggan, the Law Department, and the Office of Eviction Defense that more residents currently need eviction defense than the Office has the funding to assist. If adequate funding is not allocated, what will under-funded eviction defense look like?
5. City Council often approves settlements between the city and residents, understanding that the settlements are the most advantageous option for the City. We don't, however, see how many cases do go to trial or get dismissed. Please provide a report of the results of all lawsuits against the city in FY2023. This report should indicate how many suits were settled, dismissed, or went to trial, as well as any other possible outcomes.
6. Capturing billable time is one of the Law Department's goals for FY2024. Please share more details on what steps will be taken to capture more billable time. How does the Law Department plan to be more efficient and effective in the coming fiscal year?
7. What metrics are used to evaluate the performance of your department each year? How do your FY2024 goals and strategies differ from previous years?
8. Please share staffing demographics for your department. Demographics report should indicate how many employees are Detroit residents, minorities, and/or women.
9. Please explain the following budget changes:
 - a. Decrease in expected revenue from \$2.26M in FY2023 to \$1.72M in FY2024.
 - b. Decrease in Professional and Contractual Service expenditures from \$4.63M in FY2023 to \$1.95M in FY2024.
 - c. Decrease in Operating Services expenditures from \$2.43M in FY2023 to \$1.79M in FY2024.
 - d. Decrease in General Fund expenditures from \$22.6M in FY2023 to \$18.4M in FY2024.
10. Last October, the City accepted the FY2023 Michigan Indigent Defense Commission Grant for a total of \$2.44M. Please share how this grant funding has been used and will continue to be used to support Detroit residents in need.

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT:

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