



Board Agenda Item 23

DATE: May 19, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Doug Sloan, County Counsel

SUBJECT: Salary Resolution Amendment - County Counsel Org 0710

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve Amendment to the Salary Resolution deleting a vacant Principal Deputy County Counsel classification allocation and increasing the number of Senior Deputy County Counsel allocations from nine to fifteen in County Counsel Org 0710, effective July 6, 2026, as reflected on Appendix “C”.

There is an approximate \$113,388 increase in Net County Cost (NCC) associated with the recommended action beginning in FY 2026-27, which is anticipated to be partially offset by revenue and additional cost savings. Approval of the recommended action will delete the Principal Deputy County Counsel (Principal) classification allocation and increase the Senior Deputy County Counsel (Senior) allocations from nine to fifteen to allow the County Counsel’s Office to retain and attract experienced attorneys. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Should your Board not approve the recommend action, the organizational structure of the Department will remain unchanged, which may affect County Counsel’s ability to hire and retain qualified attorneys.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in NCC associated with the recommended action for FY 2025-26, as this amendment to the Salary Resolution will not be effective until the beginning of FY 2026-27. The estimated increase in NCC of approximately \$113,388 will be included in the FY 2026-27 Recommended Budget request for County Counsel Org 0710. The increase in cost will be partially offset by the deletion of the vacant Principal classification allocation and revenues collected from external agencies and other County departments. There will be additional savings in outside counsel costs paid from Interest and Miscellaneous Expenditures Org 2540.

DISCUSSION:

The County Counsel desires to provide the Board, County Administrative Officer, and all other departments the best possible legal services, always mindful of helping them reach their goals in a timely and legally defensible manner. Currently, the Department’s Salary Resolution limits the number of Senior positions to nine, which does not provide the flexibility to hire or promote additional experienced deputies.

The County Counsel’s Office currently has four vacant Deputy positions, and is experiencing challenges with hiring and retention. The County Counsel’s Office generally does not hire entry level attorneys, as the

majority of work performed by the office is complex and requires specific legal knowledge and experience. Providing opportunities for promotion will aid in retention of experienced attorneys, and the ability to advertise Senior positions will help increase the pool of qualified applicants with relevant expertise. Retaining experienced attorneys is a cost-effective strategy in providing the County's legal services. Currently, eight of nine available Senior positions are filled, with the ninth position recently becoming vacant. The County Counsel's Office has a number of established, experienced attorneys worthy of a promotion to the Senior level. County Counsel also wishes to competitively recruit experienced attorneys to fill future vacancies.

If the County Counsel's Office is unable to hire and retain attorneys, the result will be sending work to outside counsel. The average rate for outside counsel is \$400 per hour, which is significantly more expensive than utilizing County staff.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Salary Resolution Amendment - Appendix "C"

CAO ANALYST:

Amy Ryals