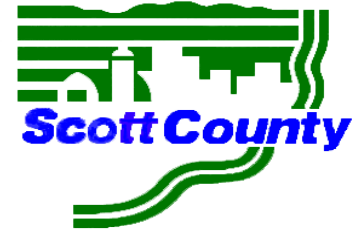


SCOTT COUNTY ATTORNEY

Scott County Courthouse
400 West Fourth Street
Davenport, Iowa 52801-1104
Telephone: (563) 326-8600
Fax: (563) 326-8763
Website: www.scottcountyiowa.gov



Kelly G. Cunningham, County Attorney (563) 326-8241
Kelly.Cunningham@scottcountyiowa.gov

January 6, 2023

To: Scott County Board of Supervisors

RE: Request for Immediate Budgetary Approval for Attorney I position

The Scott County Attorney's Office is seeking immediate budgetary approval for an entry level assistant attorney within the Juvenile Division. Currently the Juvenile Division is staffed with two attorneys, a Senior Assistant Attorney/Supervisor and an Assistant Attorney.

The Juvenile Division is tasked primarily with handling two different types of cases: CINAs (Child in Need of Assistance cases) and delinquencies arising out of the commission of crimes by juvenile offenders. These areas of law are distinctly different in how they are processed through the Juvenile Court system and involve an extensive amount of cooperative work with members of the Department of Health and Human Services, social service agencies, child protection centers, school officials, members of law enforcement, members of juvenile court services, families of the involved children, as well as victims and witnesses. Given the number of involved parties and/or entities in juvenile court matters, the nature of the work being performed by the Juvenile Division is extremely time consuming. With that being said, the office's Senior Assistant Attorney/Supervisor is primarily responsible for handling all of the CINA cases, while the Assistant Attorney is primarily responsible for handling the juvenile delinquencies. Both of these attorneys have a number of responsibilities that go with the caseload they handle.

The supervisory responsibilities of the Senior Attorney are also significant in that she is responsible for providing legal advice to representatives of the Department of Health and Human Services, various social service agencies, schools officials, law enforcement, the judiciary, staff employed by juvenile court services, as well as attorneys within our office related to legal matters involving CINAs and delinquencies. The Senior Attorney drafts the policies and procedures to be followed by the Juvenile Division. She is a member of various juvenile justice committees throughout the State of Iowa. She also supervises two staff members within the office to include the Assistant Attorney and a legal assistant assigned to our Juvenile Division.

The Assistant Attorney is responsible for handling the delinquency docket as well as providing coverage on CINA cases when needed. Her work in the area of delinquencies requires her to work with law enforcement, members of social service agencies, members of juvenile court services, school resource officers, families of the involved children, as well as victims and witnesses. Furthermore, she is tasked with handling assignments outside the Juvenile Division to include mental health hearings for the office.

Currently between these two subjects, the Senior Attorney of the Juvenile Division has estimated they have an open caseload of approximately 800 cases. This is a significant caseload for two attorneys to handle. Additionally, juvenile crime within our community is on the rise which will further increase the caseload being handled by our Juvenile Division. To ensure that these cases are being processed through the court system in an expeditious manner and as required by various statutory time frames set forth within the Iowa Code, the Associate Court Division of the Scott County Courthouse is operating two full time courtrooms assigned strictly to the Juvenile Division. Given the amount of judicial resources allocated to the juvenile court arena, the two attorneys within the Juvenile Division are providing coverage for court hearings set every Monday through Thursday. On Friday's, the Senior Attorney is responsible for handling Family Wellness Court, which is scheduled every other Friday, as well as participating in weekly staff meetings with the Department of Health and Human Services to discuss informal safety plans on cases to be filed related to child sex abuse, neglect and abuse. Given the breadth of these responsibilities, this leaves our staff with little to no time to review and/or prepare legal documents for court hearings or meet with witnesses and victims to prepare them for these hearings. An additional assistant attorney would help to offset the responsibilities being assumed by these two attorneys and would help to decrease the job stress and attorney/staff turnover, all of which is detrimental to public safety. I would further note that county attorney's offices in the State of Iowa with comparable populations and caseloads have more assistant county attorneys to assist in handling the type of caseload that is currently being managed by these two individuals.

Sincerely,

Kelly G. Cunningham
Scott County Attorney

THE COUNTY AUDITOR'S SIGNATURE CERTIFIES
THAT THIS RESOLUTION HAS BEEN FORMALLY
APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON

DATE

SCOTT COUNTY AUDITOR

R E S O L U T I O N

SCOTT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

January 19, 2023

APPROVAL OF STAFFING ADJUSTMENTS IN THE
ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

BE IT RESOLVED BY the Scott County Board of Supervisors as follows:

- Section 1. That the table of organization for the Attorney's Office be increased by 1.0 FTE Assistant County Attorney position (total 9.0 FTE).
- Section 2. This resolution shall take effect immediately.