

Alaska Department of Law

Civil Division Overview



Cori Mills

Deputy Attorney General
Civil Division

Senate State Affairs Committee

February 20, 2025

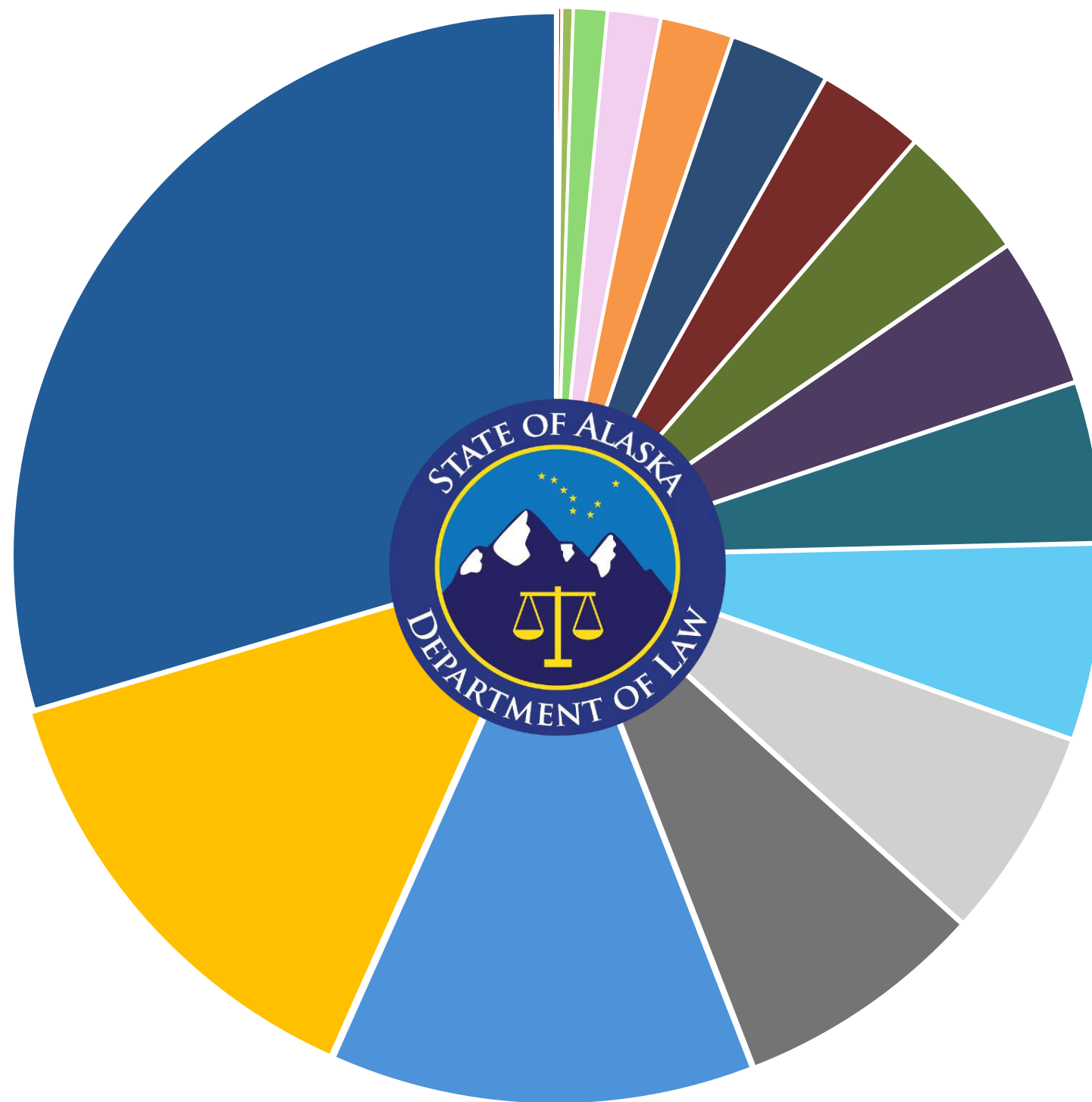
WHAT DOES THE CIVIL DIVISION DO?



The civil division provides high-quality legal services to the executive branch through litigation, agency advice, research, legislative drafting, regulatory review, case management, and fostering good governance.



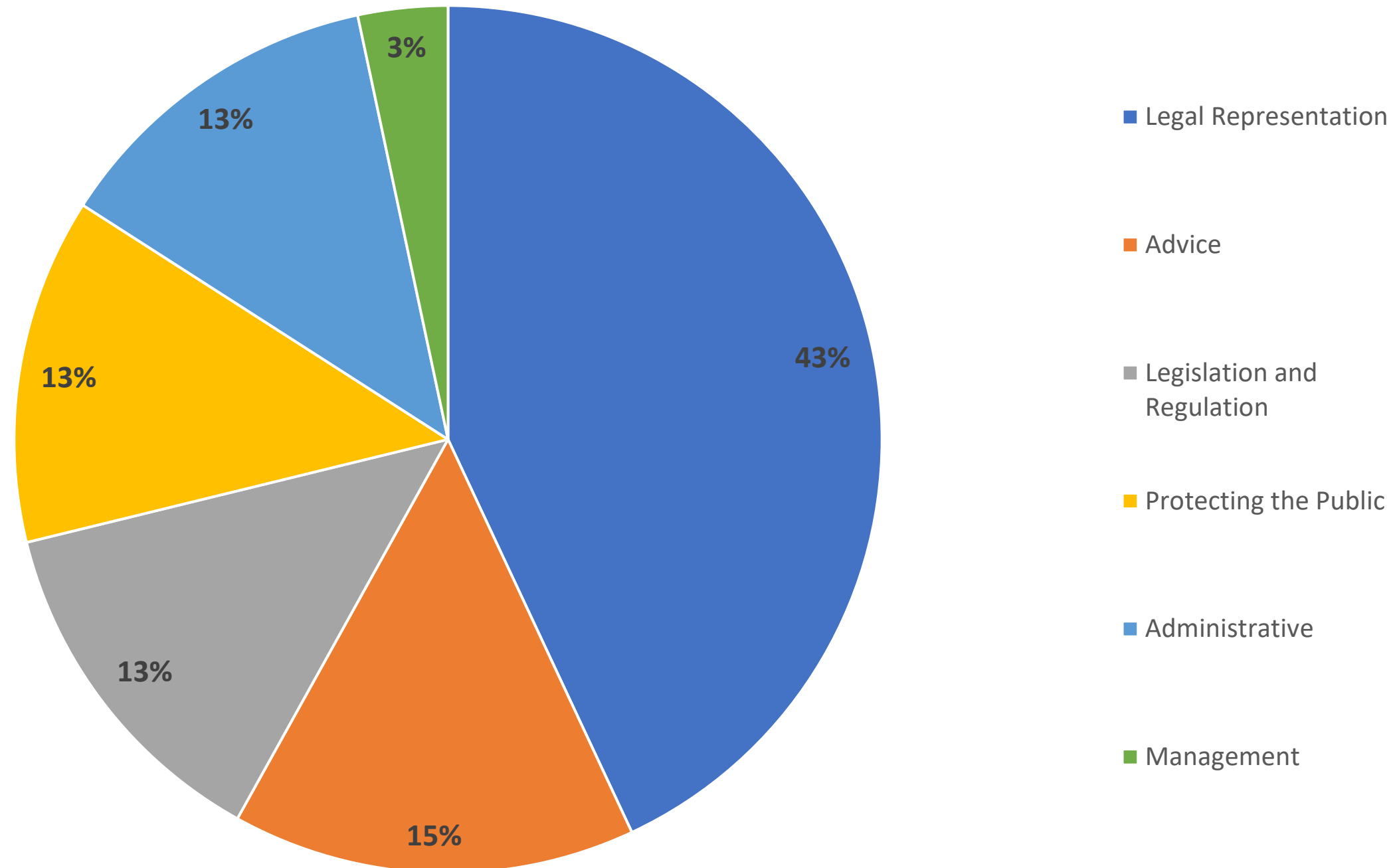
BIGGEST LAW FIRM IN THE STATE



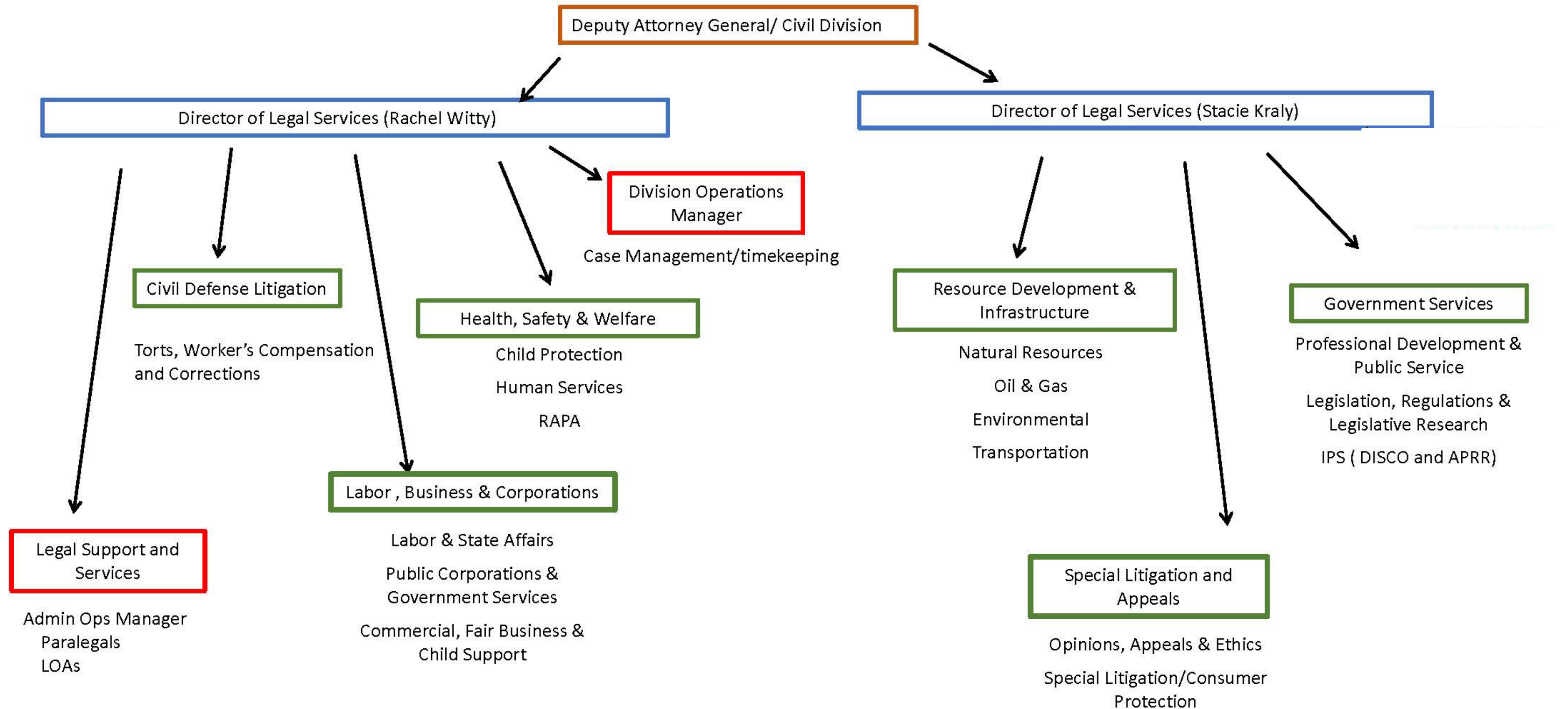
- Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Alaska Court System
- Department of Public Safety
- Office of the Lieutenant Governor
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Department of Education and Early Development
- Department of Fish and Game
- Department of Corrections
- Department of Environmental Conservation
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
- Office of the Governor
- Department of Revenue
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Health
- Department of Administration
- Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
- Department of Family and Community Services

FY 2024 Total = 206,261 hours to each department and executive branch

HOURS BILLED BY CORE MISSION CATEGORIES



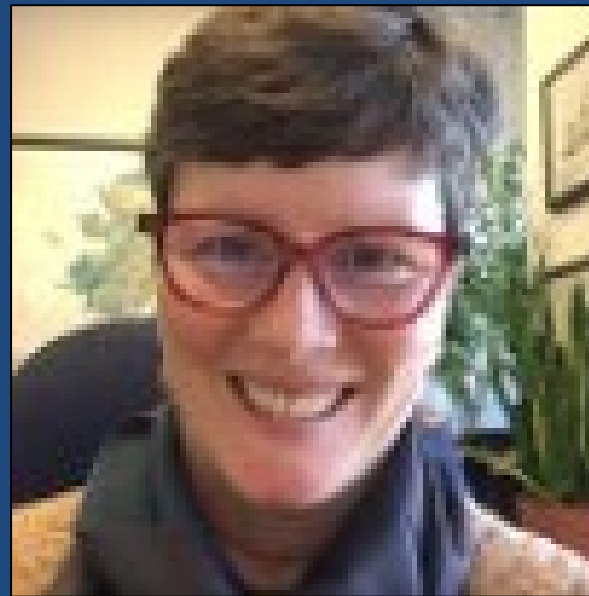
CIVIL DIVISION ORGANIZATION



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE



Natural Resources



Anne Nelson

- Represents state interests in statehood defense, natural resource management & development, fish & game management

Oil & Gas



Mary Gramling

- Ensures the state receives its appropriate share of oil & gas royalties and state taxes

Transportation



Sean Lynch

- Represents DOT&PF on construction & operation of public facilities & development projects

Environmental



Jenn Currie

- Represents the state's interest in clean water & air matters, hazardous waste discharge cases, and cleanup costs & recovery

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE



Child Protection



Carla Erickson

- Institutes court actions when children must be removed from abusive or neglectful homes or when court oversight is required

Human Services



Chris Robison

- Protects vulnerable adults
- Advises and represents the Department of Health, including public assistance, public health, and behavioral health

Regulatory Affairs & Public Advocacy



Jeff Waller

- Protects the Alaskan public interest in public utility and pipeline proceedings before the Regulatory Commission of Alaska

SPECIAL LITIGATION & APPEALS

Special Litigation



Margaret Paton-Walsh

- Handles high-profile, expedited & complex litigation constitutional challenges & elections matters
- Enforces Alaska consumer protection and antitrust laws

Opinions, Appeals & Ethics



Jessie Alloway

- Defends the state in federal and state appellate courts
- Advises on the Executive Branch Ethics Act
- Acts as the tribal liaison

GOVERNMENT SERVICES



Legislation, Reg & Leg. Research



Rebecca Polizzotto

- Oversees all legislative drafting, coordinates review of proposed & enacted legislation
- Oversees regulations projects for all state agencies

Prof. Dev. & Public Service



Jessica Leeah

- Oversees all internship, externship and fellowship programs
- Works on recruitment efforts and training opportunities

IPS (Disco & APRR)



Alan Birnbaum

Advises agencies on the management, sharing, retention, and disclosure of information

CIVIL DEFENSE LITIGATION



Torts, Workers' Comp & Corrections



Mark Cucci

- Provides advice & defense to state agencies in tort suits
- Defends the state as an employer in workers' compensation claims
- Provides advice & defense to the Department of Corrections in civil suits

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

GOVERNMENT SERVICES



- Monitored each introduced bill during the 33rd Legislature
- Streamlined regulations process to reduce time to promulgate rules
- Updated and revised statewide retention policies and guidance
- Advised the Executive Branch on cybersecurity issues, artificial intelligence, and state and federal confidentiality issues
- Developed and implemented expansion of the Civil Division Fellows Program

CIVIL DEFENSE LITIGATION



- Maintained an active corrections caseload, including petitions for post-conviction relief, administrative appeals, and civil rights litigation
- Continued to defend all state agencies as the employer in litigated claims before the Workers' Compensations Board
- Represented state agencies in lawsuits for damages or civil rights violations with Risk Management

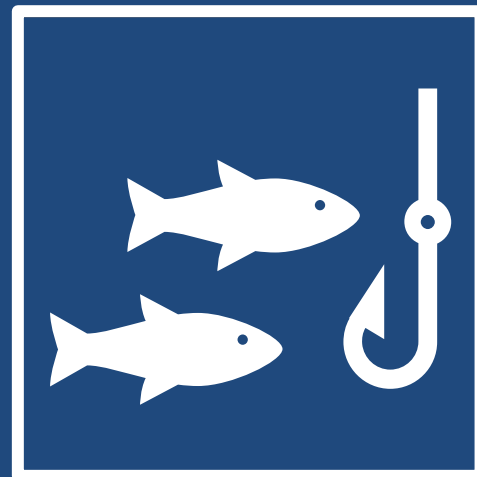
HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE



- Continued to effectively represent the Department of Children and Family Services in every Child in Need of Aid case filed in the state
- Played a key role in defending the Division of Public Assistance in three significant class action lawsuits
- Helped develop Dept. of Health's Behavioral Health Roadmap Project
- Helped operationalize new statute regarding criminal defendants not competent to stand trial

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



- Advised and litigated several cases relating to public access rights to public water and public lands
- Supported state agencies on implementation issues and creation regulatory frameworks for carbon storage projects
- Finalized a major amendment to the state air quality plan for Fairbanks
- Advised and defended DOT&PF in development and delivery of \$1B in highway and airport projects

LABOR, BUSINESS, AND CORPORATIONS



- Recovered pension funds and permanent fund payments in securities fraud cases totaling \$400K
- Advised and represented the Lt. Governor and the Div. of Elections during primary and general elections
- Represented Occupational Licensing in many significant and successful lawsuits involving health care practitioners who presented a danger to the public
- Began transitioning labor relations work to the Department of Law

SPECIAL LITIGATION AND APPEALS



- Represented state agencies against a variety of constitutional and statutory claims in education, elections, natural resources, public welfare, and child welfare cases
- Received favorable decisions from the Alaska Supreme Court in several major lawsuits, recovering millions of dollars in settlement funds
- Promoted and enforced compliance with the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act through advice, trainings, and drafting opinions

QUESTIONS?

Cori Mills

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General

Civil Division

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