



## RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The Criminal Division's primary function is prosecution of all felonies and approximately two-thirds of the misdemeanor prosecutions across the state of Alaska. Prosecution of crime, by the nature of the work, is labor intensive, and requires skilled, highly educated professionals more than any other resource. The Department's most valuable resource is its people.

Recruitment, retention, and ongoing support of a skilled and qualified workforce is critical to sustaining successful legal outcomes for Alaska. Successful legal outcomes protect the public. Department management has made it a priority to address problems in personnel recruitment and retention, identifying the causes and developing appropriate responses to these issues.

The Criminal Division's plan for recruitment and retention is as follows:

### Recruitment

- I. Get the message out
  - a. Post notices of openings in more locations such as
    - i. Periodicals for both state and national prosecutor associations
    - ii. Prosecutor association websites
    - iii. Publications of bar associations for other states
    - iv. Local community postings in Alaska
    - v. Web -based job posting sites and services
  - b. Work with the military to attract qualified applicants who are in-state due to military placement
  - c. Targeted recruitment for certain skilled or high level positions such as prosecutors focusing on sexual assault cases
  - d. Revamping of the Department of Law's employment webpage in order to make it a top result when candidates are conducting web searches for prosecutor positions
  - e. Attend more legal job fairs in the lower 48
    - i. Partner with colleges to develop internship and externship programs for the Department of Law. These programs would include both prosecutor positions and staff positions
  - f. Develop a program for employees to visit law school career centers when on business in the lower 48

- i. Employees would talk with students about current or future opportunities, as well as make contact with career center staff and share information on the Alaska Department of Law
- II. Refine the message
  - a. Create professional materials promoting employment with the Department of Law
    - i. Explain and promote the State of Alaska's salary structure
    - ii. Explain and promote employee benefits (annual leave, medical and dental insurance, retirement benefits, etc.)
    - iii. Promote living in Alaska by describing all 13 communities where the department has offices showcasing the unique outdoor and cultural activities that Alaska has to offer
    - iv. Promote being a part of the Department of Law team
    - v. Promote criminal legal work and the opportunities it presents to serve one's community
- III. Substantive incentives to be considered and/or developed and then promoted
  - a. Providing rural housing
  - b. Provide more promotional opportunities
  - c. Reevaluate mandatory minimum qualifications to expand the pool of applicants without sacrificing quality
  - d. Explore student loan repayment programs

## **Retention**

- I. Ensure employees have a manageable workload
  - a. Add positions to address sexual assault and sexual abuse of minor cases allowing the department to focus on these cases and decrease the likelihood of burnout for those handling them
  - b. Develop and promote more pre-trial diversion programs
  - c. Develop a robust volunteer program
  - d. Review the distribution of workload throughout the state
- II. Incentives
  - a. Compensation
    - i. Salary study
    - ii. Offer more opportunities for promotion
    - iii. Review and develop more career advancement opportunities through additional training and opportunities for practice in specialized areas
  - b. Secure housing in rural areas for prosecutors working in those communities
  - c. Pay bar dues for prosecutors who work for the Department of Law
  - d. Develop a plan to recognize employee achievements through awards and other recognitions
  - e. Evaluate student loan repayment programs
- III. Training
  - a. Expand and improve the Annual District Attorney and Paralegal Conference
  - b. Research more grant funded trainings both in and out-of-state

- c. Hire a Prosecutor Training Specialist to focus on developing ongoing training programs for attorneys
  - i. This position would offer trainings in trial advocacy and areas that present challenges unique to Alaska. In addition, it would develop practice manuals and videos so new employees could take advantage of these trainings as they onboard
- IV. Rural Housing
  - a. Explore the benefits of the department owning, renting, or leasing properties with a focus on the communities with the greatest need for prosecutorial resources
- V. Improve Communications
  - a. Internal –
    - i. Develop a periodic newsletter which would include achievements at trial, employee spotlights, recent appellate court opinions, as well as management and administrative changes
  - b. External
    - i. Expand the use of press releases and other public statements to inform the public of significant cases