

WASHINGTON STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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Dear Washingtonians,

The Office of the Attorney General is Washington State's law firm.

Whether it's consumer protection, public safety, civil rights, health care, environmental protections, education, or defending democracy and justice in America, we are Washington's advocate.

I came into office last year as the nation faced unprecedented and troubling threats against our democracy and the rule of law. Almost daily, we have seen alarming headlines that have left many of you worried, dispirited, or afraid. Many of the Trump Administration's actions have been reckless and illegal. Left unchallenged, they would significantly disrupt our residents' well-being by raising the cost of living, targeting working class people, or taking away basic protections for women, people of color, immigrants, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

And for us in Washington, there is much to fight for. Our state leads the nation in protecting civil rights and the environment, demanding government transparency, and welcoming people fleeing persecution, all while supporting a strong and innovative economy. My office sued the federal government 49 times in 2025. On average, that's nearly one lawsuit a week, and more than twice as many lawsuits than the state filed in the first year of Trump's first term. I will continue to use my authority to protect our state's interests and our people in court, and to make the federal government follow the damn law.

But as this report makes clear, those high-profile cases are a small part of what we do each year.

This is a time of widespread mistrust in government. I have made clear to all my staff across the state that we must strive to do our work in the most transparent way possible. We must endeavor to be the best public law firm in the country. We must show the people that the government works for them.

The Attorney General's office advises hundreds of state agencies, from the Office of the Governor to the Washington State Potato Commission. We defend state laws. We support state policy initiatives. We bring cases to protect the rights of Washington workers and consumers, and to ensure we all can live our lives free from discrimination and exploitation.

In 2025, the nearly 2,000 employees of the Attorney General's office:

- **Provided excellent, ethical legal advice to the state of Washington.** Our office supports and provides independent legal advice to all three branches of state government including over 230 state agencies, boards, and commissions. Our legal advice helps state entities serve the public and follow the law.
- **Protected the state from federal overreach.** In 2025, the Trump administration took dozens of actions that would have illegally robbed Washington of billions of dollars in federal funding appropriated by Congress. This funding is critical for our state, supporting projects and services that keep Washingtonians safe. We fought these attempts and protected more than \$15 billion in federal funding. Thanks to the work of our federal litigation team, we kept the lights on in our schools, food on the table for kids, health care accessible for our most vulnerable residents, a roof over the heads of people transitioning out of homelessness, and funding in place to prevent terrorism and environmental disasters.
- **Advanced public safety.** Our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Cold Case Unit solved a nearly decade-old murder case and secured its first conviction. We supported law enforcement by taking on more than 70 criminal cases referred to us by local prosecutors and supported the Criminal Justice Training Commission in rolling out millions in grant funding to local law enforcement and first responders.
- **Fought for Washington workers.** We investigated and, when needed, litigated, when businesses took advantage of workers. We won settlements for farmworkers from businesses that abused the visa system at the expense of qualified local labor.
- **Stood up for consumers and renters.** We protected consumers against government imposters, deceptive advertising, predatory lending practices, privacy violations, pyramid schemes, and data breaches. We went after the root causes of the housing affordability crisis like monopolies and exploitative algorithms, and secured refunds for renters who were overcharged.
- **Provided support for people in need.** Our youth-centered crisis response program, HearMeWA, responded to hundreds of contacts from young people experiencing stress, anxiety, violent threats, sexual abuse, and more. We helped military personnel and veterans get volunteer legal help and launched the state's first hate crimes and bias hotline to connect victims to services.

I'm honored to be Washington's 19th Attorney General and so appreciative of the attorneys, paralegals, administrative staff, fiscal experts, HR professionals, and others who serve you, the people of Washington.



Nick Brown



2025 BY THE NUMBERS



Our office supports over **230** state agencies, boards, and commissions.

We filed **49** lawsuits against the federal government to protect the rights of Washingtonians in 2025.

These lawsuits protected **\$15 billion**

for Washington. For every **\$1** we spent suing the Trump administration, we protected **\$3,000** in federal funds.

We enforced laws that protect consumers. We secured more than **\$33 million** to remedy violations, provide consumer restitution, and support future enforcement.

We returned more than **\$18 million** in value to consumers through our "Lemon Law" program. This program protects you if you buy a new vehicle that is defective.

We fielded more than **40,000** consumer calls and complaints through our Consumer Resource Center to resolve disputes for consumers and businesses. We returned more than **\$12 million** to Washington consumers this year.

We responded to **270 contacts** from young people through our HearMeWA crisis response program.

The Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents Hotline has received **315 reports.**

We supported law enforcement by prosecuting criminal cases where local prosecutors lacked resources or had conflicts of interest. In all, we reviewed or prosecuted **74 criminal cases.**

We responded to **176 calls** from veterans or their families for civil legal assistance.

We enforced Washington's new rent stabilization law and **secured refunds for hundreds of households** for rent overpayment.

We litigated **116 matters involving sexually violent predators** and will continue to rigorously enforce laws intended to keep dangerous predators out of our communities.

We responded to **1,200+ contacts** from the public on workplace pregnancy accommodations, criminal history inquiries in the job hiring process, and general civil rights issues ranging from existing state law protections to federal actions targeting and threatening the well-being of Washingtonians.

We stood up for Washington laws in our state supreme court. **During the 2024-25 term, our appellate lawyers argued 10 cases, winning eight of them.** The cases involved issues such as the constitutionality of restrictions on large capacity magazines for firearms, the state's system for verifying signatures on mail-in ballots, and worker protection standards.

ABOUT THE AG'S OFFICE

Our mission is to provide excellent, independent, and ethical legal services to the State of Washington and protect the rights of its people.



Many of our legal divisions advise and represent state agencies. For example, some of our lawyers have expertise in environmental law, and advise the state's departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife. Other attorneys specialize in health care and advise the Department of Social and Health Services or the Health Care Authority. Lawyers in the Solicitor General's Office advise the Governor, the Legislature, and the Secretary of State, and supervise all litigation in the appellate courts, including the Washington Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Our advice helps state agencies interpret and implement state and federal laws. We strive to make sure that agency leaders have timely and accurate legal advice so that when they make decisions, they have all the necessary information. When the state is sued, we represent agencies before administrative tribunals and courts. Our job doesn't end when a judge rules. If the judicial process finds a state agency fell short, we help develop and implement changes to ensure compliance with the law.

We also have independent authority to enforce laws such as the Consumer Protection Act. Sometimes, that means simply issuing guidance on how to comply with the law. Other times, we are forced to file lawsuits to ensure people follow the law as designed. Either way, our goal is to protect the workers, consumers, and others who keep our state safe and our economy strong.

Finally, we have limited, but important, authority to prosecute criminal charges, such as Medicaid fraud, environmental crimes, organized retail theft, and referrals of criminal cases from county prosecutor's offices.

In addition to our legal work, dedicated professionals in our office work hard to support our mission through Human Resources, Financial Services, Information Technology, Facilities Management, and Racial Equity. We also have teams who work in Legislative Affairs, Public Affairs, Tribal Relations, and Policy, who help our office coordinate with important partners.



Federal Litigation

“*Our country is still governed by the Constitution, even when we have a lawless president determined to sow disorder and eliminate vital programs. Now more than ever, states have a key role in upholding the rule of law.”*

—Nick Brown, January 31, 2025



2025 Snapshot:

Filed
49
lawsuits

Protected more than
\$15b
in federal funding for vital public services across the state

For every **\$1** the state has spent pursuing these cases, we've protected
\$3,000
for Washingtonians

The federal government has unleashed a number of unconstitutional, un-American, and cruel executive actions that in many cases harm Washingtonians.

The Attorney General decides whether to sue the federal government by asking three questions:

1. Is the administration doing something illegal or unconstitutional?
2. Are those actions harming Washingtonians?
3. Is a lawsuit necessary to protect our state's interests?

In 2025, we filed **49 lawsuits** against the federal government. These lawsuits have protected civil and constitutional rights and safeguarded public programs. In all, our office has protected more than **\$15 billion** in federal funding for vital public services across the state. For every \$1 the state has spent pursuing these cases, we've protected \$3,000 for Washingtonians.

That means funding for schools, infrastructure to protect against natural disasters, housing for our most vulnerable residents, and programs to feed children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Highlights

Birthright Citizenship. On January 21, 2025, we challenged the president's unconstitutional order to **strip birthright citizenship from thousands of babies born in Washington each year, despite the Constitution's guarantee.** Two days later, a court called the President's action "blatantly unconstitutional" and enjoined it nationwide. Since that time, every court to consider the issue has agreed the Constitution is clear: if you are born in the United States, you are a citizen of the United States.

"Citizenship by birth is an unequivocal Constitutional right. It is one of the precious principles that makes the United States the great nation that it is. The President cannot change, limit, or qualify this Constitutional right via an executive order."

— U.S. District Judge John C. Coughenour, 765 F.Supp.3d 1142, 1154 (W.D.Wash. 2025)

Gender-Affirming Care. We led a coalition of states in filing a lawsuit to stop the president's illegal and hateful order that would have prohibited gender-affirming care for young people, endangering transgender individuals and threatening unconstitutional criminal prosecution of medical professionals.

Voting Rights. We successfully challenged an unlawful executive order that undermined our election system and violated voting rights of Washingtonians.

FEMA. The Federal Emergency Management Agency tried to illegally withhold funding to protect against terrorism and respond to natural disasters unless states cooperated with federal immigration enforcement efforts. **We sued and won in court, removing the unlawful funding conditions.**

Gun Safety. We sued the Trump administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) over its plans to distribute thousands of machine-gun conversion devices to communities across the United States. **The redistribution of machine-gun conversion devices jeopardized public safety in Washington, which had 1,053 gun-related fatalities in 2023, and would violate state law already banning such instruments.** After we filed our suit, ATF agreed not to distribute the devices into Washington and the other plaintiff states.

Mental Health Grants in K-12s. The U.S. Department of Education tried to illegally cut congressionally approved mental health programs in K-12 schools. The cuts jeopardized \$15 million in future grant funds for the University of Washington and three educational service districts in Washington. A judge ordered the Department of Education to unwind the unlawful cancellation of the grants.

Education Funding. We sued the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Management and Budget for illegally withholding \$7 billion in education funding already appropriated to the states by Congress, including about \$150 million for K-12 schools and post-secondary education systems in Washington. **As a result of this suit, the federal government released this money and Washington got what we had been promised.**

SNAP. The U.S. Department of Agriculture demanded that states turn over personal and sensitive information about millions of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. We filed a lawsuit to stop them. We won an order that blocked USDA's demand for Washingtonians' SNAP data. During the federal government shutdown in October, we successfully sued to compel the Trump administration to continue to provide SNAP benefits to Washingtonians. We also sued when the Trump administration claimed that certain green card holders would be ineligible for SNAP benefits and forced the Trump administration to withdraw that policy.

Supporting Victims of Crimes. After the federal government jeopardized more than \$30 million in funding to support crime victims in Washington, we fought back. The federal government said we couldn't have this funding unless we ignored our own state law and sent our police to enforce federal immigration law. Once again, a court ordered the administration to restore the funding.

Lowering Energy Costs. We sued the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for illegally ending a \$7 billion program to lower energy costs. The program would have brought solar energy to more than 900,000 households in low-income and disadvantaged communities across the country, and Washington stood to lose \$156 million. The case is ongoing.

Our lawsuits against the Trump administration are important because of the harms to our residents. Our actions have stemmed federal overreach and are delivering for Washingtonians. But they are only a small fraction of what the AG's office does. Out of the 800 attorneys working in our office, only about 30 attorneys work on federal litigation. The following sections give examples of some of the other important work our office does.

Protecting Workers

“Thanks to the advocacy of so many people in this room and across the state, Washington state has some of the country’s strongest labor standards, including the nation’s second-highest minimum wage, requirements for paid overtime for all workers (including agricultural workers), protections from pregnancy-related discrimination, and protections against retaliation. But laws are only effective if they are robustly and consistently enforced.”

-Nick Brown, September 2, 2025

Traveling for work. Our office secured protection for traveling workers in Azorit-Wortham v. Alaska Airlines. We represented the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, which directed Alaska Airlines to provide treatment and benefits to a flight attendant who caught COVID-19 while working in March 2020. The Washington Supreme Court agreed that if a worker contracts a disease during work-related travel, they may receive workers’ compensation benefits to help them heal and return to work.

Unpaid Labor. Our office also supports the Washington Department of Labor & Industries in their investigations of wage theft. A 2025 investigation into a company called Cannabis Green found it underpaid its workers and failed to give them sick leave. After we sued on behalf of Labor & Industries, Cannabis Green argued that Labor & Industries has a very limited ability to bring civil wage theft suits, and the lower courts ruled in favor of Cannabis Green. We appealed to the Washington Supreme Court, and the Court directly and unequivocally affirmed Labor & Industries enforcement authority to recover wages for affected workers. This win ensures Labor & Industries has tools to effectively respond to complaints and enforce labor standards laws, which protect workers and their families.



Farmworkers. In 2025, we reached court-enforceable settlements with agricultural companies after our investigation found they engaged in discriminatory, unfair, and deceptive hiring practices. In one case, we found that two companies in Yakima County, Shinn & Son and Cornerstone Ranches, illegally replaced local farmworkers with foreign guestworkers through the H-2A visa program. As a result of the settlement, Shinn & Son will pay \$300,000 to approximately 20 affected farmworkers, and more than 50 farmworkers will receive compensation through a \$1 million settlement with Cornerstone. Similarly, in April, we reached a \$180,000 agreement with King Fuji Ranch in Richland to resolve allegations the farm had unlawfully replaced local farmworkers with H-2A workers.



Standing Up for Consumers & Renters

The AG's office enforces laws that protect consumers. In 2025, we recovered more than \$33 million to remedy violations, including money to pay back what consumers lost and money to support new cases going forward. We took on government imposters, deceptive advertising, predatory lending practices, privacy violations, pyramid schemes, and data breaches, among many others.

Lemon Law. Our Lemon Law program helps consumers resolve disputes about new car warranties. In 2025, we received more than 314 requests for arbitration through Lemon Law, and we returned more than \$18 million in value to consumers. In addition, we fined manufacturers more than \$500,000 for noncompliance.

Supporting Renters. In April 2025, we sued the software company RealPage and nine local landlords, alleging that RealPage software is central to a conspiracy among the landlords to rapidly increase rents. The lawsuit alleges that landlords use RealPage software to push rental prices beyond what they could otherwise achieve in a competitive market. The software also reduces the risk that other landlords will undercut them with affordable rates. Many tenants in Washington have been hurt by the inflated rents.

We chose to sue RealPage on our own, withdrawing from a case led by President Trump's Department of Justice. The federal government settled that case in November, but the settlement does not go far enough to fully address the scheme. This is why it's so important that Washington brought its own case. Our office will continue to ensure a competitive market and protect regular people from conspiracies and abuse.

"To this day, I have no idea how I did it for so long. And the most painful and revolting part of it is that all of the money I spent unnecessarily is now in the pockets of those who need it the least." - Chris Vialpando, a Seattle renter who said that his landlord, using RealPage software, hiked his rent more than 50% in late 2022.

The AG's office began enforcing Washington's landmark rent stabilization law, House Bill 1217, in May 2025. After opening dozens of investigations under the new law, we have secured refunds for hundreds of households for rent overpayment, and we successfully resolved cases with nearly 30 landlords.

One tenant wrote, "Thought you might be interested in the letter we received today with the good news our space rent is capped at 5%. Thank you, State of Washington!"

We also enforced the law against a senior living mobile home community renting lots to dozens of mobile homeowners in Spokane. The park issued notices of lease renewal and rent increase to all households, announcing a rent increase more than double the legal limit. The tenants organized themselves and attempted to resolve the unlawful increase with their landlord directly, but the landlord refused. **After we intervened, the landlord agreed to rescind the increase and to refund all tenants – resulting in approximately \$28,200 in canceled rent.**

Federal and state law protects military service members, but an investigation from our office found that two other rental companies, Greystar and Olympic Management, unlawfully charged fees when renters terminated their leases early due to deployment or other military orders. Following these investigations, Greystar agreed to fully refund all Washington service members, and to remove negative marks from their credit reports resulting from unlawful charges. Olympic Management also agreed to refund unlawful fees, including interest, to Washington service members. And under the agreements, both companies are barred from charging illegal early lease termination fees to service members in the future.

"I'm glad that my fellow service members and I will not be taken advantage of. I was very happy that the Attorney General's Office was able to help out." - U.S. Army Captain Steven Broyles, whose complaint to the AG's Office initiated the investigation.

Washington also sued Zillow and Redfin, alleging that they violated antitrust laws when they struck a deal in 2025 to cement Zillow's dominance in the market for online rental ads. Antitrust laws protect competition in the market, allowing consumers to benefit from lower prices and higher quality products. But Zillow and Redfin's deal effectively eliminated a major competitor for Zillow in the market for multifamily property rental listings, which hurts renters. Trial is anticipated to occur in 2026.

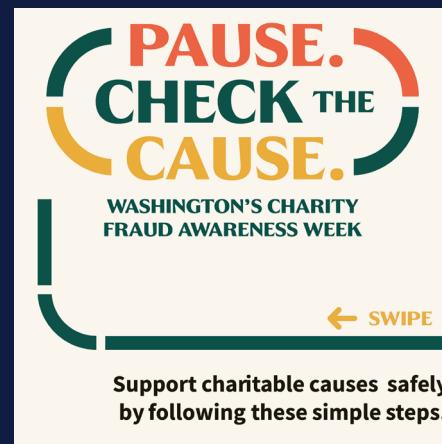
"I want to say thank you so much for helping with my lemon car and being treated fairly. Officially everything is done, they bought my car back and all the checks cleared my account loan. Thank you again. I would not be able to do that without your help."

– a Washingtonian helped by the program

Consumer Resource Center.

Our Consumer Resource Center helps consumers and businesses resolve disputes without going to court. In 2025, the Center fielded well over 40,000 consumer calls and complaints, and our informal complaint resolution process returned more than \$12 million in value to Washington consumers this year.

Pause. Check the Cause. This year was the 10th annual International Charity Fraud Awareness Week. This year, we joined with the Secretary of State to share information to help Washingtonians avoid deceptive or fraudulent charity solicitations. The campaign was called "Pause. Check the Cause."



Advancing Public Safety



“My dad was a master carver. There are two half-finished puppets my dad was carving, that were to be used as a means of Indian Storytelling. But that never got to happen. I just have half-finished carvings, that never got to become puppets and tell their stories. Indian artwork is a way for us to tell our stories. And his stories can no longer be told, and we will never be able to see any of my dad's artwork again. Silver engraving, masks, totem poles, rattles, prints. It's all silent now. I am thankful to the Attorney General's Office and the Cold Case Unit for their work.” - Maria David, George David's daughter

Image: George C. David, Friendship Mask (1984). Part of Washington's State Art Collection. Photo courtesy of the artist and the Washington State Arts Commission, 2022.

In 2023, the Legislature established the **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP) Cold Case Unit** at the AG's office. This is the first unit of its kind on the country. Its purpose is to review cold cases involving homicides and missing persons of indigenous ancestry, who go missing and are murdered at a higher rate than people of other demographics.

This year, the MMIWP Cold Case Unit solved and successfully prosecuted the 2016 murder of George David, a renowned woodcarver, a resident of Neah Bay, and a member of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation of Vancouver Island, B.C. Mr. David's murder was initially investigated by the Port Angeles Police Department in 2016, but there wasn't enough evidence to charge the crime. The MMIWP Cold Case Team conducted additional investigation resulting in DNA evidence identifying the person who committed David's murder.

The AG's office secured a conviction of second-degree murder with a sentence of more than 13 years.

Organized Retail Crime

We also successfully prosecuted organized retail theft crimes. In one case, our office prosecuted a defendant who used firearms and axes to force his way into businesses after hours to steal high value items. The defendant pleaded guilty to stealing more than \$750,000 in high-end sneakers and jewelry throughout King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties and was sentenced to 160 months in prison.

Supporting Law Enforcement

Our office supports law enforcement by taking on criminal cases where local prosecutors lack resources or have conflicts of interest. In 2025, we reviewed or prosecuted 74 criminal cases.

We also review and pursue civil commitment for sexually violent predators. In 2025, we litigated 116 matters involving sexually violent predators and will continue to rigorously enforce laws intended to keep dangerous predators out of our communities.

Funding for Law Enforcement

The AG's office provides advice to the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC), which establishes standards and provides training to local law enforcement across the state. In 2025, the AG's office advised the Commission on the rollout of a new program establishing \$100 million in funding to local law enforcement and first responders.

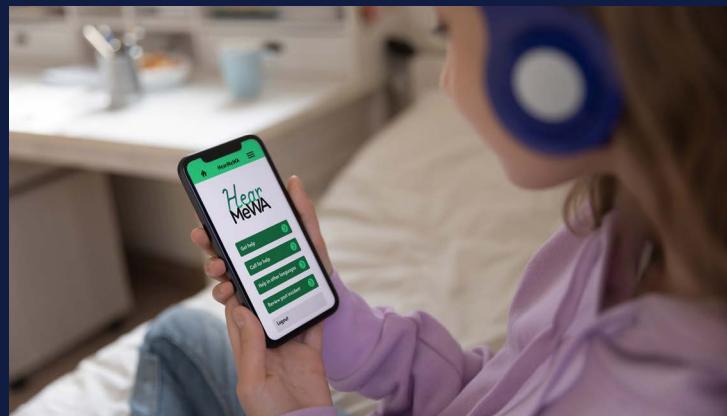
Gun Safety

The AG's office also successfully defended the Commission against a lawsuit filed by gun manufacturer Sig Sauer. Sig Sauer sued the Commission in July 2025, challenging its March 2025 decision to ban police departments from using a certain model of firearm. CJTC made the decision based on research showing the firearm was dangerous due to misfires. A court upheld the Commission's decision as appropriate and dismissed the case.

Providing Community Resources

HearMeWA is a safety and well-being helpline that provides free help to youth (up to the age of 25) by connecting them to existing support systems in their community. Through HearMeWA, our office receives and responds to a wide range of concerns including, but not limited to, bullying and cyberbullying, behavioral health, violence, and safety. It is a system built specifically to serve young people, designed with input from Washington youth. HearMeWA has responded to more than **270 contacts** since its launch in April 2024.

The HearMeWA team collaborates with state agencies, community-based organizations, youth, school districts, law enforcement agencies, and others. Overall, our HearMeWA team connected with nearly **400 organizations** and over **3,000 people** in 2025.



Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents Hotline

315 Reports

⊕ The hotline is scheduled to expand statewide in January 2027, supporting a coordinated, victim-centered approach.

19 Languages

⊕ Educational flyers and a hotline launch press release translated into 19 languages.

The Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents Hotline launched on July 1, 2025, as a pilot in King, Clark, and Spokane counties, and received 315 reports in 2025. The hotline is scheduled to expand statewide in January 2027, supporting a coordinated, victim-centered approach.

This year, our office sought to increase awareness, accessibility, and trust around reporting hate crimes and bias incidents. We collaborated with community-based organizations to develop culturally responsive, trauma-informed outreach materials, including educational flyers and a hotline launch press release translated into 19 languages. We also partnered with the Criminal Justice Training Commission to develop training for law enforcement on how to work with hotline staff to promote public safety and trust in law enforcement.

Legal Services for Veterans

176 calls

⊕ from veterans or their families for civil legal assistance.

Our office promotes and facilitates access to free civil legal services for Washington's current and former military service members. We recruit and train volunteer attorneys, maintain a registry of available services and volunteers, assess requests for legal assistance, and refer requests to registered volunteer attorneys and legal aid providers.

In 2025, we responded to 176 calls from veterans or their families for civil legal assistance.



Healthcare and Family



Supporting Children. The AG's office represents the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to protect vulnerable children, including kids in foster care. From July 2024 to June 2025, the office opened 1,480 new dependency cases and represented 2,244 children. Dependency cases are legal actions where the state steps in to protect a child from abuse, neglect, or abandonment. During the same timeframe, the office opened 446 new termination of parental rights cases, which represented 582 children, and opened 428 new guardianship cases, which represented 636 children.

The AG's office helped DCYF get the necessary court orders that helped a couple adopt three brothers whom they had fostered for more than three years. The brothers, who are of Haitian descent, found their home with a family in King County. The case was highlighted by the [Seattle Times on National Adoption Day](#).

Supporting Seniors. Our office represents the Department of Social and Health Services in their work to protect seniors. In 2025, we litigated 22 guardianships on behalf of people who are no longer able to protect their own health, safety, or finances and need the assistance of a substitute decision maker. We also litigated eight cases regarding vulnerable adult abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation; and handled nine long-term care licensing matters to ensure Washington's long-term care facilities meet applicable health and safety codes.



Supporting Quality Healthcare. Our office's Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Division investigates and prosecutes healthcare provider fraud committed against Washington's Medicaid program. We also investigate and pursue criminal and civil actions when patients are neglected or abused by caregivers. This year, we trained emergency departments around the state on how to identify and refer cases to our office related to abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults who reside in long-term care facilities in Washington state. Our goal is to bring awareness of our office's resources and authority, so we can better protect and support vulnerable Washingtonians.

Our office also represents numerous boards and commissions that regulate health care professionals. We work on dozens of cases each year that keep patients safe and ensure that licensed providers meet professional conduct standards. For example: Our office represented the Washington Medical Commission as they successfully revoked the medical license of a doctor who engaged in unprofessional conduct, including inaccurate charting, substandard physical exams, and putting his patients at risk through improper prescription of medication. This former physician was also convicted in 2021 of fraudulently seeking \$3.5 million in COVID-19 relief funds.

Improving Washington's Environment



First waste containers awaiting disposal at Hanford's Integrated Disposal Facility (vitrified waste cannisters then put into disposal vessels).

Photo credit: Ryan Miller,
Washington Department of Ecology

Cleaning up Hanford

The AG's office plays an important role in enforcing the cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. The nuclear weapons production that began at Hanford in the 1940s generated substantial amounts of radioactive and chemical waste and contaminated the land and groundwater, creating a legacy of nuclear waste. The most hazardous and radioactive waste, 56 million gallons, is stored in 177 underground tanks. All the tanks are well past their design life, some tanks are currently leaking, and at least 67 are assumed to have leaked in the past.

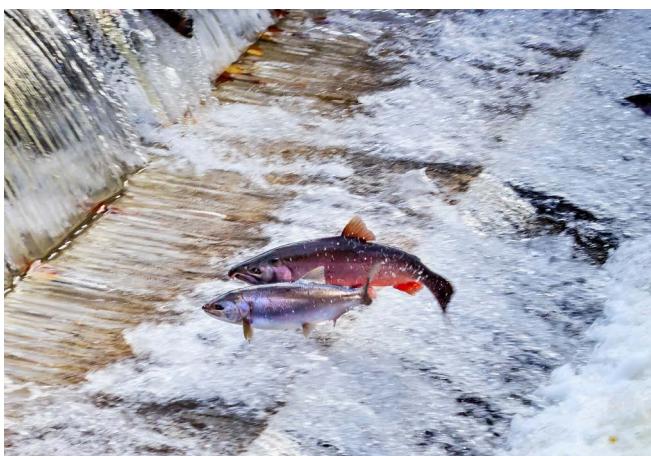
In October of this year, we met a major milestone of beginning the removal and treatment of certain kinds of dangerous waste through vitrification. Under enforcement by the state Department of Ecology, the United States Department of Energy began converting tank waste into a stabilized glass form. Once "glassified," the waste can be safely disposed of in a way that will no longer threaten the health of residents or the Columbia River.

This milestone was reached thanks to the work of our office representing the Department of Ecology. Assistant attorneys general instituted court actions and engaged in negotiations aimed at holding the federal government accountable for treating the waste.

Earlier this year, our office finalized a settlement agreement with the Department of Energy reached through a five-year mediation process. Called the "Holistic Negotiations Agreement," this agreement will ensure tank waste cleanup will continue to proceed under enforceable deadlines over the next several years.



Photo: Ryan Miller,
Washington Department of Ecology



Keeping Toxins Out of Our Water

The AG's office uses all available avenues to increase awareness about environmental protection and business' obligations under the law. For example, state and local agencies have recently found thousands of waste tires illegally dumped on public and private property—a crime under state law. Waste tires can release toxins, including a chemical called 6PPD-quinone, which is severely toxic to some species of salmon, especially Coho. In September, our office sent a letter to every tire shop in Washington reminding them of their obligations under state law: Anyone hired to transport, store, or dispose of waste tires must have a license. The letter encouraged recipients to obtain documented proof of a valid license from any vendor that transports, stores, or recycles waste tires that they do business with.

Supporting State Functions

The AG's office represents all state agencies, officers, and employees in claims and lawsuits seeking money damages in tort. Reaching reasonable settlements or successfully defending these matters in court saves taxpayer money. In FY2025, our office received 1,593 new tort claims and 518 new tort lawsuits. In 44% of these matters, the AG's office successfully defended the state from any financial obligation.

The AG's Bankruptcy and Collections Unit pursues money owed to Washington for delinquent sales and B&O taxes, industrial insurance premiums, and unemployment fund contributions. In FY 2025, the Bankruptcy and Collections Unit recovered nearly \$5.4 million for the state.

The AG's office supported the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in a critical bi-state and federal partnership to build a modern, earthquake resilient bridge across the Columbia River that will replace the current, aging bridge. Our office works with the Oregon Department of Justice and federal partners and advises WSDOT on compliance with state and federal environmental law, public records, real property, federal permitting, contracts, cooperative agreements, and tribal agreements.



2025 Staff Appointments & Awards

Kristin Brewer

- *Government Compliance & Enforcement*
Washington Bar Association's Angelo Petruss Award for Lawyers in Government Service

Paula Pera Czollak

- *Antitrust*
ABA's Top 40 Young Lawyers Award for 2025

Candie Dibble

- *Corrections/Spokane*
Spokane County Superior Court Judge

Kent Liu

- *Criminal Justice*
King County Superior Court Judge

Susan Llorens

- *Complex Litigation*
King County Superior Court Judge

Gauri Shrotriya Locker

- *Torts*
Washington State Women's Commission

Colleen Melody

- *Civil Rights*
Washington State Supreme Court Justice

Tienney Milnor

- *Criminal Justice*
Governor's Outstanding Leadership Award

Jonathan Pitel

- *Licensing & Administrative Law*
Washington Bar Association's Local Hero Award

Looking Ahead to 2026

In 2026, our office will continue its work to improve the lives of Washingtonians. We will continue to enforce Washington's strong civil rights, consumer, and worker protection laws. We will continue to hold the federal government accountable when they break the law and make sure Washington gets the federal funds we have been promised. And we will continue to provide high-quality, independent legal advice that helps state government work effectively.

In November 2025, we created a **Worker Rights Unit** to uphold Washington's nation-leading worker protections and to address wage theft. In 2026, we will hire a leader for this new team, and it will begin its work. We hired the office's first-ever Chief Transparency Counsel in late 2025, who will lead the new **Public Records and Open Government Unit**. The Unit's tasks are to modernize public records and retention processes, enhance staff training on open government issues, improve our own office's practices in responding to public records requests, and continuously boost transparency and efficiency.

In 2026, we will work for you, the people of Washington. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership.

For Washingtonians who need help on an issue handled by our office, check out these simple explainers to help Washingtonians know their rights. They can be found here: <https://www.atg.wa.gov/publications-reports>.

Or contact our office here: <https://www.atg.wa.gov/contactus.aspx>.



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<https://www.atg.wa.gov/contact-us>



For more info, visit
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