

Iowa Department of Justice

THE MISSION

The Iowa Department of Justice is responsible for one of the core functions of government: administering justice. It fulfills this mission by prosecuting crime; by representing state agencies and the official work of state officers and employees; by providing civil justice for defrauded Iowans; and by assisting victims of violent crime.

THE PEOPLE

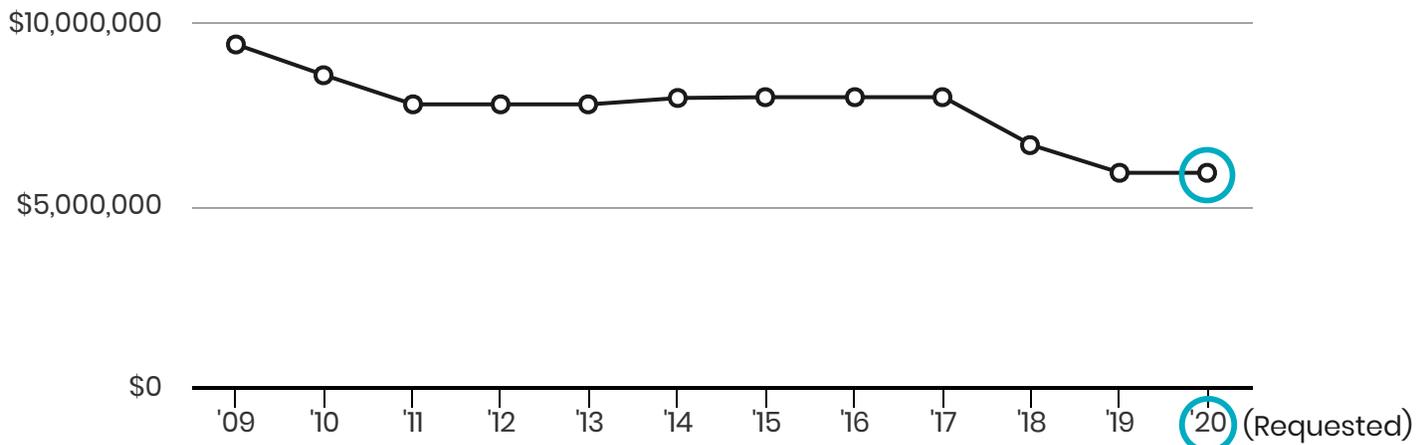
The Attorney General is an elected constitutional officer who leads the Department of Justice. The Department employs 215 attorneys, investigators, and support staff who serve all 99 counties.

THE BUDGET

Over the past decade, the Department's budget has been cut to the bone. While Department lawyers continue to provide excellent advice and representation on behalf of the State, the Department cannot withstand any additional reductions. Appropriations to the Department are spent almost entirely on personnel and additional cuts will have serious consequences to the citizens of Iowa, including victims of crime.

- As the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) noted in its 2018 budget brief, the Department "has little discretion in spending [appropriated money]": the Department "must spend it for its required purpose."
- General-fund dollars appropriated to the Department are used on core functions of government: representing the State and fighting crime.

37% Decrease in State Appropriations Since FY 2009

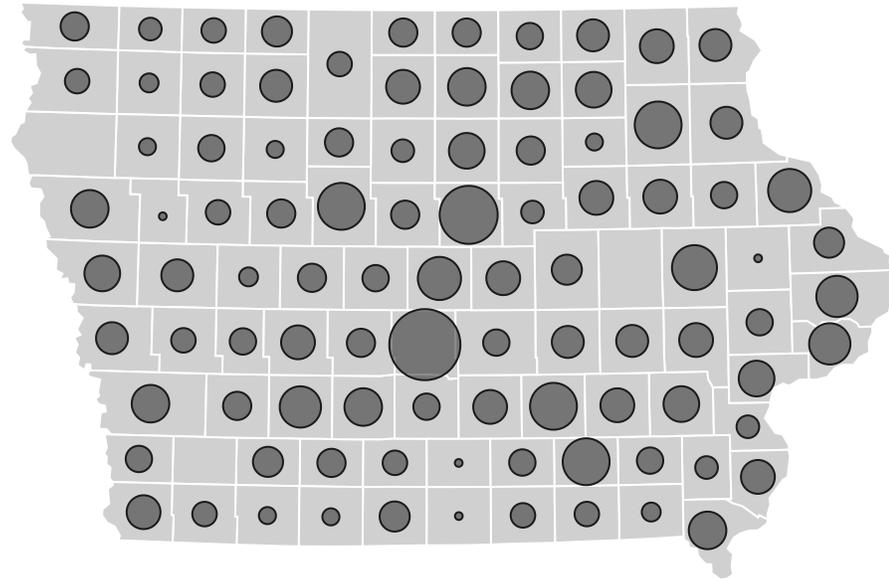


APPROPRIATIONS

In light of the governor's request, the Department of Justice is requesting a status quo budget for FY 2020. Over the past two years, the Department has (with legislative approval) transferred money from the Consumer Education and Litigation fund to pay for attorneys who prosecute criminal trials and appeals or represent the State in civil litigation. Using restricted funds to pay for core government functions is an unsustainable and irregular budget practice. The consumer fund pays out \$2 million for consumer protection efforts each year; if an additional \$1.5 million is taken out every year, the Department cannot continue to adequately protect Iowans.

Statewide Criminal Prosecutions

Prosecution of Complex Felonies. Though most routine criminal cases are handled by local county attorneys, complex cases are frequently referred to the Department's area prosecutors. These veteran trial attorneys have specialized training and prosecute multiple Class A and Class B felonies to verdict each year, with a particular focus on homicides, crimes against children, and sexually violent predators.



In 2018:

- 32 cases tried to verdict in 27 counties
- 106 new cases opened
- 28 defendants charged with murder
- 23 defendants charged with an element of sexual abuse
- Cases pending in 67 counties



968 cases filed across 96 counties from 2013 - 2018

Criminal Appeals

Protecting Criminal Convictions and Handling Statewide Appeals. The Department's Criminal Appeals Division represents the State in cases filed by offenders convicted in all 99 counties. These appellate prosecutors collectively file more than 600 briefs per year and argue dozens of cases before the Iowa Supreme Court, Iowa Court of Appeals, and Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

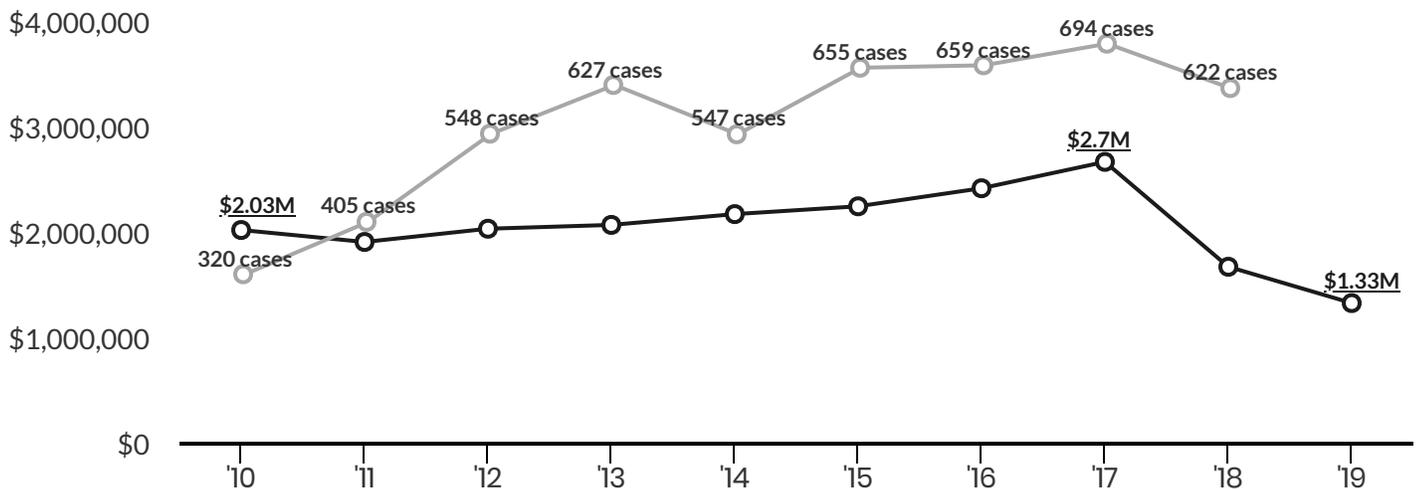


50% Decrease in State Appropriations Since SFY 2017



94% Increase in Number of Cases Since 2010

State Appropriations to Criminal Appeals & Number of Cases



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Representing the State

By law, the Department of Justice has a duty to represent the State in litigation. The Department's work in this area generally falls into three areas:

- 1 Defending State Agencies, Officers, and Employees.** These Department lawyers function like an in-house civil-defense law firm, representing the State of Iowa and state officers or employees who are sued in their official capacity.
 - The Department provides quality representation in cases that range from routine slip-and-fall matters in state-owned buildings, to complex cases that claim state actors discriminated against job applicants, to claims by prison inmates alleging denial of religious freedom.
 - The Department handles a growing number of increasingly complex employment cases. As the Iowa Supreme Court hands down new interpretations of employment law, the Department's workload expands. Furthermore, the Department continues to see a rise in jury awards.
- 2 Defending Legislation.** The Department also has a duty to defend lawfully enacted legislation and regularly does so in state and federal court. These cases frequently involve complicated issues of constitutional law and appellate litigation before the Iowa Supreme Court.
- 3 Advising State Agencies.** The Department's team of administrative-law and licensing attorneys provides daily advice to more than 200 state boards, commissions, agencies, and departments. These lawyers also prosecute cases before the boards and commissions, collect delinquent child support, and represent boards and commissions when agency decisions or rules are challenged in Iowa courts.

Consumer Protection

In years past, the Consumer Protection Division was funded by state appropriations. Now it is fully funded by consumer judgments and settlements, requiring no taxpayer money. This efficient division handles an increasing load of complaints, difficult cases, and direct consumer education across the entire state. By targeting bad actors who defraud consumers for their own profit, the office protects consumers, serves the vast majority of businesses who follow the law, and ensures a fair marketplace.

Consumer Stories

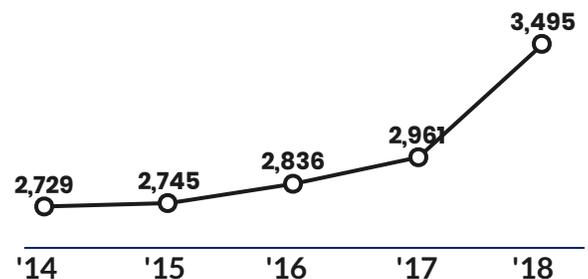


A 72-year-old woman in Washington, Iowa, was recovering in the hospital when she was duped into signing a car loan. When the loan went to collections, she asked the Attorney General's Office for help. The bank ultimately forgave the \$10,000 loan.



A 64-year-old man in Sheffield, Iowa, purchased a custom-fit holster from Wild Guns Leather Company in Yoakum, Texas. After a year and a half of delays, he filed a complaint with the Attorney General's Office. An investigator pursued the case and the company soon sent the holster.

28% Increase in Consumer Complaints since 2014

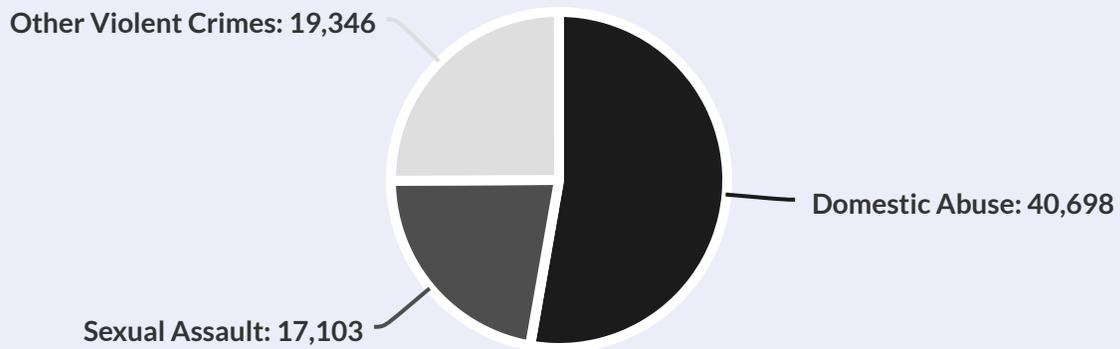


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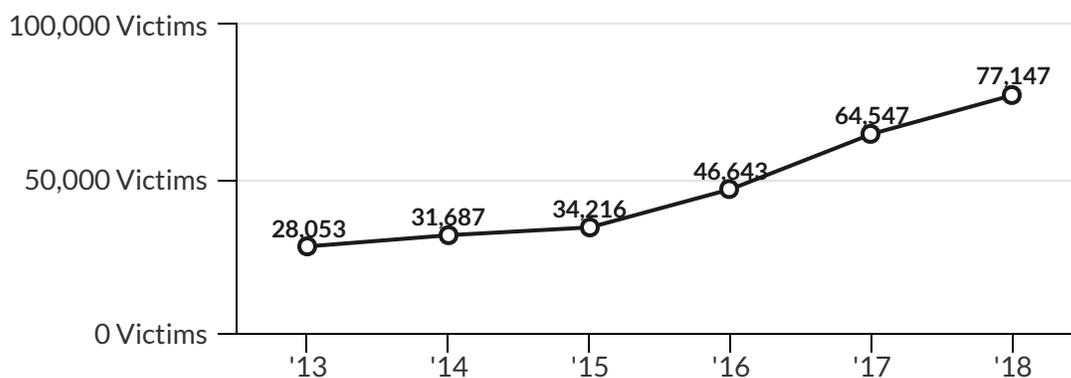
Crime Victim Assistance

The **Crime Victim Assistance Division** administers programs that directly benefit victims of violent crime. These programs assist victims with the financial burden resulting from injuries of crime, support local crime victim services, and hold offenders responsible for the effects of their crimes. In the General Fund budget, Victim Assistance Grants are listed as a separate line item. In FY 2018, that line item totaled \$5,016,708. The amount remains stationary at \$5,016,708 in FY 2019 (estimated) and in the Governor's budget request for FY 2020.

In FY 2018, victim service programs served 77,147 lowans.



175% More Victims Served Since FY 2013



9,990 lowans volunteered 275,138 hours to victim service programs in FY 2018, equivalent to 132 full-time staff.

Iowa Department of Justice Office of the Attorney General

