



Office for Access to Justice (ATJ)

FY 2022 Budget Request At A Glance

FY 2021 Enacted:	\$0.0 million
Current Services Adjustments:	+\$0
Program Changes:	+\$6.0 million
FY 2022 Budget Request:	\$6.0 million (8 positions; 6 attorneys)
Change From FY 2021 Enacted:	+\$6.0 million (+8 positions; +6 attorneys)

Mission:

The primary mission of the Office for Access to Justice (ATJ) will be to help the justice system efficiently deliver outcomes that are fair and accessible to all, irrespective of wealth and status. Additionally, the ATJ will promote uniformity of Department of Justice and government-wide policies relating to equal access to justice, and examine proposed legislation, rules, and other policies to ensure access to justice principles are properly considered.

Organization:

The ATJ will serve as the U.S. Government's central authority on access to justice, promote inclusive and equal justice for all, and help to solve limitations of legal representation throughout the criminal and civil legal systems. The ATJ will lead Federal Government efforts in cross-agency, State, local and third-party collaborations protecting the rights for low- and middle- income and underserved communities within America's legal systems. The ATJ will staff the Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable (LAIR), which the Attorney General will co-chair. The LAIR fosters innovative interagency collaborations among Federal agencies, and facilitates non-governmental partnerships to more effectively support underserved individuals and address legal aid issues throughout the Federal Government.

Resources:

The FY 2022 budget request for ATJ totals \$6.0 million. This is a new program for FY 2022.

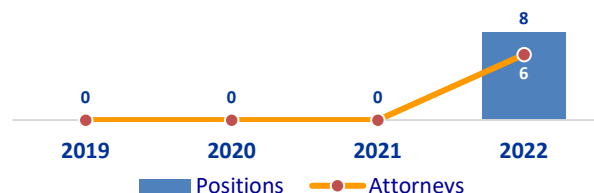
Personnel:

The ATJ's direct authorized positions for FY 2022 total 8 positions, including an increase of 8 positions over the FY 2021 Enacted of 0 direct authorized positions. FY 2022 includes a minimum of eight positions, eight FTE, currently estimated to include six attorneys and two support positions. Final staffing, including distribution of resources between attorney and support positions, will be determined by the Attorney General's plan in accordance with the memoranda issued by the President and the Attorney General on May 18, 2021.

Funding (FY 2019 - 2022)



Personnel (FY 2019 - 2022)



FY 2022 Strategy:

The ATJ aims to narrow the current inequality in the justice system and ensure all Americans have access to adequate legal representation regardless of social and economic factors. There are millions of people in the United States who cannot get legal assistance. With approximately 34 million Americans living in poverty per the 2019 census reports, the ATJ sets to ensure that all Americans not only are able to obtain legal representation but also fair, timely, and equitable justice in both the criminal and civil legal systems. The ATJ's strategies to achieve this is through the advancement of new statutory, policy, and practice changes that support development of quality indigent defense and civil legal aid delivery systems at the State and Federal level; promotion of less lawyer-intensive and court-intensive solutions to legal problems; and expansion of research on innovative strategies to close the gap between the need for, and the availability of, quality legal assistance.

Further, as part of the ATJ program, the LAIR will leverage resources to strengthen Federal programs by incorporating legal aid to help the vulnerable and underserved communities. The LAIR will also develop policy recommendations that improve access to justice in Federal, State, local, tribal, and international jurisdictions; facilitate strategic partnerships to achieve Federal enforcement and outreach objectives; advance evidence-based research, data collection, and analysis of civil legal aid and indigent defense; and publicize best practices.

By working with Federal agencies and State, local, and tribal stakeholders, the ATJ is able to increase access to legal assistance and improve the justice delivery systems that serve people who are unable to afford lawyers.

FY 2022 Program Changes:

Access to Justice Programs: \$6.0 million and 8 positions (6 attorneys)

This request is to reinvigorate the Access to Justice program and re-establish its own office to address access to justice in the criminal and civil justice systems. The current gap in justice is a persistent problem that not only has lasted for decades but is expected to worsen due to the impact of COVID-19 as more people continue to lose jobs and face evictions. The ATJ will serve as the Department's legal and policy advisor on all access to justice matters, including issues involving the Constitutional Sixth Amendment right to counsel. As its own office, the ATJ will lead coordination and collaboration efforts among Department components; Federal, State, local and tribal partners; and indigent defense and civil legal aid organizations to identify and develop programs, policies, initiatives, and activities that address and alleviate existing barriers to justice. This increase includes a minimum of eight positions, currently estimated to include six attorneys and two support positions. Final staffing, including distribution of resources between attorney and support positions, will be determined by the Attorney General's plan in accordance with the memoranda issued by the President and the Attorney General on May 18, 2021. There are no current services for this program.

Office for Access to Justice
(Dollars in Thousands)

	Office for Access to Justice		
	Pos	FTE	Amount
2020 Appropriation	0	0	0
2021 Enacted	0	0	0
2022 Request	8	8	6,000
Change 2022 from 2021 Enacted	8	8	6,000
Technical Adjustments			
Total Technical Adjustments	0	0	0
Base Adjustments			
Total Base Adjustments	0	0	0
2022 Current Services	0	0	0
Program Changes			
Increases:			
Access to Justice Programs	8	8	6,000
Subtotal, Program Increases	8	8	6,000
Decreases:			
Subtotal, Program Decreases	0	0	0
Total Program Changes	8	8	6,000
2022 Request	8	8	6,000

Note: The FY 2022 program increase includes a minimum of eight positions, eight FTE, currently estimated to include six attorneys and two support positions. Final staffing, including distribution of resources between attorney and support positions, will be determined by the Attorney General's plan following the review process directed by the Attorney General's May 18, 2021 Memorandum entitled *Access to Justice*.

Office for Access to Justice
(Dollars in Thousands)

Comparison by activity and program	2021 Enacted			2022 Current Services		
	Pos.	FTE	Amount	Pos.	FTE	Amount
Access to Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0

Comparison by activity and program	2022 Total Program Changes			2022 Request		
	Pos.	FTE	Amount	Pos.	FTE	Amount
Access to Justice	8	8	6,000	8	8	6,000
Total	8	8	6,000	8	8	6,000

Note: The FY 2022 program increase includes a minimum of eight positions, eight FTE, currently estimated to include six attorneys and two support positions. Final staffing, including distribution of resources between attorney and support positions, will be determined by the Attorney General's plan following the review process directed by the Attorney General's May 18, 2021 Memorandum entitled *Access to Justice*.