



Office for Access to Justice (ATJ)

FY 2025 Budget Request At A Glance	
FY 2024 Continuing Resolution:	\$10.0 million (42 positions; 22 attorneys)
Current Services Adjustments:	+\$463,000
Program Changes:	+\$0
FY 2025 Budget Request:	\$10.5 million (42 positions; 22 attorneys)
Change From FY 2024 Continuing Resolution:	+\$463,000 (+4.6%)

Mission:

The Office for Access to Justice (ATJ) works to break down barriers to the Department of Justice’s founding principle: equal justice under law. The ATJ’s mission is to ensure, for all communities, access to the promises and protections of our civil and criminal legal systems. The ATJ aims to achieve this by enhancing access to courts and legal systems through legal assistance and counsel; pursuing data-driven and innovative strategies informed by stakeholders for judicial process improvement; and advocating for integrity, efficiency, accountability, fairness, and reform of legal systems to allow for a more holistic and equitable administration of justice.

Organization:

The ATJ serves as the Federal Government’s central authority on access to justice matters, promotes inclusive and equal justice for all, and helps to solve limitations of legal representation throughout the criminal and civil legal systems. The ATJ leads Federal Government efforts in cross-agency, State, local, tribal and third-party collaborations protecting the rights for low- and middle-income and underserved communities within America’s legal systems. It facilitates these partnerships to strengthen how the Federal Government effectively addresses access to justice issues.

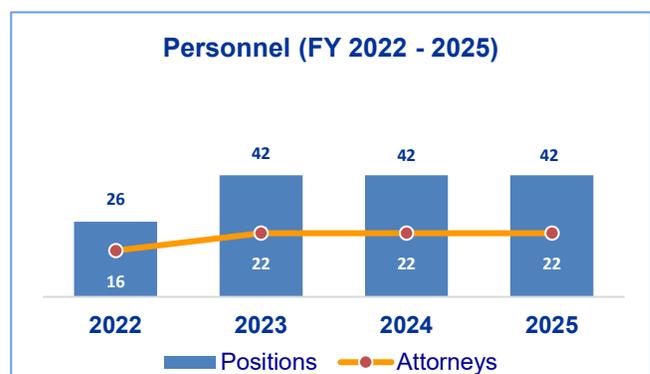
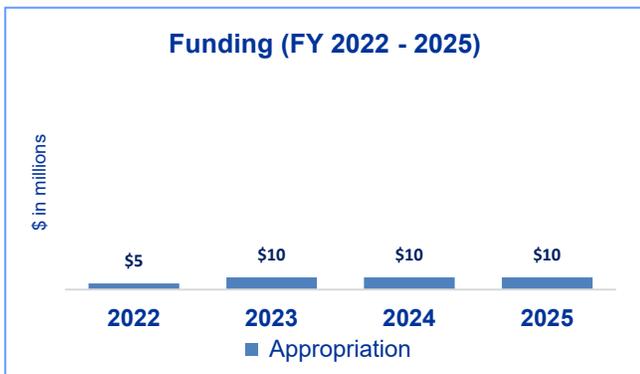
The ATJ directs and staffs the Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable (LAIR), which fosters innovative collaboration among over 28 Federal agencies. Among other initiatives, the ATJ also houses the Department of Justice’s Language Access Program and the Pro Bono Program. Finally, the ATJ serves as an authority on access to justice issues before international organizations and assists with the U.S. Government’s efforts to implement United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, ensuring equal access to justice for all, and building transparent institutions.

Resources:

The FY 2025 budget request for ATJ totals \$10.5 million, which is a 4.6 percent increase over the FY 2024 Continuing Resolution.

Personnel:

The ATJ’s direct authorized positions for FY 2025 total 42 positions and are the same as FY 2024 Continuing Resolution.



FY 2025 Strategy:

The ATJ aims to reduce inequality in the justice system, ensuring all Americans have access to legal help, and to the promises and protections of our legal systems regardless of social, racial, and economic factors. There is a significant gap in the ability of low- and moderate-income communities to obtain legal help in the United States, especially in rural areas. In 2020, 40 percent of counties in the United States had fewer than one attorney per 1,000 residents. Many had none at all. With approximately 37.9 million people living in poverty per the 2022 census, the ATJ works to ensure that all communities are able to obtain both legal assistance as well as fair, timely, and equitable justice in both the criminal and civil legal systems.

The ATJ will achieve this through advancing new statutory, policy, and practice changes that support the development of high quality indigent defense and civil legal aid systems at the State and Federal levels, as well as supporting legal solutions that are less lawyer- and court-intensive.

The ATJ will continue to engage with stakeholders across both governmental and non-governmental organizations to enhance language access throughout legal systems and expand innovative strategies to close the gap between the need for, and the availability of, quality legal assistance. By working with these stakeholders, the ATJ can reduce barriers that will improve the justice delivery systems that serve all people nationwide.

The ATJ will also leverage resources to strengthen Federal programs that help vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved communities. Through its work with LAIR, the ATJ will develop policy recommendations that improve access to justice in Federal, State, local, and tribal jurisdictions; facilitate strategic partnerships, domestically and globally, 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.

FY 2025 Program Changes:

The budget proposal includes funds for current services for the ATJ. No program changes are requested.

Office for Access to Justice
(Dollars in Thousands)

	Office for Access to Justice		
	Pos	FTE	Amount
2023 Appropriation^{1/}	42	17	10,015
2024 Continuing Resolution	42	34	10,015
2025 Request	42	42	10,478
Change 2025 from 2024 Continuing Resolution	0	8	463
Technical Adjustments			
Additional Amount for 2024 Pay Raise	0	8	170
Total Technical Adjustments	0	8	170
Base Adjustments			
Pay & Benefits	0	0	286
Domestic Rent & Facilities	0	0	7
Total Base Adjustments	0	0	293
2025 Current Services	42	42	10,478
Program Changes			
Increases:			
Subtotal, Program Increases	0	0	0
Decreases:			
Subtotal, Program Decreases	0	0	0
Total Program Changes	0	0	0
2025 Request	42	42	10,478

Office for Access to Justice
(Dollars in Thousands)

Comparison by activity and program	2024 Continuing Resolution			2025 Current Services		
	Pos.	FTE	Amount	Pos.	FTE	Amount
Access to Justice	42	34	10,015	42	42	10,478
Total	42	34	10,015	42	42	10,478
Total Direct and Reimbursable	42	34	10,015	42	42	10,478

Comparison by activity and program	2025 Total Program Changes			2025 Request		
	Pos.	FTE	Amount	Pos.	FTE	Amount
Access to Justice	0	0	0	42	42	10,478
Total	0	0	0	42	42	10,478
Reimbursable FTE	0	1	0	0	1	0
Total Direct and Reimbursable	0	1	0	42	43	10,478