

Sauk County, Wisconsin
Corporation Counsel Annual Report

2013 Mission: Provide professional legal services to Sauk County government, including the Board of Supervisors, committees, departments, and connected boards and commissions, as well as providing legal representation of the public interest in statutorily and contractually defined areas.

Vision: Provide legal advice and guidance to County officials to assist them in making policy decisions, and provide the legal support to the organization to facilitate and carry out those decisions.

Departmental Program Summary:

The work of the Corporation Counsel's Office is broken down into four separate program areas described below:

General Government Legal Services: Involves providing civil legal advice and representation across the spectrum of the County to include reviewing and drafting contracts, leases, ordinances, resolutions, court pleadings and other legal documents. The office represents the County in litigation including the enforcement of the Code of Ordinances and other matters, and serves as ethics advisor to employees and elected officials, and reviews and defends claims filed against the County.

Department of Human Services: Legal support to the Department includes representing the public interest in involuntarily mental commitments and the DHS as petitioner in guardianship and protective placement actions, children in need of protection and services cases (CHIPS) and termination of parental rights (TPR) cases.

Labor-management Relations: The office represents the County in all labor/management relations matters to include serving as alternate spokesperson and legal advisor during negotiation sessions, representing the County in arbitrations and other proceedings before the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, equal employment matters, and litigation resulting from labor relations issues.

Child Support Enforcement: One Assistant Corporation Counsel is assigned full time to providing legal services for the Child Support Agency on a contract basis. This attorney handles enforcement of child support obligations through judicial action, establishment of paternity, and related collection matters.

2013 Goals Review:

2013 GOALS REVIEW

OBJECTIVE	WAS THIS OBJECTIVE REACHED IN 2013?
	Yes or No (If no, please provide comment)
100% of juvenile matter referrals with statutory timelines completed within those requirements; 90% of all other DHS referrals completed within two weeks or less.	Yes
90% of legal opinions completed within two weeks or status update given.	Yes
100% of all referred emergency detentions to be completed as is most appropriate within statutory requirements.	Yes

The Year in Review:

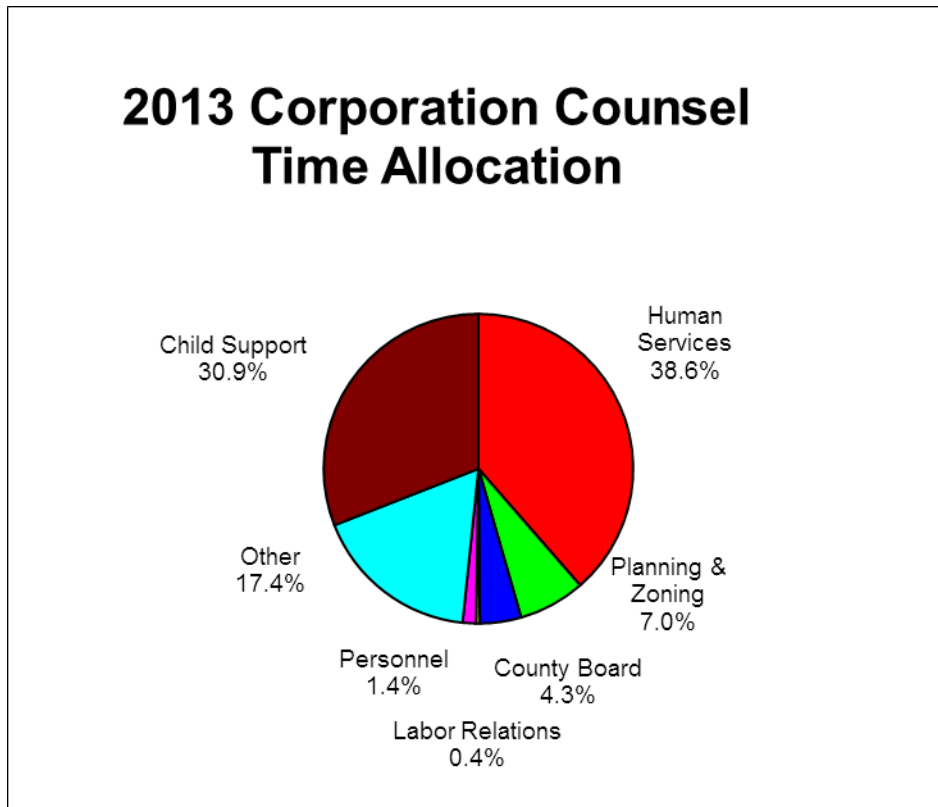
A significant highlight of 2013 was the substantial completion of the first comprehensive revision of the County’s zoning code with the office providing all legal counsel and drafting assistance in this major effort. The Corporation Counsel serves as legal counsel to the UW Baraboo-Sauk County Campus Commission, and 2013 saw major progress toward a public/private venture to construct and operate the campus’s first residence hall and the hiring of an architect for construction of a new science building, with this office providing all the legal support to these major projects. The case of *Sauk Co. v. U.S. Department of the Interior* which was pending in Federal District Court was settled resulting in a victory for Sauk County in asserting its rights under the Freedom of Information Act and in obtaining needed Federal Government records related to trust land. The office drafted the first ordinance providing for the designation of ATV and UTV routes. The Corporation Counsel testified before both Assembly and Senate Committees of the State Legislature to oppose detrimental changes to mental health law, and worked with legislators from both parties to draft legislation that was not detrimental to Wisconsin counties. All attorneys in the office were involved in presenting meaningful training to various County departments and other entities. Comprehensive training in a variety of legal areas was provided to the Sheriff’s Department, and training was also provided to other law enforcement officers for other agencies. Patent trolling litigation was successfully concluded and MIS contracts were reviewed to avoid future problems

Changes/Accomplishments:

The accomplishments of this office are highlighted in the year in review section. In sum, providing legal support to new and innovative projects, achieving the County’s objectives in Federal litigation, and providing legal support to the County in the myriad of programs that serve the public is the *raison d’être* of the office. We continued to set the statewide standard in handling juvenile matters and providing dedicated legal support to the Child Support Agency. The changes manifest in society impact the office in many ways, including the aging population, mobility of families in crisis, and economic challenges. Venue transfers in guardianships and

diverse locations of parents in juvenile matters highlight just some of the areas where complexity is increasing. To address these issues, we have emphasized training to law enforcement and human services workers and prioritized work in the office to achieve objectives. Residual impacts of the recession have impacted tax delinquent properties, and limited budgets have encouraged the County to pursue transactions that leverage public assets and attract private investment. An aggressive and united legislature has attempted to address issues in a manner that has not always considered the impact of changes on counties, and this office has responded in concert with the Wisconsin Counties Association, professional and advocacy groups to make the concerns of county government heard. The office continues to serve the County as its comprehensive in-house legal department while protecting public health, safety and welfare through the myriad of civil law matters the office is statutorily responsible for.

Statistical Summary:



ACTIONS	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Legal Opinions Rendered	136	219	228	273	260	300	389
Guardianship/Prot. Plcmnt. Hrgs.	35	34	43	77	52	59	63
Mental Commitment Detentions	242	216	224	182	145	134	99
Mental Commitment Hearings/Stips	186	173	154	166	138	112	114
Prot. Plcmnt. Reviews	98	91	85	87	90	84	87
TPR/CHIPs Cases Filed	98	92	93	96	112	130	116
TPR/CHIPs Hearings	151	105	106	82	82	89	70

OUTPUT MEASURES

DESCRIPTION	2011 ACTUAL	2012 ACTUAL	2013 ACTUAL
Guardianship/Protective Placement Hearings & WATTs Reviews	142	143	150
Mental Commitment Hearings	138	112	114

OUTCOME AND EFFICIENCY MEASURES

DESCRIPTION	2011 ACTUAL	2012 ACTUAL	2013 ACTUAL
Legal Opinions Rendered (90% of actions completed or status report given within two weeks)	260 - 99% of goals met	300 – 99% of goals met	389 - 99% of goals met
TPR/CHIPs Hearings & Filings (100% of actions followed through to completion)	194 - 100% of goals met	219 – 100% of goals met	186 - 100% of goals met
Mental Commitments (100% of actions followed through to completion)	145 - 100% of goals met	134 – 100% of goals met	114- 100% of goals met
Violations - P&Z, PH, Parks (90% of cases to gain compliance with Ordinance Code w/i 2 weeks or status/follow-through until compliance reached)	19 actions – 100% of goals met	25 actions – 100% of goals met	22 actions – 100% of goals met