



## State's Attorney's Office

Kimberlee J. Hegvik  
State's Attorney

### MEMO

TO: County Commission

FROM: Kimberlee J. Hegvik, Cass County State's Attorney

Date: April 2, 2025

Subject: Mid-Year Attorney FTE Position Request

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Members of the Cass County Commission:

I am requesting a mid-year budget adjustment to add a Senior Assistant State's Attorney to my staff. This position is classified as D62A. Below is the cost estimate provided by the finance office:

- Senior Attorney D62A Step 1--\$154,285
- Justification—adequate staffing to perform core office duties while meeting attorney ethical obligations and supporting a healthy working environment.
  - Caseloads in Cass County remain high. We handle approximately 26 regularly scheduled court sessions per week. That number will increase when the new courtroom is completed.
  - Technology continues to advance. The vast majority of local law enforcement agencies are now fully equipped with body and squad car cameras. Downloading information from cell phones is now common-place in criminal investigations. These advances have created significantly larger amounts of data and evidence to review than we have experienced in the past.
  - Cass County's population continues to increase, and with it so do crime rates.
  - Cass County has seen a significant increase in jury trials in 2025. This year my office has tried 11 jury trials—more than were tried in all of 2024. Causes include increased case filings, less experienced defense and prosecution attorneys, and defendants with increasing mental health needs and substance use disorders.
  - National consultants identified a disproportionate workload on the personal crimes teams. Since that time, my office has taken many steps to redistribute work. Redistribution has not been able to solve what many attorneys in my office have described as “unsustainable” workloads.
  - Performance appraisal feedback from attorneys has indicated they feel overwhelmed and unable to maintain a healthy work life balance or take annual leave.
  - A Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) will be starting in Cass County. The Commission indicated it supported creation of the VTC but would not be providing financial support. However, the VTC will require representation from my office.
  - Manpower projection for 2026 included the addition of another FTE attorney for 2026.
  - A review of other regional prosecutors' offices found that Cass County's number of citizens per attorney is significantly higher than comparison offices.

**SUGGESTED MOTION:** Authorize an additional Attorney FTE position for the Cass County State's Attorney's Office.

**Comparison of Regional Prosecution Offices**

<b>Cass County</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 9,523 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: Approx 200,000	21 Total		No
	1 Elected		
	1 Civil		
	16 Criminal		
	3 Child Welfare/Zone		

<b>Grand Forks County</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 5,816 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: Approx 72,700	12.5 Total		No
	1 Elected		
	2.5 Civil		
	11 Criminal		

<b>Burleigh County</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 5,567 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: Approx 103,000	18.5 Total	*due to staffing issues Burleigh currently has 14 attorneys, which is reflected in unfilled/unknown category	No
	1 Elected		
	11 Criminal		
	2 Child Welfare/Juvenile		
	*4.5 Unfilled/Unknown		

<b>Minnehaha County SD</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 4,811 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: 202,078	42 Total		Yes
	31 Criminal		--The Prosecutor by Karpel Systems
	4 Juvenile/Child Welfare		
	7 Civil		
	4 Juvenile/Child Welfare		

<b>Billings</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 4,337 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: 117,116	27 Total		No
	1 Elected		
	22 Criminal		
	4 Civil		

<b>Missoula</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 4,841 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: 121,041	25 Total		Unknown
	16 Criminal		
	9 Civil		

<b>Laramie</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 10,000 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: 100,000	10 Total		Yes and No
	8 Criminal		
	2 Float/Misc		

<b>Scott County MN</b>	Attorneys	1 Attorney per 6,038 Citizens	Paperless?
Pop: approx. 157,000	26 Total		No
	11 Criminal		
	8 Civil/Family		
	7 Unknown		