



# Department of the Month

## Office of the City Attorney

### COMING IN OCTOBER: City Attorney's Office, Part 2!

# Office of City Attorney Has 3 Main Directives

City Attorney Rockard J. Delgadillo was selected by the people of Los Angeles to serve as the chief legal adviser and prosecutor for the City of Los Angeles. The Office of the City Attorney is the largest municipal law office in the nation, with more than 500 attorneys practicing both criminal and civil law and more than 500 support staff.

#### 1 DIRECTIVE 1: Criminal Prosecutions

The City Attorney is the chief prosecutor for the City of Los Angeles with jurisdiction to prosecute all misdemeanor criminal offenses and infractions occurring in the City of Los Angeles. The Office of the City Attorney reviews more than 135,000 misdemeanor criminal cases annually, with a conviction rate of greater than 90 percent. Additionally, the City Attorney administers a number of Citywide crime prevention initiatives focused on proactively addressing criminal problems and preserving the quality of life throughout Los Angeles's neighborhoods, including the

Neighborhood Prosecutor Program and the Citywide Nuisance Abatement Program.

#### 2 DIRECTIVE 2: Legal Counsel

The City Attorney is the chief legal adviser and general counsel to the Mayor and City Council, as well as all boards, departments and officers in the City of Los Angeles. As General Counsel, the City Attorney provides advice and opinions on matters of municipal concern, drafts contracts and ordinances and approves them as to form and legality, and is frequently called upon to interpret the City Charter, federal and state statutes, and other laws that govern Los Angeles.

#### 3 DIRECTIVE 3: Civil Law

The City Attorney also litigates all civil actions on behalf of the City and represents the City, its boards and officers in all civil trials and legal proceedings in local, state and federal court.



From left: Claudia Henry, Sr. Assistant City Attorney; Katherine Hamilton, Assistant City Attorney, 25 years; Candice Horikawa, DCA, 29 years; Katherine Mackenzie, DCA, 20 years; Renee Rich, DCA, 1.5 years; Kim Rodgers Westhoff, DCA, 5.5 years; and Sunnie Lee Daniels, DCA, 5 years.



Guadalupe Lopez, Legal Secretary II, 5 years.



Front, from left: Helen Rogers, DCA, 4.5 years; Maria Sarmiento-Arias, Witness Coordinator, 25 years; Jina Kim, DCA, 5.5 years; Felicia Nguyen, DCA, 2.5 years; and Gina Lee, DCA, 2.5 years. Back: Travis Austin, DCA, 3 years; and Greg Dorfman, DCA, 4 years.



From left: Nora Manzanilla, Tobacco Enforcement Program, 3.5 years; and Ana Johnson, Legal Secretary II, 2.5 years.



From left: Keith De La Rosa, DCA, 17 years; Elizabeth Calles, Investigator, 2 years; Don Kass, Supervising Attorney, 20 years; Christopher Garcia, DCA, 5 years; Patrick Shibuya, DCA, 18 years; and Chris Sanchez, Legal Secretary, 35 years.



From left: Barbara Jolly; Sue L. Frauens (sitting) and Jeanne Di Conti.



From left: Jeanie Lewin, DCA, 3.5 years; Del C. San Juan, Assistant Supervising Attorney, 15 years; Juliann Anderson, DCA, 1.5 years; and Matthew Schonbrun, DCA, 2 years.



Rosemarie Cabrera, Sr. Legal Clerk, 18 years.



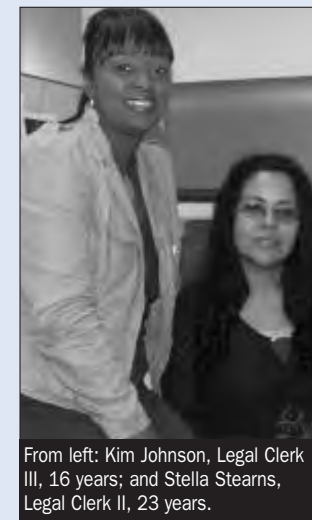
Regina Mills, DCA, 6 years.



Gabriel Sandoval, Directing DCA, 8 months.



Linda Escobedo, Legal Secretary (sitting) and Martha Egre, SR Legal Clerk.



From left: Kim Johnson, Legal Clerk III, 16 years; and Stella Stearns, Legal Clerk II, 23 years.



Rhonda Pantellas, DCA, less than one year (standing), and Nicholas Karno, DCA, 4 years.



Standing, from left: Tony King, Tom Rujan, Kathy Lanning, Thelma Flock, Lurenza Cooper, Genice Jones, Patricia Toliver and Robyn Verdne. In front: Diane Davenport and Bill Dykens.



From left: Margarita Barron, Paralegal; Quin Calvin, Paralegal; Jonni Hoffman, DCA, 25 years; and Christy Ammons, Legal Assistant.



From left: Wonkou Chang, DCA, 5 years; Sam Garrett, Law Clerk, 3 months; Jenifer Rood, DCA, 5 years; and Will Chang, DCA, 2.5 years.

## Office of the City Attorney

Department  
of the MonthOur Job: To Make Sure City  
Receives Best Legal Protection

By Rocky Delgadillo, City Attorney

Welcome to the Office of the City Attorney. My office was established as a Citywide elected position under the City charter to serve as the principal legal adviser and prosecutor for the City of Los Angeles. Three years ago, I had the honor of being chosen by the people of Los Angeles to serve in this very important and multifaceted position. As the City Attorney, it is my responsibility to assure that the City of Los Angeles receives the best legal advice and protection that can be made available.

My office has three primary goals: to improve the quality of life and public safety in our City's neighborhoods through crime prevention and the prosecution of criminal misdemeanors; to save taxpayer dollars by effectively and efficiently representing the City, its departments, commissions and employees in civil litigation and transactions; and to provide the highest quality legal advice and guidance to the City, all City departments and commissions.

Since taking office, our criminal department has increased our Citywide conviction rate for misdemeanor crimes to more than 90 percent for a third straight year. Since 2001, we have doubled the number of active gang injunctions in our City, leading to significant decreases in gang-related crimes. We have also added nine new Neighborhood Prosecutors to proactively work in our communities and expand service to our residents. In addition, we continue to save millions in taxpayer dollars through tough civil litigation,

which has led my office to fall under budget projections in liability payouts.

These accomplishments could not have been achieved without the help of our excellent team. The demands on my office are both extremely important and work-intensive and as the second largest City in the nation, these responsibilities require many resources. My office is fortunate to have more than 1,000 excellent City employees to manage and tackle this challenging workload. We have been able to meet the City's demands with the help of top quality legal professionals including lawyers hired from outside agencies such as the U.S. Attorney's Office, the District Attorney's Office, major private law firms and the Public Defender's Office.



By Rocky Delgadillo, City Attorney

For three years now, my office has fiercely fought on behalf of all Angelenos on issues of environmental protection, consumer protection, immigration consulting fraud, identity theft, and gang violence. Our office has continued to find new and innovative ways in combating school truancy, tobacco sale to minors, slumlord housing abuses, workers' compensation fraud and elder abuse. In addition, the City Attorney's Office has defended the City's cash reserves from payouts in lawsuits against the City with unprecedented success. Overall, I am very proud of the work that my office has done and continue to be excited about the unbridled potential to serve the residents of our City.

kind for any municipal law-enforcement agency. The EJECT team has proved to be successful and has established a number of initiatives that target certain businesses and other locations in Los Angeles that are not environment friendly. The three main initiatives that have been established under EJECT are the Wilmington Initiative, Sun Valley Initiative, and a Chrome Plating initiative.

## Office of the City Attorney

## PROFILE

## Mission Statement:

To improve the quality of life and public safety in the City's neighborhoods through crime prevention and the prosecution of criminal misdemeanors; to save taxpayer dollars by effectively and efficiently representing the City, its departments, commissions and employees in civil litigation and transactions; and to provide the highest quality legal advice and guidance to the City, all City departments and commissions.

## Staff:

City Attorney	Rockard J. Delgadillo
Chief Deputy City Attorney	Terree Bowers
Appellate Branch Chief	Katherine Hamilton
Civil Liability Branch Chief	Cheryl White Mason
Criminal Branch Chief	Luis Li
Municipal Council Branch Chief	Patricia Tubert
Special Assistant City Attorney	Josh Pertuba
Director of Intergovernmental Relations	Gaye Williams
Chief Financial and Administrative Officer	Jennifer Krieger

Annual Budget: \$86.8 million (2004-05)

Website: www.lacity.org/atty

Liz Montes,  
Member Services  
CounselorHey, Office of the City Attorney:  
I'm Your Counselor!

Hi, I'm **Liz Montes**, your Club Member Services Counselor. I can help you with insurance products ... advice ... ticket discounts ... and all your Club benefits. It's my job!

I'm in the Office of the City Attorney all the time. Call or e-mail me to schedule an appointment: (800) 464-0452, or [lmontes@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:lmontes@cityemployeesclub.com)

Neighborhood Prosecutors and Saving Money:  
Just Two City Attorney Accomplishments

## Saving Taxpayers Money

For the third straight year, liability payouts were down dramatically and the City Attorney's Office saved the City \$4.6 million in liability claims payouts. As a result, the money saved went to the City General Fund for more police officers and to improve community services.

## Neighborhood Prosecutor Program

The Neighborhood Prosecutor Program was created to advance the City Attorney's goal of making Los Angeles a safer City through crime prevention and the effective prosecution of criminals. Each Neighborhood Prosecutor is assigned to one of the Los Angeles Police Department's 18 divisions to coordinate efforts and crack down on neighborhood crime and blight. The program is driven with the understanding that the ability to respond to neighborhood complaints and address criminal problems proactively is critical to preserving the quality of life in our neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Prosecutor Program aims to identify, prioritize and address criminal problems proactively before they are able to grow into serious offenses and larger problems that can lead to urban decay in our communities. This program has led to legislative success in cleaning up nuisance properties and cracking down on illegal street racing.

## EJECT Unit

This spring, The City Attorney's office announced the creation of the Los Angeles Environmental Justice Enforcement and Compliance Team (EJECT), modeled on the Neighborhood Prosecutor Program. The new effort aims to combat serious environmental crimes that plague some of Los Angeles' most disadvantaged neighborhoods. EJECT targets the growing crisis of rampant urban industrial pollution by combining myriad inspections, criminal prosecution, civil litigation and constant community input. The Team works by coordinating the tasks of more than 30 environmental protection groups from the federal, state, county and local levels. It is the first of its

kind for any municipal law-enforcement agency. The EJECT team has proved to be successful and has established a number of initiatives that target certain businesses and other locations in Los Angeles that are not environment friendly. The three main initiatives that have been established under EJECT are the Wilmington Initiative, Sun Valley Initiative, and a Chrome Plating initiative.

## Fighting Gangs

Los Angeles is home to 800 known gangs and more than 56,000 gang members, according to the Los Angeles Police Department. Since taking office in 2001, City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo has more than doubled the number of active gang injunctions. In March, the City Attorney's office obtained an injunction against the Mara Salvatrucha (MS) gang, which has been linked to more than 18 killings in the past two years. The MS gang injunction was the City's 21st filed since March 1993. Delgadillo's Gang Unit also secured permanent gang injunctions against the Eastside and Westside Wilmas gangs in Wilmington in March 2004, contributing to a 31 percent drop in gang-related crime in the Harbor area. A permanent injunction against the 18th Street Gang in Hollywood has also led to a 50 percent decrease in gang-related crime in the area. The City Attorney's office continues to promote and find innovative ways to implement gang injunctions as a useful legal tool to stem gang activity.

## Giving Opportunity to Our Children

In September 2002, City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo joined forces with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to introduce Operation Bright Future to address the chronic problems of truancy and gang violence in Los Angeles schools. Operation Bright Future is a prevention program aimed at junior high school students. The purpose of the program is to keep kids away from gangs and drugs during this critical period in their lives by enforcing attendance and truancy laws and informing parents of their responsibility to keep children in school.

Operation Bright Future reduced truancy from 11 percent to virtually zero in targeted schools, with only two out of more than 16,000 students continuing to have attendance problems. Operation Bright Future is active in 20 schools at the sixth-grade level throughout the inner city Los Angeles area.

## Stopping Gun Violence

In its second year since City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo formed it, the Gun Violence Prosecution Unit has continued to focus on reducing the number of illegal guns on the street and the number of illegal outlets where guns can be obtained. The Gun Violence Prosecution Unit works with local and federal law enforcement agencies. This multilateral approach allows for the inspection, investigation, and prosecution of businesses and individuals violating firearm laws.

## Immigration Fraud Prevention

The Immigration Fraud Strike Force investigates and prosecutes individuals and businesses that take advantage of those who do not know the intricacies of our immigration laws. This strike force continues to collaborate with the Attorney General and the District Attorney as well as immigrant advocacy and legal aid organizations. Since its inception, the City Attorney's Immigration Fraud Strike Force has filed more than 40 criminal cases against fraudulent immigration consultants. The City Attorney's Office has also created a number of consumer protection hotlines that provide residents with a guide for reporting these crimes.

## Tackling Workers' Compensation Fraud

Workers compensation payouts by the City continue to decrease. In 2003-04 there have been more than 56 worker's compensation cases investigated. Of these cases the City Attorney's office has referred 17 cases to the District Attorney, which are now either resolved or are under active investigation. In fact, in two fraudulent claims cases the City saved more than \$150,000 by convicting the claims filers and the

total money saved from 16 cases referred to the District Attorney is approximately \$1.2 million. Additionally, 35 businesses were investigated for failing to provide workers compensation benefits to their employees. Eleven of these cases were referred to the District Attorney's office for hearing and five resulted in prosecutions. The City Attorney was also successful in lobbying to place fraud warnings on the back of all City Employee checks.

## Campus Safety Initiative

City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo helped to implement a comprehensive Campus Safety Inspection initiative to effectively address health and safety concerns at Los Angeles Unified School District campuses. The CSI initiative has allowed for independent inspections to be conducted by City and county inspectors and has also encouraged Los Angeles schools to become safer for the City's children while improving their ability to learn and succeed in life. Since the CSI initiative was proposed, the school board and the superintendent have taken important steps to open the doors to parents to implement lasting changes in the schools throughout Los Angeles. The district has also enhanced its existing online resources, providing user-friendly results of past inspections and grades of local schools.

## Freedom of Information Unit

Californians have a fundamental right to open government and access to public records, which is codified in the California Public Records Act (CPRA) at Government Code §6250 et seq. To facilitate the exercise of this right, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office has adopted new guidelines for public inspection and copying of public records. Forms are posted on the City Attorney's Office website for members of the public to download and send in when they require a copy of a public record and attorneys in the office will be trained to handle public records requests in a uniform manner to promote greater access to government.