



## COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION  
DRIVE, ROOM 102A  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

### SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 12/16/2025

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**To:** Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Water Agency, Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and Board of Commission of the Community Development Commission

**Department or Agency Name(s):** County Counsel's Office, Human Resources Department

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Joshua A. Myers, 707-565-3737; Janell Crane, 707-565-2885; Christopher Meza, 707-565-3521

**Vote Requirement:** 4/5th

**Supervisory District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Second Amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with Beach Law Group

**Recommended Action:**

Authorize County Counsel to execute a second amendment to the outside liability counsel legal services agreement with Beach Law Group, LLP to extend the contract term through December 31, 2026 and increase the contract maximum not to exceed \$1,750,000 for the contract term.

**Executive Summary:**

Staff requests Board approval for a Second Amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with Beach Law Group, LLP, increasing the contract amount by \$250,000 and extending the term by one year to ensure uninterrupted access to qualified legal defense services through the end of the amended contract period.

**Discussion:**

The County of Sonoma has been self-insured for general liability since 1986. County Counsel is statutorily mandated to defend civil lawsuits brought against the County and its officers and employees. From time to time, the County has retained outside legal counsel to represent the County in tort claims (legal actions that seek financial compensation for harm) and civil litigation (a legal process to resolve non-criminal disputes) filed in state and federal courts. Outside law firms are retained only when County Counsel either does not

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have the capacity, lacks the expertise to handle these lawsuits in-house, or has an ethical conflict. County Counsel and Human Resources staff assign cases to outside firms based on their demonstrated qualifications and expertise in public entity defense. Board Resolution Number 85-2577 delegates oversight of civil litigation to County Counsel in consultation with the Risk Manager, and both departments are responsible for the coordination and oversight of the work performed by outside legal counsel.

This item seeks a second amendment to the agreement with Beach Law Group, LLP to provide legal services, as needed, to represent the County in tort claims and civil litigation. County Counsel and the Human Resources Risk Management Division conducted a competitive process and selected Beach Law Group, LLP for its significant experience and recognized expertise in the area of civil litigation and defense of public entity tort liability claims, with specialized knowledge and expertise in the defense of claims against public entities, social workers, and human services providers relating to the delivery of child welfare services. The initial agreement was executed on August 31, 2021, under County Counsel's delegated purchasing authority of \$50,000 per contract. The agreement was amended on January 25, 2023, to increase the contract limit to \$1,500,000 and extend the term to December 31, 2025.

As with the original agreement, this is a fee-for-service contract with no minimum or maximum amount of work guaranteed to the firm. The agreement also contains a termination clause that allows the County to terminate the agreement at any time. Actual costs will depend on future litigation or specific projects assigned to the firm. As of October 2025, \$851,908 has been expended on the agreement since inception August 31, 2021. All assignments are reviewed by County Counsel and Human Resources Risk Management, the law firm's proposed legal strategy is reviewed by County Counsel and Human Resources Risk Management, and all legal services invoices are reviewed and approved by the Liability Manager, who tracks all work and expenses of each firm. The amended contract term will expire on December 31, 2026, with contract maximum limits not to exceed \$1,750,000. Depending upon the number of case assignments to the firm and the size and scope of each case assigned, this limit may never be reached, or may require a contract amendment, which would be presented to your Board for authorization.

**Strategic Plan:**

N/A

**Racial Equity:**

**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

March 21, 2023 ([Item 5; File Number 2023-0202](#)) - Authorized execution of amendments to three outside liability counsel agreements extending the term through December 31, 2025, with contract maximum limits not to exceed \$1,500,000 with law firms (1) Beach Law Group LLP, (2) Ferguson, Praet & Sherman, APC, and (3) Greines.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY25-26 Adopted</b>	<b>FY26-27 Projected</b>	<b>FY27-28 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$706,000	\$190,000	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$706,000</b>	<b>\$190,000</b>	
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$706,000	\$190,000	
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$706,000</b>	<b>\$190,000</b>	

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

The Human Resources department budgets expenditures for legal services in the Liability internal services fund 51230, funded by internal services rates paid by all county departments/agencies.

No additional appropriations are requested, and costs of services provided under the second amendment to the agreement will be absorbed using existing appropriations.

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

None.

**Attachments:**

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1. Original Legal Services Agreement with Beach Law Group, LLP dated August 31, 2021
2. First Amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with Beach Law Group, LLP dated January 25, 2023
3. Draft Second Amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with Beach Law Group, LLP

**Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:**

None.