



# Office of Attorney General

600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58505. Tel: (701) 328-2210  
Website: [www.ag.nd.gov](http://www.ag.nd.gov)

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The Attorney General is one of twelve statewide elected offices in North Dakota, and was established in the 1889 state constitution. The Office is headed by the Attorney General, an independently elected constitutional officer, and is comprised of several divisions of highly specialized staff and attorneys.

## The State's Lawyer

The Attorney General represents the state in all legal matters, civil and criminal, where the state is named as a party or the state may have an interest in the outcome of the litigation. The office also provides legal services and opinions to state legislators, state officials, constitutional officers, state agencies, boards, and commissions.

The Office of Attorney General has approximately 30 attorneys divided into five divisions: State and Local Government, Criminal and Regulatory, Consumer Protection and Antitrust, Natural Resources and Indian Affairs, and Civil Litigation.

The office enforces the Open Meetings and Open Records laws, and issues opinions in response to complaints that a public entity has violated those laws.

## Other Duties

In addition to our role as the "state's lawyer," the Office of Attorney General has several divisions with regulatory or investigative functions:

- The **Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI)** assists local governments in criminal and drug enforcement investigations, maintains the criminal history and sex offender registration systems, and provides training for law enforcement officials.
- The **Fire Marshal's Office** conducts fire safety training and inspections, controls hazardous materials incidents, and investigates fires.
- The **Lottery** division is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Lottery and its games. Find information about the Lottery and its games at: [www.lottery.nd.gov](http://www.lottery.nd.gov).
- The **Gaming** division regulates charitable gaming, and ensures compliance with tribal-state casino gaming compacts. The **Licensing** section regulates and issues certain wholesale, retail, and distributor licenses.
- The **Crime Laboratory** analyzes samples from drug and alcohol related criminal cases, and evidence from crime scenes.
- The Finance, Administration, and Information Technology divisions provide support within the agency.

## Boards and Commissions

The Attorney General serves on numerous boards and commissions, including the Board of University and School Lands, Industrial Commission (which oversees all state-owned industries), ND Commission on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, ND PERS Board, Judicial Council, and Pardon Advisory Board.

**Our  
Commitment**

The Office of Attorney General serves the people of North Dakota. We are committed to providing instant access, via the Internet, to information and resources on a variety of issues, including:

- Sex Offender website - [www.sexoffender.nd.gov](http://www.sexoffender.nd.gov) - provides information about sex offenders who may be living in your neighborhood.
- Be informed about your rights to access public records and participate in the process of government. Information about the state's Open Record and Open Meetings laws is on our website - go to the "[Open Records and Meetings](#)" link.
- [Opinions](#). Attorney General opinions are posted on our home page almost immediately after they are issued. Also, access the opinion archive by clicking on the "Legal Opinions" link.
- Do Not Call. North Dakota residents can reduce unwanted telephone solicitations by registering home and cellular telephone numbers on the state's Do Not Call list. Click on the "[Do Not Call](#)" link on our home page.
- Obtain information regarding scams, identity theft and consumer fraud, [concealed weapons](#), gaming, [detailed sex offender information](#), and more from our web site:

[www.ag.nd.gov](http://www.ag.nd.gov)

**Qualifications  
for Office**

The Attorney General is elected for a four year term (except the term beginning in 2005 was a two-year term; thereafter the term reverted to four years). To be eligible for election to the office, an individual must be 25 years of age, qualified to vote in North Dakota, and a licensed Attorney.

See: Article V of the North Dakota Constitution and North Dakota Century Code Chapter 54-12.

**The Attorney  
General**

Wayne Stenehjem (R). Elected 2000; Re-elected 2004 and 2006.

Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem was born in Mohall, North Dakota. He graduated from the University of North Dakota and received his law degree from the UND School of Law in 1977. He is married and has a son.

Stenehjem was elected to the North Dakota House of Representatives in 1976, serving for two terms until his election to the ND Senate in 1980. He served continuously in the Senate until his election to the Office of Attorney General.

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State law does not permit the Attorney General or his staff to give legal advice or provide legal services to members of the public or private businesses. Other than requests relating to violations of the state's open records and open meetings laws, the Attorney General's office may issue opinions only to state agencies, state officials, and certain local government entities.