
ATTORNEY GENERAL

J. Joseph Curran, Jr., *Attorney General*

200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202 (410) 576-6311

The office of Attorney General was established by the Constitution of 1776 (sec. 48). In 1817, the office was abolished by Constitutional amendment (Chapter 247, Acts of 1816, ratified 1817). The General Assembly in 1818 recreated the office by statute (Chapter 146, Acts of 1817). By 1851, the Attorney General's duties were fulfilled by a State's Attorney in each county and in Baltimore City (Const. 1851, Art. V, sec. 3). The office of Attorney General was reestablished by the Constitution of 1864 (Art. V, sec. 1).

The Attorney General is elected by the voters for a term of four years (Const., Art. V, sec. 1). There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms which an Attorney General may serve. The Attorney General must be a citizen of the State and a qualified voter who has resided and practiced law in Maryland for at least ten years prior to election. The date on which the Attorney General takes office is not specified by law but customarily occurs on December 20 following the election. The Attorney General heads the Office of the Attorney General, formerly known as the State Law Department, which was established in 1916 (Chapter 560, Acts of 1916).

The Attorney General serves as legal counsel to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Judiciary, and to all departments, boards, and commissions of the State, except the Human Relations and Public Service Commissions (whose counsel is appointed by the Governor), and the State Ethics Commission (which appoints its own counsel). The Attorney General and assistant attorneys general represent the State in all matters in which the interests of the State are involved. This includes litigation in the Court of Appeals, the Court of Special Appeals, the Circuit Courts, the District Court of Maryland, as well as the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States Circuit Courts, and the United States District Courts. The Attorney General's Office represents the Clerks of Court, the Registers of Wills, the Sheriffs, and the State's Attorneys of the counties and Baltimore City. The Office does not represent the charter or noncharter counties, the County Boards of Education, the Boards of Supervisors of Elections (except in Baltimore City), or such other boards or officials of the counties that employ their own counsel. The Attorney General may render an opinion on any legal subject or matter upon the request of the Governor, the General Assembly (or either house thereof), or any department or agency of the State.

The administrative rules and regulations promulgated by any State officer or agency must be submitted to the Attorney General for review before they may become effective. The Office is responsible for enforcement of the State Securities Act, and for the Division of Consumer Protection and the Antitrust Division. It also directs the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit which investigates and prosecutes provider fraud.

The Attorney General serves on the Governor's Advisory Board for Justice Administration; the Commission on Correctional Standards; the Police Training Commission; the Correctional Training Commission; the Board of State Canvassers; the Criminal Justice Information Advisory Board; the Maryland State Employees Surety Bond Committee; and the State Prosecutor Selection and Disabilities Commission. The Attorney General also is a member of the Governor's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission.

DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ralph S. Tyler, *Deputy Attorney General*
(410) 576-6342

The Deputy Attorney General oversees administration, the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, and six divisions: Antitrust; Civil Litigation; Consumer Protection; Contract Litigation; Criminal Appeals; and Criminal Investigations. The Deputy Attorney General also is responsible for the assistant attorneys general assigned to certain State government agencies.

PRO BONO PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Jack Schwartz, *Chairperson*
(410) 576-6344

ANTITRUST DIVISION

Ellen S. Cooper, *Chief*

200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202 (410) 576-6470

The Antitrust Division was created in 1972 and is headed by an assistant attorney general (Chapter 357, Acts of 1972). The Division enforces the Maryland Antitrust Act, which governs restraints of trade, unfair competition, monopolies, and other acts or practices that restrain or tend to restrain trade and commerce within the State. The Act calls for both civil and criminal enforcement of its provisions and permits the Attorney General to cooperate with officials of the federal government and the several states in the enforcement of antitrust laws (Code Commercial Law Article, secs. 11-201 through 11-213).