



# DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Wisconsin State Agency 101

A SERIES PREPARED BY



INSTITUTE FOR REFORMING GOVERNMENT

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## STATE AGENCY

## FAST FACTS

### AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Department of Justice represents the state of Wisconsin in legal matters, provides support to local law enforcement, and investigates crime throughout the state.
- The Department was allocated **\$308 million** in the 2021-2023 budget and has **405 full time positions**.

- The Department of Justice is responsible for administering Wisconsin's Concealed Carry permit program. In 2021, the DOJ had the highest number of applications since the permit was created in 2011.

### TAXPAYER ALERT!

In their 2023-2025 budget request, the Department of Justice asked for \$172 million in new spending for the next budget, a **54.50% increase**.

**\$308 MILLION BUDGET**

**405 EMPLOYEES**

Total Applications Received: 156,351  
 New Applications Accepted: 53,630  
 Renewal Applications Accepted: 98,850  
 Number of Licenses Approved and Issued: 145,693

### DID YOU KNOW?

- In 2015, Attorney General Brad Schimel launched the Dose of Reality Campaign, a program to prevent prescription drug abuse with a focus on opioids, which has become a serious problem in Wisconsin.
  - 3,133 emergency room visits and 1,123 inpatient hospitalizations in 2021.
  - **1,227 deaths** in 2020. (2021 deaths not available)
- In partnership with the DHS, the DOJ works to educate the public about the risks of prescription drug abuse, provide resources for those seeking treatment, and provide safe methods for the disposal of unwanted prescription drugs.
- The prescription drugs collection program has established permanent drop boxes and annual collection days at over 501 locations around the state.
  - In 2021, the Take-Back Day held on April 21, 2021 collected 60,632 pounds of drugs.

# WISCONSIN STATE AGENCY 101

## DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

### REFORM HISTORY

In March 2018, Wisconsin created the Office of School Safety within the Department of Justice. This office was responsible for dispensing grants to schools to improve school safety, standardize school safety plans, and create a reporting system for threats of school violence. As of 2021, the DOJ had awarded \$92 million to schools in Wisconsin to improve school safety.

### KEEP AN EYE ON...

Increases in crime rates continue to be a problem in Wisconsin. The Department of Justice must do more to support local law enforcement and ensure that Wisconsin's communities are a safe place to raise families and do business.

### IRG WANTS TO KNOW...

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO??

If you were in charge for a day, what reforms would you make to the Department? Email Alex Ignatowski, IRG's Director of State Budget and Government Reform, at [ai@reforminggovernment.org](mailto:ai@reforminggovernment.org).

### DOJ LEADERSHIP



**Josh Kaul**  
*Attorney General*



**Eric Wilson**  
*Deputy Attorney General*



**Ashley Viste**  
*Chief of Staff*

### CLOSE CALL

In his 2021-23 budget, the Governor proposed allowing the Attorney General to deposit funds received from legal settlements in a DOJ appropriation. The AG then would put together a plan on how to spend the funds. Currently, all settlement dollars are deposited in the state's general fund, which means the legislature has the authority to decide how to spend it. As we all learned in high school civics, the power of the purse should rest with the legislature, not with bureaucracy.

## ABOUT IRG



INSTITUTE FOR  
REFORMING GOVERNMENT

The Institute for Reforming Government (IRG) is a 501 (c) 3 and Wisconsin-based think tank established to help remove the onerous barriers and red tape separating the individual from an efficient and functioning government.

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