



## What is a county prosecutor?

A prosecutor refers to a lawyer who typically represents the state or government in legal proceedings. In Ohio, each of the state's 88 counties has an Office of the Prosecutor, which houses an elected county prosecutor, as well as a staff of assistant prosecutors. Together, these law officials represent citizens of their county in both criminal and civil legal matters. Prosecutors also provide legal counsel to government entities and represent the State of Ohio in certain legal matters. Offices of county prosecutors are often separated into specific divisions for civil, criminal, and juvenile legal matters.

## How long is a county prosecutor's term?

Prosecutors are elected to a four-year term.

## Are there term limits?

No.

## Are county prosecutors political actors?

Yes, they are partisan officials. Candidates have their party affiliation listed on the ballot.

## What are the responsibilities of prosecutors?

- **Litigation on Behalf of Individuals:** Prosecutors collaborate directly with law enforcement agencies to pursue convictions of those who have committed crimes. They also advocate for victims of crime and their families. In some cases, prosecutors may pursue evidence that may exonerate an individual who has been wrongly accused.
  - **Litigation on Behalf of the State:** County prosecutors deal with legal matters within the county and litigate on behalf of Ohio when the state itself is a party in the complaint, suit, or controversy.
  - **Legal Counsel:** Each county prosecutor serves as the legal counsel for all county elected officials, officers and boards, including tax-funded public libraries. The county prosecutor also prosecutes and defends all actions on behalf of these public officials and entities.
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## How does the State Attorney General impact prosecutors?

The Office of the State Attorney General [provides support and collaboration](#) for prosecutors during every step of the legal process from pre-indictment investigation to trial preparation and beyond. Specific divisions of the Attorney General's office offer pre-trial consultation for a variety of legal matters, ranging from consumer protection matters to high level felony cases to death penalty cases. The Attorney General often supports county prosecutors in legal matters that reach the Supreme Court of Ohio.

## What is prosecutorial discretion?

Prosecutorial discretion is the authority vested in each Office of the Prosecutor to decide which legal cases they pursue and what charges they file. The purpose of this power is to prioritize which cases move forward, thus balancing their need to uphold public safety, as well as defend those in need of justice.

## What are the requirements for running for county prosecutor?

- Candidates [must](#) be U.S. citizens, at least 18 years old, and be a resident in the state of Ohio within the county they would like to represent. They must be an attorney licensed to practice within Ohio.
- To obtain a spot on the ballot, county prosecutor candidates must file a [petition](#) signed by between 50 and 150 electors for major party candidates and between 25 and 75 signatures for minor party candidates.