



POLICE LEGAL ADVISOR



THE COMMUNITY

Conveniently located on the west coast of Florida between Tampa and Fort Myers, the City of North Port is a vibrant, up-and-coming community and home to 94,700 residents, with a median age in their 40s. North Port anticipates its population growing to 250,000 at build out (Developnorthportfl.gov). Covering 104 square miles, North Port is the largest city in Sarasota County and is accessible via I-75 and Tamiami Trail. The City offers excellent connectivity with easy access to six international and municipal airports. North Port is one of the fastest-growing cities in Florida, with active residential, commercial, and economic development. As a result, the population has increased rapidly over a relatively short time.

Incorporated in 1959, the City of North Port is relatively young. Residents and visitors enjoy the high quality of life the area's warm climate offers year-round, as well as the many cultural and recreational activities that abound in North Port. The City is within driving distance to most of the region's award-winning, internationally known beaches including Stump Pass State Park, Siesta Key, and several other beaches on Manasota, Casey, and Longboat Keys. North Port is also home to the renowned Warm Mineral Springs Park, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the only natural warm spring in Florida. The spring maintains an average temperature of 85 degrees and purportedly contains one of the highest mineral contents of any natural spring.

North Port is home to three beautiful natural springs, 80 miles of freshwater canals, nine miles of the Myakkahatchee Creek, and portions of the Myakka River. Popular local activities in the area include boating, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, golfing, nature walks, birdwatching, and horseback riding. Additionally, the City has over 400 acres of parks and green space and two indoor community centers. The Myakka State Forest is also fully located within the North Port corporate boundaries.

The City is continually working to offer a wide variety of amenities for residents and visitors while at the same time preserving the small-town charm that defines North Port. The North Port Aquatic Center opened in 2019, and the Atlanta Braves Spring Training Facility experienced its inaugural season in 2020. North Port has a robust arts community with

BUSINESS & CAREERS

- #2 Best State for Small Business in the U.S.
Simplify LLC 2024
- Best City in U.S. for Young Entrepreneurs
Moneyrates
- Top 25 City in U.S. for Business and Careers
Forbes
- Best Place for Manufacturing in Tampa Bay
Southern Business & Development
- Top 10 Medium-Sized City for Working Women
Nerdwallet
- Best National Workplace for Commuters
National Center for Transit Research - USF

FAMILY

- Top 20 City in the Nation for Home Buyers
Forbes
- Best Place on Florida's Gulf Coast to Raise a Family
Smartasset
- 2nd Overall Safest City in Florida
Safehome.org

EDUCATION

- Top 5 Florida School Districts
Niche.com
- Top 100 City in the U.S. for Education
Forbes

LIFESTYLE

- Top 3 City in the U.S. for Well-being
Gallup
- 2nd Fastest Growing City in the U.S.
Quickenloans 2023
- Top U.S. Growth City in 2023
UHaul 2023
- 14th Happiest Place in the U.S.
National Geographic
- Playful City USA
8 consecutive years
Humana Foundation

GOVERNMENT

- #1 Up and Coming Small City in the U.S.
MoneyGeek 2024
- Top 10 Digital City in Class
Center for Digital Government

THE COMMUNITY *continued*

the North Port Art Center and the North Port Performing Arts Center, one of the largest theaters in Sarasota County. The City also hosts numerous family-friendly celebrations and festivals, including Flashlight Egg Hunts, Fourth of July Freedom Festival, Trick or Treat at City Hall, and the Poinsettia Parade and Festival.

North Port is a well-educated community, with 90% of the residents having a high school diploma and over 25% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Area students are served by the Sarasota County School District, over which consists of six elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools. The new Wellen Park High School is also currently in the planning stages and is scheduled to open for the 2026 school year. The Pine View School mixes traditional classroom learning with independent study, mini-courses, and ungraded classes and was rated the #1 High School in Florida and #18 in the nation by US News and World Report. The Imagine School - North Port also provide education opportunities for K-12 grades. A pair of new Sarasota Memorial Hospitals in North Port are scheduled to break ground in 2025. One location will be off Interstate 75 at North Sumter Boulevard, and the other at Wallen Park. For those seeking higher education, the area offers Ringling College of Art and Design, Keiser University, State College of Florida, Suncoast Technical College, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida SouthWestern State College, and University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee.

Major employers within the City of North Port include Sarasota County Schools, the City of North Port, North Port Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, King Plastic, Adams Brothers Cabinetry, and Euro Wall. Other large area employers include Sarasota Memorial Hospital, Stonewall Logistics/Amazon, Venice Regional Bayfront/Englewood Community Hospital, Helios Technologies, PGT Innovations, Doctors Hospital of Sarasota, Tervis, Walmart, Publix Supermarkets, Costco, and Lowes Home Center.

North Port has a median household income of \$78,000 and a median home price of \$227,400 and the North Port MSA was rated the 6th Best Performing City in the nation by the Milken Institute. North Port's largest ethnicity populations are comprised of White (79.4%), Black of African American (5.24%), White-Hispanic (5.3%), Multiracial-Non-Hispanic (3.3%), Multiracial-Hispanic (3.1%), and Asian (1.6%). (Source: DATA USA)

MOTTO

"A city where you can Achieve Anything."

VISION

An innovative, friendly, engaging, and sustainable community where residents, businesses, and visitors flourish.

MISSION

To provide exceptional service to our entire community for the continuous enrichment of quality of life through transparency, engagement, and respect.



GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

The City of North Port operates under a Commission-Manager form of government. The City Commission consists of five members, who are elected at large to one of the five Commission District Seats in which they reside. Commissioners serve four-year staggered terms and may not be elected to the office more than twice. The Commission selects the ceremonial Mayor and Vice Mayor from its members annually.

The City Commission hires and supervises the three Charter Officers: City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk.

North Port's rapid growth and progress have attracted new departmental leadership and fresh ideas throughout the City, contributing to an energized and collaborative staff of roughly 900 employees, with positions in the Police and Fire Departments covered by collective bargaining agreements. North Port's proposed FY2025 overall budget is \$285 million (General Fund \$88.5 million) which is supported by an operating property tax rate of 3.7667 per \$1,000 of assessed taxable valuation. The City's current long-term issuer ratings are Aa3/No Outlook from Moody's, AA/Stable from S&P, and AA/Stable from Fitch.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are dedicated to the highest ethical standards and accept ownership for our conduct and obligations.

INTEGRITY

We maintain the public's trust through honest, transparent, respectful, and equitable behavior.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

We provide outstanding customer relations through compassion, professionalism, and purpose by building connections. We strive to make a positive difference with our residents, businesses, visitors, internal staff, and with those we serve.

TEAMWORK

We promote working collaboratively to achieve efficient and effective results.

EMPOWERED EMPLOYEES

We embrace an inclusive work environment by empowering employees to act through supportive leadership, mutual respect, trust, ownership, and open communications.

DIVERSITY

We embrace our community's differences and life experiences by encouraging inclusiveness.

INNOVATION

We foster an environment that stimulates new and innovative approaches to achieve efficiencies and exceptional outcomes.



ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The City Attorney's Office consists of eight full-time employees, including the City Attorney, Deputy City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, the Police Legal Advisor, two Paralegals, and one Business Services Coordinator, and is supported with a total proposed FY 2025 departmental budget of \$1,886,690.

The City of North Port is growing at more than twice the rate of Sarasota County and Florida statewide. As the City meets the challenges associated with rapid growth and strategically prepares for future growth, the City Attorney's Office is instrumental in providing legal counsel for the City Commission and City boards and committees. In addition to delivering all legal services for the City, the office retains and manages the representation of outside special counsel at the City Attorney's discretion, largely in the areas of major litigation and specialized matters. The City Attorney's Office also assesses unmet and potential legal needs. The City Attorney's Office has a commitment to professional development, including membership in and training opportunities through Florida Association of Police Attorneys (FAPA), International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), The International Municipal Lawyers Association (IMLA), including conference attendance.

PHILOSOPHY

The City Attorney's Office is committed to providing excellent and ethical legal services to the City. Team members frequently collaborate to deliver the best possible work product. The office is completely paperless and employs the latest technology to manage files. The work of the City Attorney's Office directly impacts the City and its internal processes, and demand for legal services continues to increase in scope and quantity.

CORE SERVICES

Legislative Acts and Legal Instruments

- Draft and review all ordinances, resolutions, contracts, interlocal agreements, deeds, leases, and other legal instruments in compliance with the City Charter and upon request of the City Commission and City administration.

Advisory Services

- Provide legal analysis and guidance in establishing administrative policy and making top-level management decisions.
- Research and prepare legal opinions upon request of the City Commission and City administration.
- Attend all meetings and workshops of the City Commission, Planning and Zoning Advisory Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Charter Review Advisory Board to render advice on legal issues and questions of law.

Claims and Litigation

- Provide ethical and competent litigation representation in county, state, and federal courts.
- Manage all litigation assigned to special litigation counsel.



ABOUT THE POSITION

Under the general direction of the City Attorney, provides comprehensive support to the Police Department on routine matters to protect the interests of the City. The Police Legal Advisor will also assist the City Attorney on various City matters as needed. This job has no supervisory responsibilities. The City Attorney's Office has also adopted a flexible work environment to provide employees the opportunity to work both in the office and remotely.

This position will work closely with these Departments:

POLICE

The North Port Police Department (NPPD) is a state quadruple excelsior accredited law enforcement agency that is focused on the safety of residents, visitors, and businesses. The Department is responsible for maintaining public order and safety, enforcing the law, and preventing, detecting, and investigating criminal activities. NPPD was the first agency to deploy body worn cameras on patrol officers in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. The City of North Port is exploring options to build a new Police Department headquarters on City-owned property off Toledo Blade Boulevard. A \$122 million option is recommended by the City's consultant and accounts for growth through 2065. The City Commission has directed City staff to explore funding options.

The Police Department consists of 215 personnel, 159 sworn police officers, and 56 civilian support staff, with a proposed FY 2025 budget of \$40 million.

The Patrol Operations Bureau is responsible for patrolling the 104 square miles that make up the City of North Port and responds to more than 89,892 calls for service per year. The Investigations Bureau consists of a Criminal Investigation Division and a Special Operations Division, including computer forensics, a K-9 unit, school resource officers, a special enforcement team, and homeless outreach.

FIRE RESCUE

The North Port Fire Rescue District is a full-service, career agency providing fire suppression, advanced life support emergency medical services, disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, and fire prevention functions. In 2023, the District responded to over 10,000 emergency incidents from six fire stations strategically located around the 104 square mile service area, with a total force of 158 employees.

Fire Rescue is a dependent special purpose fire district whose primary source of funding for fire protection services is received through non-ad valorem assessments; the balance of the budget provides advanced life support medical services with funds received from the City's general fund. The Department's proposed FY 2025 budget is \$34 million.

The District has a 10 year financial plan that supports the Department's master and strategic plans and anticipates the construction of an additional station and associated firefighter staffing in 2027.



A summary of the essential functions of the Police Legal Advisor position includes the following:

- Provides legal guidance to the North Port Police Department on legal questions related to administrative and operational issues. Expected to be available at any time for urgent requests, including days, nights, holidays, and weekends as needed.
- Issues formal legal opinions on matters affecting police operations, including legal bulletins on changes in the law affecting law enforcement.
- Represents the City in court and administrative hearings related to law enforcement, including forfeiture actions, risk protection order actions, and City ordinance violations.
- Drafts and/or reviews law enforcement policies and procedures, training materials, bulletins, and similar documents to ensure legal sufficiency. Review may include observing police field procedures and operations.
- Drafts and/or reviews all contracts, ordinances, and resolutions related to the North Port Police Department.
- Conducts in-service training for police officers in areas of potential legal liability.
- Serves as liaison between the North Port Police Department and the Office of the State Attorney.
- Attends and participates in North Port Police Department command staff meetings and/or other leadership meetings, as the City Attorney and the North Port Police Department deem appropriate.
- Unless otherwise assigned by the City Attorney, advises the City Clerk, the North Port Police Department, and other City Departments regarding public records requests and applicable laws.
- Unless otherwise assigned by the City Attorney, provides legal guidance to North Port Fire Rescue, including responses to general inquiries and review of contracts,
- Unless otherwise assigned by the City Attorney, represents the City in code enforcement hearings and provides legal guidance to the Code Enforcement Division.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

POLICE LEGAL ADVISOR TO THE CITY

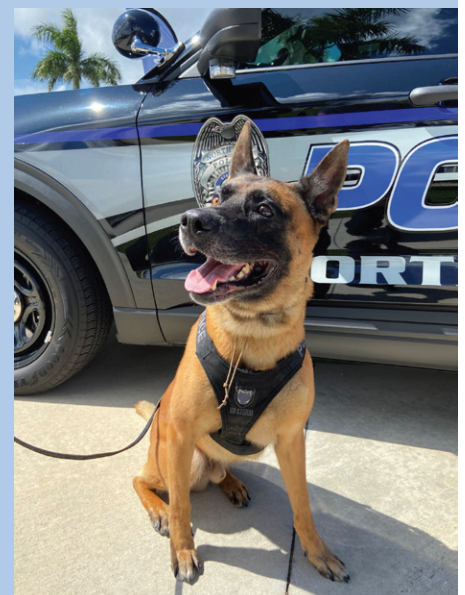
The Police Legal Advisor is currently dedicated to at least 50% public safety work, with the vision that over time, the position will expand to being fully dedicated to Police/Public Safety matters. As such, the Police Legal Advisor should be experienced in legal matters impacting law enforcement, including interpreting criminal statutes and case law, public records, interlocal agreements, and other contracts.

FAST-PACED, CROSS FUNCTIONAL OFFICE

While every attorney has their own assigned files, team members frequently collaborate, brainstorm, and provide feedback to one another. The office provides a consistent level and style of work product to its clients throughout the City's government. The selected Police Legal Advisor should be comfortable performing their own legal research and drafting their own documents, including ordinances, agreements, and policies, but should also be receptive to accepting input from the team.

WELLEN PARK

Wellen Park is a master development of 10,000+ acres including 14 neighborhoods, a town center with recreation and dining, major commercial development, and the Atlanta Braves Spring Training Baseball Facility. Wellen Park is recognized as one of the fastest selling communities in the United States, with over 20,000 new homes and a population of 60,000 at buildout. A public safety complex containing a new police substation and fire station opened in early 2022. The rapid growth of this development will result in an expansion of public safety services and increased legal needs.



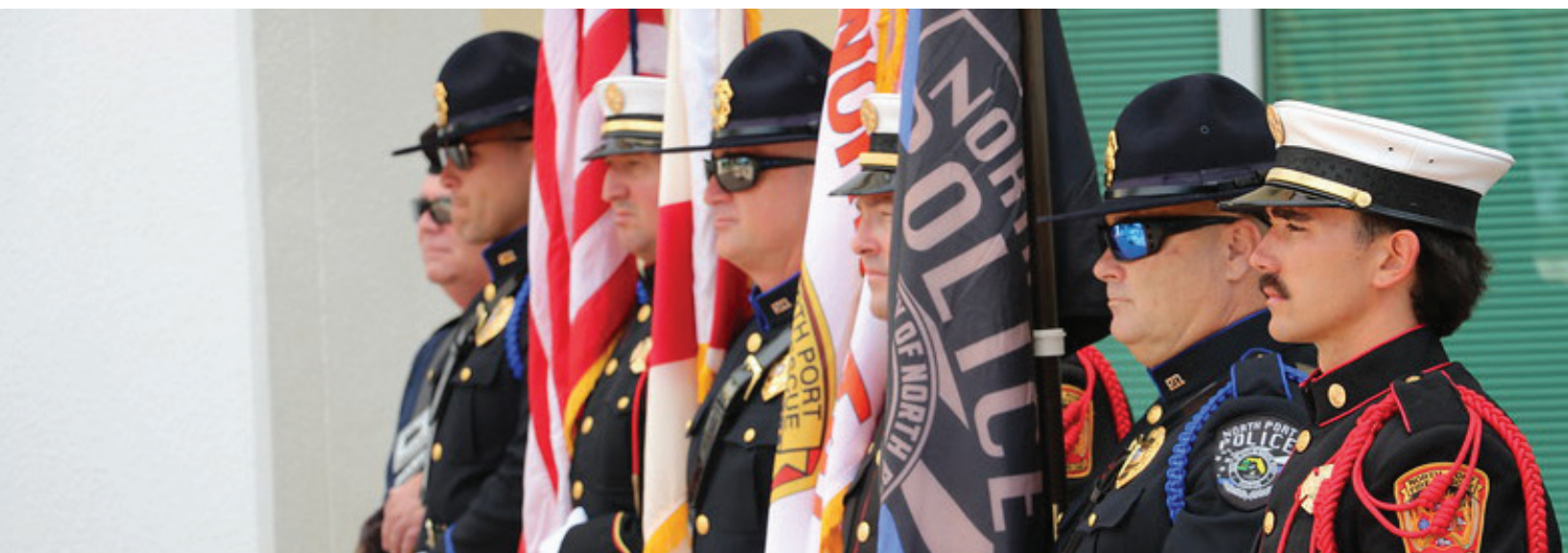
IDEAL CANDIDATE

North Port seeks candidates who have the ability to work well with the legal team and earn the trust and respect of the law enforcement officers. The ideal candidate will be adept at handling numerous files in diverse practice areas and detail-oriented. The successor Police Legal Advisor should possess considerable knowledge of the principles, methods, materials, and practices of legal research, in addition to substantive knowledge of relevant state and federal law and their application to the essential functions of the position.

The successful candidate will be skilled in conducting research on complex legal issues and drafting sound legal opinions and will be able to analyze and define problems, identify alternative solutions, estimate consequences of proposed actions, and implement recommendations in support of goals. Someone who can interpret and apply legal principles and precedents in addressing complex legal problems is desired.

The ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing are essential. The Police Legal Advisor must have the ability and experience to review and draft resolutions, ordinances, contracts, leases, and other legal documents. The City Attorney's Office is completely paperless and utilizes an electronic case-management system, so the successful candidate should be comfortable using contemporary technology platforms.

The City desires a candidate who can organize work for timely completion, meet deadlines, manage priorities, and multi-task while working in challenging and time-sensitive situations with shifting priorities. The ability to maintain effective professional relationships through contact and cooperation and the ability to learn and utilize new skills and information to improve job performance and efficiency will be paramount. Lastly, someone who has a sense of humor and works well in a team-oriented environment is desired.



EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

A Juris Doctor Degree from an accredited law school with a minimum of five (5) years of work experience as a practicing attorney, a substantial amount of which has been in the practice of criminal law, or other relevant experience in the government or private sector is required. Candidates with a comparable amount of relevant training, education and/or experience may also be considered. The selected candidate must be an attorney eligible to practice law in Florida with an active Florida Bar license and in good standing with the Florida Bar at the time of appointment.



COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The City of North Port offers a competitive annual salary range of \$104,750 – 167,600 depending on qualifications and experience. The City provides a generous benefits program including health, dental, and life insurance, paid vacation, sick leave, and other professional development assistance. The City participates in the Florida Retirement System (FRS) at a 3% employee deposit rate with additional contributions from the City. The Police Legal Advisor position qualifies for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program. There is no residency requirement for the position, and the cities of Venice, Sarasota, Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte, and Fort Myers are within commuting distance.



APPLICATION PROCESS

[Please apply online](#)

For more information on this position contact:

Doug Thomas, Executive Vice President
DouglasThomas@GovernmentResource.com
863-860-9314



The City of North Port is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Pursuant to Florida law, all applications are a public record once submitted and available for disclosure upon receipt of a public records request, however, public record requests regarding candidates are not expected for this position during the recruitment process.



RESOURCES

City of North Port
northportfl.gov

North Port Area Chamber of Commerce
northportareachamber.com

Develop North Port
developnorthportfl.gov

City Attorney's Office
northportfl.gov/City-Government/City-Leadership/City-Attorney

Wellen Park
wellenpark.com

North Port Police Department
northportfl.gov/City-Services-and-Safety/Emergency-Services/Police

Fire Rescue
northportfl.gov/City-Services-and-Safety/Emergency-Services/Fire-Rescue

North Port Social Media



North Port Police Department Social Media

