



# **TERRA LAWSON-REMER**

## **CHAIR**

**SUPERVISOR, THIRD DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** August 26, 2025

**05**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

#### **SUBJECT**

**APPROVAL OF TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT COMPENSATION FOR THE ACTING  
COUNTY COUNSEL (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

#### **OVERVIEW**

On July 24, 2025, the Board of Supervisors appointed David Smith as the Acting County Counsel. Today's recommendation is for the Board to approve a temporary compensation increase for David Smith in accordance with the Compensation Ordinance of the County of San Diego.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

##### **CHAIR TERRA LAWSON-REMER**

Approve a temporary base salary increase, effective August 26, 2025, to \$173.40 per hour for David Smith equal to 15% of his current salary rate while serving as Acting County Counsel pursuant to Section 3.5.2(d) of the Compensation Ordinance of the County of San Diego. Additionally, Mr. Smith shall receive benefits for the County Counsel classification as defined in the County of San Diego Compensation Ordinance, including the automobile allowance under Section 496 of the County Administrative Code and the benefits which are authorized for all other executive management appointing authorities and not otherwise limited by law.

#### **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Office of County Counsel is a full-service law office, tasked with handling the County's civil law needs, including proactive participation in all phases of governmental decision-making and a very active and successful trial litigation program.

The office provides advisory and litigation support to the Board of Supervisors, County departments, County officers, boards, and commissions. The office also represents the County in juvenile dependency matters and administers public liability claims. Today's action will ensure continuity of operations under the supervision of the Acting County Counsel, including effective implementation of the Board's policies and programs.

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THE ACTING COUNTY COUNSEL (DISTRICTS: ALL)

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The proposed action provides stability and continuity in County operations and in carrying out the Board of Supervisors' initiatives until a new County Counsel is appointed and fully assumes the functions of the Office of County Counsel. With David Smith's institutional knowledge, experience, and professional relationships, the Office of County Counsel will continue to align the County's available resources with services to provide advisory and litigation support to the Board of Supervisors, County departments, County officers, boards, and commissions.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The funding source is General Purpose Revenue. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years until a new County Counsel begins employment. There will be a short-term 15% increase to the base salary rate of David Smith as compensation for temporary assignment to a higher classification. This temporary compensation will increase David Smith base salary rate to \$360,672.00 per year and is consistent with the provisions of the County's Compensation Ordinance.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

The County of San Diego's County Counsel resigned on July 23, 2025, and, at a Special Meeting on July 24, 2025, the Board of Supervisors appointed David Smith as the Acting County Counsel.

Mr. Smith has been a long-time collaborator and trusted partner in the County organization, having served as the County Information Officer and in the office of County Counsel where he served as a Senior Deputy, a Chief Deputy and as the Acting County Counsel. With deep institutional knowledge, strong relationships, and a shared commitment to the County's values, Mr. Smith is well-positioned to carry this work forward during this time of transition.

The County's Compensation Ordinance provides that an Executive Management employee may receive a rate higher than their current rate of pay, not to exceed twelve months, to perform the duties of a classification with a higher salary rate. Today's action will provide temporary compensation for David Smith assignment to Acting County Counsel that is commensurate with his professional skills, knowledge and experience.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's recommended action supports the Empower Strategic Initiative in the County of San Diego's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan by optimizing the County's available resources with services to maintain governance stability and ensure continuity of operations.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Terra Lawson-Remer', with a stylized, cursive script.

TERRA LAWSON-REMER  
Supervisor, Third District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A