

**OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL
STRATEGIC PLAN**

VISION

The Office of General Counsel will be a valued and sought after strategic partner, recognized for our industry-leading legal expertise, innovative and creative problem solving, and commitment to Kansas State University as the nation’s leading next-generation land-grant university.

MISSION

We serve as legal counsel to our client, the University. We empower the University’s teaching, research, and service mission in accordance with legal obligations, policy requirements, and best practices applicable to public research and land-grant universities. We proactively identify and mitigate risk and respond to the University’s legal needs. We engage collaboratively and creatively to provide practical, timely solutions.

VALUES

Connection

We are stronger together — cultivating trust and building relationships to connect our K-State community with our state, nation and world.

Courage

We lead with bold conviction — rising to the moment, even when the course is uncharted, to deliver the greatest good for areas of greatest need.

Impact

We listen, adapt and challenge the status quo — leading change through learning and discovery that transforms lives and creates shared prosperity for all.

Learner-Focused

We welcome all who seek to learn and grow — providing an exceptional experience that helps them achieve their potential.

People-Centered

We are everything because of our people — supporting, valuing and inspiring our entire K-State community and championing a culture of belonging for all.

Stewardship

We are committed to our future – using our resources responsibly to leave a positive, lasting legacy.

GOAL 1

We will be trusted, sought-after advisors.

We will build and sustain positive relationships that enable the University to pursue its vision and achieve its strategic imperatives while managing the University's legal risks and obligations. University leaders will know us, trust us, and seek out and value our involvement from early stages of planning and decision making.

*Alignment with Next Gen Imperatives 1–10.
Emphasis on Imperatives 5, 6 & 8.*

Strategy 1: Establish attorney liaisons for each college and major University unit.

Presently, many individual colleges and major units do not have an assigned OGC liaison. As a result, we are not always in the room before or when consequential decisions are made. This has led to unnecessary legal and compliance risks, and a feeling that OGC does not serve the greater campus community. In order for us to become trusted, sought after advisors, each college and major unit will be paired with an OGC attorney who will serve as their designated OGC point of contact. These attorney liaisons will invest their time to understand the college or unit's work, goals, leaders, and culture, while also calling in OGC subject-matter legal experts when appropriate. OGC will communicate to every college and major unit who to turn to first for advice or assistance and will empower the colleges and units with confidence that their liaison—and all of OGC—understands the context and substance of their priorities and legal needs.

Next Gen Imperatives 5, 6 & 8.

Metrics: Our success will be measured by meeting these benchmarks:

- (1) Define liaison relationships through both college/unit-directed and University-wide communications by September 2025, to include publication of attorney liaisons and subject-matter experts on the OGC website.
- (2) Establish regularly-scheduled meetings at a frequency defined by the liaisons and their college or unit counterparts by January 2026.
- (3) Solicit directed feedback on this alignment following the Fall 2026 term, with a full review of this structure's impact in Spring 2027.

During the life of this Plan, we anticipate the development of subsequent strategies and metrics that will enhance and leverage our liaison relationships.

Strategy 2: Deliver relevant, interactive legal presentations that can proactively mitigate University risk and amplify OGC services.

Decision makers are more likely to involve us in planning and decision making after they engage with us in relevant content presentations. To drive that engagement and build and sustain relationships, we will enhance our presence across campus through additional presentations. Our legal education initiatives will be offered in multiple formats and modalities and address a range of topics from foundational, perennial issues to emerging concerns.

Next Gen Imperative 8.

Metrics: In the first phase of this Plan, our success will be measured by meeting these benchmarks:

- (1) Develop and offer delivery of foundational legal presentations to every college and major unit leadership team each academic year. *These presentations will focus on well-established and perennially-relevant matters. Possible topics include: OGC Role and Services, Kansas Open Meetings and Open Records, Attorney-Client Privilege and Confidentiality Obligations, Free Speech and Expressive Activities, and Freedom of Association.*
- (2) Host one presentation on an emerging legal issue and an interactive Q&A for cross-campus constituents at least once each fall and spring semester. *These presentations will focus on time-specific legal issues. Possible topics could explore the implications of new or proposed laws and regulations.*
- (3) Participate in other college and unit-invited presentation series.

During the life of this Plan, as we increase our engagement in these activities, we anticipate further refinement of this strategy and our outcome-related metrics.

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GOAL 2

We will provide expert, meaningful, and strategic advice.

Our legal capabilities will meet the needs of the Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan, and our deep understanding of K-State’s next-generation land-grant mission will inform our delivery of counsel that responds to traditional legal demands and proactively empowers the University, colleges, and major units to achieve their own strategic priorities.

*Alignment with Next Gen Imperatives 1–10.
Emphasis on Imperatives 3, 5, 7, 8 & 9.*

Strategy 3: Support the University’s strategic plan, especially our research, entrepreneurial, and startup enterprise.

The Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan emphasizes our land-grant role in driving relevant research and entrepreneurial endeavors. We can contribute our legal expertise to empower this critical work. Therefore, we will deliver legal tools and advice to empower the University’s plans to spark economic development by expanding partnerships and launching startups.

Next Gen Imperatives 5 & 7.

Metric: Our success will be measured by the delivery of an organizational document template bank for new K-State-related startups.

Strategy 4: Empower the University’s plans for applied learning experiences.

The Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan establishes applied learn as one of our key strategic imperatives. We can contribute our legal expertise to empower the University to deliver on this promise while mitigating legal risks. Therefore, we will engage our campus partners to effectuate students’ applied learning opportunities.

Next Gen Imperative 3.

Metric: In partnership with the Executive Director of Applied Learning, our success will be measured by (1) the delivery of draft applied learning experience templates and (2) the launch of web-accessible forms by the end of the Spring 2026 term.

Strategy 5: Support attorneys’ legal expertise through purposeful professional development.

The University’s legal needs are broad and ever evolving. To serve the University well—and to retain and recruit exceptional attorneys—we must commit to purposeful professional development. Therefore, each attorney will map an annual professional development plan, inclusive of areas of needed subject-matter knowledge growth and external opportunities to enhance and demonstrate OGC’s subject-matter expertise.

Next Gen Imperatives 8 & 9.

Metrics: Our success will be measured annually, with attorneys preparing their plans in January, reviewing their progress in June, and documenting their successes by December.

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GOAL 3

We will champion innovation and operational excellence that enhance our client services.

Our team will implement and utilize new methods to enhance our workflows and deliver helpful advice to best serve the University’s priorities.

Alignment with Next Gen Imperatives 1–10.

Emphasis on Imperative 8.

Strategy 6: Adopt a new in-house legal practice management platform that allows us to manage legal matter intake and monitor active legal matters.

Currently, we manage the University legal enterprise using phone calls, emails, text messaging, and a simple document management platform. Modern practice management technologies allow for direct client interaction, communication platform integration, and active legal matter monitoring. These tools can enhance legal team efficiency, provide greater internal accountability, and assist in the delivery of strategic counsel to our clients. Therefore, using resources already budgeted by the University, we will adopt and launch a new in-house legal practice management platform.

Next Gen Imperative 8.

Metric: Our success will first be measured by implementing this technology in 2025. During the life of this Plan, we anticipate further development of this strategy to leverage the University’s investment in this platform and the technological capabilities and efficiencies it may provide.

Strategy 7: Develop policy or protocols for the University’s engagement of outside counsel and consultants providing privileged advice.

Occasionally, it is appropriate to engage outside legal counsel and consultants to supplement our service to the University with the services of subject-matter expertise. The University has not adopted protocols for engaging such outside lawyers or consultants. This can create role confusion, inefficiencies, or misalignment between internal and external advisors. Therefore, we will develop and implement written policies or protocols for the engagement of outside counsel and consultants that create a consistent approach and uniform expectations for the delivery of legal advice to our constituents.

Next Gen Imperative 8.

Metric: Our success will be measured by developing these policies or protocols and presenting them for any necessary approvals by Spring 2026.

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SUMMARY TIMELINE

2025

- **January** – OGC final strategic plan submitted and published
- **February** – Attorneys’ 2025 professional development plans due (Priority 2, Strategy 5) [*recurs annually in January*]
- **May** – Identify and facilitate Spring 2025 emerging legal issue forum (Priority 1, Strategy 2, Metric 2) [*recurs annually by May*]
- **May** – Develop and deliver 2024-25 foundational legal presentation (Priority 1, Strategy 2, Metric 1) [*recurs annually by May*]
- **June** – Attorneys’ 2025 professional development plan updates and progress due (Priority 2, Strategy 5) [*recurs annually in June*]
- **September** – College/Major Unit Liaisons Defined and Published (Priority 1, Strategy 1, Metric 1)
- **December** – Adopt a new technology platform that allows us to manage our legal matter intake and monitor our active legal matters (Priority 3, Strategy 6)
- **December** – Attorneys’ 2025 professional development review (Priority 2, Strategy 5) [*recurs annually in December*]
- **December** – Identify and facilitate Fall 2025 emerging legal issue forum (Priority 1, Strategy 2, Metric 2) [*recurs annually by December*]

2026

- **January** – College/Major Unit Liaison Engagements Established (Priority 1, Strategy 1, Metric 2)
- **May** – Deliver policy or protocols for the University’s engagement of outside counsel and consultants providing privileged advice (Priority 3, Strategy 7)
- **May** – Delivery of an organizational document template bank for new startups (Priority 2, Strategy 3)
- **July** – OGC Strategic Plan Review & Refresh
- **December** – VP&GC Solicits Feedback Regarding Liaison Relationships and Structure (Priority 1, Strategy 1, Metric 3)

2027

- **May** – VP&GC Reviews Liaison Relationship and Structure Feedback, Proposes Modifications as Appropriate (Priority 1, Strategy 1, Metric 3)

2028

- **January** – OGC Strategic Plan Review & Refresh

2029

- **July** – OGC Strategic Plan Review & Refresh



OUR PLANNING PROCESS

This plan was developed through contributions from all members of the Office of General Counsel (OGC) team from September 2024 through January 2025. Over the course of seven designated work sessions, we (1) brainstormed and refined desired outcomes, ultimately framing them as our three strategic priorities, (2) developed achievable strategies in support of our three priorities and in alignment with the University's Next-Gen Strategic Plan, (3) assigned reasonable metrics to assess our progress, (4) refreshed our OGC vision and mission statements, as informed by our plan, and (5) integrated feedback from the University's President, Provost, Chief of Staff, Chief Strategy Officer, Cabinet members, Deans, and OGC's high-volume clients. Each component of this plan is informed by the feedback received from our campus partners, including feedback obtained through the ongoing leadership transition in our office. In addition, we sought out the best practices of our counterparts at peer institutions. The team has unanimously endorsed and is eager to pursue the strategies, priorities, mission, and vision described in this OGC Strategic Plan.