

**Public Defender's Office
Final Performance Plan
FY 2008-09**

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Office of the Public Defender is to provide effective and innovative legal services for clients by protecting their constitutional rights, treating them with respect and encouraging them to lead productive and positive lives.

II. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Public Defender's Office is the County law office that provides legal representation for indigent persons charged with felony, misdemeanor, juvenile, and family support crimes, as well as for indigent people against whom County Counsel seeks mental or disability commitments, probate code conservatorship actions, and dependency declarations. The office is committed to ensuring representation that meets the constitutional, statutory, and decisional requirements of law that guarantee every indigent person effective assistance of counsel before the courts.

The Public Defender includes the following programs:

- Collaborative Justice
- Defense Services

The Public Defender's Office represents eligible clients in the criminal, probate, civil and juvenile courts. This representation includes eligible persons who wish to have their records sealed through the office's Restoration of Rights program.

III. ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY 2007-08

- Continued highest level of excellence and ethics in representation of clients, including social work advocacy where necessary
- Represented defendants at arraignment hearings following successful six-month trial period
- Successfully implemented GIDEON case management system
- Implemented "Green Team" to focus on environmental and sustainable initiatives in office functions, and beyond
- Continued model volunteer and internship programs and participated in School to Career partnership
- Continued ongoing effort and participation in developing a Criminal Justice Strategic Plan with focus on Community Restorative Justice

IV. GOALS AND INITIATIVES FY 2008-09

GOAL 1: Promote legal excellence through knowledge, hard work and commitment to purpose

FY 2008-09 Initiatives
1. Insure excellent representation of clients by keeping staff well trained utilizing in-house training and outside seminars
2. Improve staff skills in using new GIDEON case management system

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FY 2008-09 Initiatives

3. Improve communication with criminal justice and community partners to promote safe community outcomes
4. Continue to work with courts and other criminal justice agencies to create efficiencies through wireless technology

GOAL 2: Advocate for the most therapeutic and restorative outcomes to help clients achieve a more promising future

FY 2008-09 Initiatives

1. Refer and advocate for clients to enter therapeutic programs
2. Promote, participate and support problem-solving courts and programs that provide a restorative outcome
3. Help restructure Adult Drug Court to a continuum of care model
4. Maintain and support new social work collaboration with Veteran's Administration (VA) to assist veterans needing rehabilitative services
5. Continue active participation in development of a Criminal Justice Strategic Plan and advocate for the addition and implementation of restorative programs in the community

GOAL 3: Adhere to the highest ethical and personal standards in representing clients and working with colleagues

FY 2008-09 Initiatives

1. Continue training in trial court advocacy, consultation with clients, use of experts, and appropriate investigation
2. Ensure training and supervision that mandates ethical actions and methods in all cases
3. Conduct peer review, evaluation and mentorship of all employees to ensure adherence to high standards
4. Survey internal and external customers when possible and appropriate
5. Improve management skills of management team, supervisors and lead attorneys

GOAL 4: Promote effective communication, beneficial work/life balance, and diversity appreciation

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FY 2008-09 Initiatives

1. Continue use of participative management style, including annual meetings with all staff and annual management 360-degree survey
2. Frequent communication about matters of interest to all staff, such as budget and policy issues
3. Continue work/life balance initiatives as identified by Work/Life Balance Committee

GOAL 5: Promote sustainability through environmentally healthy and energy-conserving practices

FY 2008-09 Initiatives

1. Continue using "Green Team" to educate and promote environmentally-conscious practices
2. Develop weekly "Green Tips" that are emailed to all department employees and to other departments
3. Continue involvement with the County's Sustainability Committee and volunteer department for specific "green" experimental projects
4. Continue purchase and use of green products and recycling initiatives within office

V. KEY CHALLENGES AND OUTSTANDING ISSUES

- Transitional planning for retirements of longtime employees and meeting increasing caseloads with new more inexperienced attorneys; leadership training for future managers
- Continued integration and modification of GIDEON case management system; adaptation to and ability to work efficiently with SAP programs
- Meeting new and modified court procedures and expectations that create new demands on office resources
- Anticipated budget reductions to an already very lean budget for the services required and mandated by law

VI. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PUBLIC DEFENDER CUSTOMER SERVICE

Measures	FY 06-07 Actual	FY 07-08 Estimate	FY 08-09 Estimate
Percent of survey respondents who "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that representation by the Office of the Public Defender was satisfactory	n/a	n/a	75%
Percent of survey respondents who "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that staff of the Office of the Public Defender was cordial and respectful at all times	n/a	n/a	75%

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RESTORATION OF RIGHTS INITIATIVE

OBJECTIVE: Achieve at least a 90 percent rate of expungements granted by the Courts for qualified clients compared with potential expungements

Measures	FY 06-07 Actual	FY 07-08 Estimate	FY 08-09 Estimate
Workload Measures			
Number of clients contacted regarding available services	n/a	300	740
Number of requests for record expungement*	174	240	370
Number of clients qualifying for expungement	161	210	325
Number of expungement requests prepared and presented in court for qualified clients	161	206	318
Efficiency Measures			
Staff hours per expungement	5	5	5
Effectiveness Measures			
Percent of expungements granted by court for qualified clients compared with potential expungements	88%	89%	90%
Number of expungements granted for eligible clients	142	184	285

Department Comments:

The measures will allow us to measure effectiveness of the expungement process and do follow-up assessment of individual reintegration into the community after a criminal conviction.

ARRAIGNMENT COURT APPEARANCE

OBJECTIVE: Increase the number of defendants seen prior to arraignment

Measures	FY 06-07 Actual	FY 07-08 Estimate	FY 08-09 Estimate
Workload Measures			
Number of requests for public defender assistance at in-custody arraignments	n/a	3,000	3,800
Efficiency Measures			
Number of cases settled through negotiation at arraignment	n/a	25	40
Effectiveness Measures			
Number of clients whose bail was reduced through public defender advocacy	n/a	100	120
Number of clients released from custody on own recognisance through public defender advocacy	n/a	500	600

Department Comments:

These measures focus on outcomes that benefit clients, reduce jail population, prevent unnecessary job losses and reduce unnecessary future court appearances.