



Goals & Objectives

FY 2024-2025 Biennium

MISSION

Providing the most compassionate and expert defense of clients and the Constitution

VISION

Creating expert teams of advocates for justice, bringing respect and dignity to our clients to achieve holistic and equitable outcomes



Office of State Public Defender--Public Defender Division

Objective: Provide statutorily and constitutionally mandated counsel

Outcome Goals

#	Goal	#	Strategy	Measure	Timeline
I	Timely assignment of counsel	I.A	Track average days in various offices between receipt of appointment order and initial assignment of non-conflict, FTE counsel	Reduction toward average delays of 1 business day for involuntary commitments, 2 business days for in-custody criminal cases, 2 business days for abuse and neglect cases, and 3 business days for out-of-custody criminal and other cases	Reviewed monthly.
II	Effective counsel	II.A	Survey clients' and stakeholders' assessment of Public Defender Division representation	Average survey scores on 5-point scale for Public Defender Division attorneys	Develop and set baselines in FY 2024; stakeholder surveys annually and client surveys upon individual case close
		II.B	Evaluate Public Defender Division employee performance through Montana Talent System	Average Talent rating of Public Defender Division employees	Annually at end of each calendar year
		II.C	Review client grievances	# of valid grievances per 1,000 cases represented by Public Defender Division	Annually at end of each fiscal year

Process Goals to Effectively Recruit and Retain Qualified Employees

#	Goal	#	Strategy	Measure	Timeline
1.1	Update and develop effective workload standards for employees	1.1.1	Utilize employee time tracking to validate or update the matter weight hours associated with matter types and/or charges	Percentage of case weights that validate to attorney case time by case type	Updated annually, starting Q4 FY 2023
		1.1.2	Develop and implement data-backed processes, procedures, criteria, tools, or other resources to measure and manage attorney workloads more effectively and accurately	Deployment of new tools and resources, including home dashboard, to manage attorney workloads more effectively on reoccurring basis	Initial dashboard deployment Q2 FY 2024
		1.1.3	Develop and implement workload standards for investigators, case managers, and administrative staff in client-facing roles	Workload standards in place for non-attorney, client-facing roles	End of FY 2024
1.2	Ensure appropriate employee pay	1.2.1	Ensure implemented budget is appropriate and flexible enough to adjust to ever-changing market circumstances that affect OPD's ability to hire and retain employees	Implementation of a budget that can accommodate competitive wages for FTE attorneys at or exceeding 85% of DLI's market rate for attorneys and is flexible enough to shift resources between FTE and contracted services and adjust associated rates as necessary	2023 Legislative Session
		1.2.2	Ensure collective bargaining agreement provides framework to effectively incentivize retention, increased workload, increased duties, or other reasonable efforts to recruit and retain employees	Implementation of a CBA with the Union that appropriately allows for effective recruitment and retention of employees	End of FY 2023
1.3	Ensure agency managers are effective	1.3.1	Provide robust management training on regular basis for agency managers focusing on supervisor, accountability, motivation, mentoring, and other manager specific topics	Managers training conferences that occur and percentage of Division's managers attending	Managers training conferences to continue twice per year in FY 2024 and FY 2025
		1.3.2	Standardize business process across agency to ensure effective operations and accountability	Implementation of standardized business processes with always-up-to-date documentation available	Case Management SOPs by Q1 FY 2024 with other SOPs/Documentations coming every quarter thereafter
		1.3.3	Ensure agency managers have effective communication tools, meeting cadence, and resources to allow for feedback looping with all employees	Implementation of new communication tools, standards, or resources, setting appropriate expectations on managers, and holding managers accountable for their communications	Initial Communications and Decision-Making Structure implemented Q2 FY 2023 with revisions in FY 2024 & 2025

1.4	Implement a robust recruitment plan	1.4.1	Develop an agency-needs-based recruitment plan seeking and hiring candidates where they are most needed	Existence of formal plan and reduction in number of vacant positions	Formal development beginning in Q4 FY 2023 with implementation by end of FY 2024. Vacancies tracked monthly
		1.4.2	Build on success of third-year law student recruitments through additional engagements with law schools and other stakeholders to identify and target likely candidates	Number of successful law student recruitments, number that pass the bar, and how long they stay	2023 class recruitment started Fall 2022; 2024 class recruitment Fall 2023

Process Goals to Create and Support Expert Defense Teams

#	Goal	#	Strategy	Measure	Timeline
2.1	Provide formalized mentor program	2.1.1	Develop and implement formalized mentor program by role and specialization	Implementation of formal mentor program planning by role and specialization; percentage of employees participating	Plan development Q1 FY 2024 with initial implementation end of FY 2024; annual review at end of FY 2025
		2.1.2	Develop and implement specialized training paths by role and specialization	Implementation of formal training program planning by role and specialization	Formal plan development beginning in Q1 FY 2024 with initial implementation by end of FY 2024.
2.2	Provide robust practice tools and resources	2.2.1	Develop and implement practice standards, best practices, and practice resources by matter type and role within the agency	Implementation of standards, practices tools, and resources, by matter type and role	Initial review/updates by end of FY 2023, then review/updates in Q2 FY 2024, Q4 FY 24, Q2 FY 25, Q4 FY 25
		2.2.2	Develop framework to ensure consistent, standardized, legal, investigative, and support resources available to offices and clients regardless of location	Implementation of litigation support services framework	Development to begin Q4 FY 23 with initial implementation by end of FY 24
2.3	Provide robust Client Stabilization Services Program	2.3.1	Develop framework to ensure consistent, standardized client stabilization services are available to offices and clients regardless of location; obtain AmeriCorps Planning Grant to assist in process	If OPD receives AmeriCorps grant, Implementation of client stabilization services framework	If OPD receives grant, then development to begin Q4 FY 23 with initial implementation by end of FY 24

Process Goals to Provide Client-Centered Representation

#	Goal	#	Strategy	Measure	Timeline
3.1	Improve communication with clients	3.1.1	Ensure clients have effective communications with OPD attorneys and staff by working with DOC, local jails, treatment providers, and other facilities to ensure clients have meaningful access to effective communications tools and by using multiple communication channels to ensure that out-of-custody clients have accurate contact information for counsel	Increase communication satisfaction score on client survey	Develop in FY 2024 and begin sending to individual clients when cases close
		3.1.2	Compile comprehensively list of all courts conducting in-custody initial appearances and which have OPD attorneys present	Percentage of initial appearance courts at which OPD attorneys are present to provide initial appearances services to in-custody defendants	Complete assessment and baseline FY 2024 and reassess for improvement FY 2025
3.2	Increasing quality and consistent representation in civil matters	3.2.1	Develop and implement a Civil bureau, unit, or structure within the Public Defender Division to improve the quality of representation in civil matters (DNs, DGs, DDs, DIs, DJs, starting initial with DN) throughout the State and improve relationship with other civil focused stakeholders which will benefit the clients	Implementation of the Civil Bureau or Unit within regions and coordinated within the Public Defender Division	End of FY 2023