



# OFFICE OF THE STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER STATE OF MONTANA

February 12, 2018

Governor Steve Bullock  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

The Montana Supreme Court  
P.O. Box 203001  
Helena, MT 59620-3001

The Montana Legislature  
c/o Molly Petersen, Publications/Communications Officer  
Legislative Services Division  
P.O. Box 201706  
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Dear Governor Bullock, Supreme Court Justices, and Legislators:

RE: Office of the State Public Defender Report  
to the Governor, Supreme Court and Legislature

The 2017 Legislature passed HB 77, restructuring the Office of the State Public Defender effective July 1, 2017. This report covers the period July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017, during which the Public Defender Commission supervised agency operations. Pursuant to 47-1-105 (9), MCA (laws of 2015), the Montana Public Defender Commission was required to provide a biennial report to the Governor, Supreme Court and Legislature. Each interim, the Commission was also required to specifically report to the Law and Justice Interim Committee. Now that the Commission no longer exists, I am providing this report on behalf of the agency as the Interim Director. The report reflects agency operations as of June 30, 2017, prior to implementation of the legislation restructuring the agency.

## **Description of Report**

1. All policies and procedures in effect for the operation and administration of the statewide public defender system and all practice standards established or being considered by the agency.
2. The number of deputy public defenders and the region supervised by each; and the number of attorney and non-attorney staff employed or contracted within the system, identified by region and office.
3. The number of new cases in which counsel was assigned to represent a party, identified by region, court and case type; and the total number of persons represented by the office, identified by region, court and case type.
4. The annual caseload and workload of each public defender, identified by region, court and case type.

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5. The training programs conducted by the office and the number of attorney and non-attorney staff who attended each program; and the continuing education courses on criminal defense or criminal procedure attended by each public defender employed or contracted within the system.
6. Detailed expenditure data by court and case type.

This report is also available at <http://publicdefender.mt.gov/Resources/Reports>.

Please feel free to contact me at 496-6084 or [hfreebourn@mt.gov](mailto:hfreebourn@mt.gov) if you have any questions regarding the information in this report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "H. Freebourn", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Harry Freebourn  
Interim Director