



Brian Schweitzer  
Governor

# OFFICE OF THE STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER STATE OF MONTANA

Chief Public Defender  
Randi Hood

## **MONTANA PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION BRIEFING FEBRUARY 29, 2008 STIPEND ISSUE—CONTRACT ATTORNEYS**

- Currently the agency pays a \$25 per month stipend to contract attorneys
- This payment is in addition to the \$60 per hour rate for attorney services and any travel costs claimed by the contract attorney
- The attorney may claim collect calls from incarcerated clients and on-line research costs
- This stipend is intended to cover all other office costs—copies, phone, postage, etc.
- Contact attorneys claim that this amount is too low to cover all other costs
- Some contract attorneys suggest that the agency consider:
  - Pay all actual costs
  - Pay a graduated stipend
  - Increase the service rate above \$60 per hour
- The agency estimates that the current stipend costs about \$51,000 per year
- The agency estimates that a \$1 per hour increase in the service rate is \$109,600 per year