

Office of the State Public Defender Administrative Policies

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Section: 1-105(3) and 1-119(3)	Last Review Date: 5-26-21
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1.0 POLICY

The Office of the State Public Defender (OPD) will use information technology and caseload management systems to ensure that detailed expenditure and caseload data are accurately collected, recorded, and reported.

2.0 PURPOSE

- 2.1 As an agency of the State of Montana, OPD is accountable to the legislature for the funds it receives. The agency is statutorily required to report to the legislature annually, and must ensure that reported data is accurate.
- 2.2 Indigent Montanans may be required to pay costs of assigned counsel per 46-8-113 MCA. The agency must be able to track and assign individual costs to individual cases that go to trial. Attorneys are required to accurately keep and record information for those cases.
- 2.3 Public defenders must track time to justify appropriations from the legislature, explain work performed, demonstrate how hard staff are working, identify time consuming courts, show time inefficiencies, show increased public defender activities equal increase positive outcomes, and to assess efforts of staff on behalf of clients.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Detailed Case Reporting

Case counts, case duration and other statutorily mandated reports are based on information entered in the case management program.

3.2 Detailed Expenditure Data

Detailed expenditure information will be collected for all cases. OPD currently uses the Statewide Accounting, Budgeting and Human Resource System (SABHRS) to record all accounts payable, accounts receivable, general ledger and payroll transactions.

3.2.1 Direct Costs

All cases are assigned a case ID number, and all direct payments associated with a particular case (i.e., contract attorney costs, other

professional fees, photocopy charges, travel costs, etc.) are processed through SABHRS using the case ID number.

3.2.2 FTE Costs

Each state-employed public defender is responsible for daily timekeeping in the case management system for each assigned case.

3.2.3 Managers

Managers must ensure the accuracy of time keeping data and ensure that state-employed public defenders enter time on a regular and consistent basis.

3.3 Data Integrity

Data will be audited and certified per Policy 215, Case Management Program.

4.0 CROSS REFERENCES

Policy 215, Case Management Program

47-1-105(3)

47-1-119(3)

46-8-113 MCA

Public Defender Workforce Management Performance Audit, Sept. 2020

5.0 CLOSING

Questions about this policy should be directed to:

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