



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 1/14/2025

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Public Defender
Staff Name and Phone Number: Jeremy Scannell, 565-3869
Vote Requirement: 4/5th
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Public Defender Department Analyst

Recommended Action:

- 1) Adopt a position resolution to adjust the Public Defender's Department Allocation List to add a 1.0 FTE time-limited Department Analyst position, effective January 7, 2025, through June 30, 2026.
- 2) Adopt a budget resolution to increase appropriations and expenditures in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 adopted budget for the Public Defender's Office and Community Corrections Partnership (AB109) Special Revenue Fund.

Executive Summary:

The Public Defender's Office has secured funding through the Community Corrections Partnership for a one-year time-limited Department Analyst position to support the department in the areas of grant management and administrative support. While the department's need is ongoing, time limited funding was secured to allow the department to begin addressing needs. The Public Defender's Office intends to include this Department Analyst position as part of the department's Fiscal Year 2025-2026 funding requests. If funding is not approved through general fund, the Public Defender's Office will request continued funding through the Community Corrections Partnership (AB109) Special Revenue Fund.

Discussion:

The addition of a 1.0 FTE time-limited Department Analyst position represents a strategic investment in the Public Defender's Office (PDO) and addresses two critical areas: grant management and administrative support.

Expanding the department's grant management capabilities ensures the PDO can identify and secure additional funding sources to support its mission. While the PDO has secured a small number of grants, its ability to research additional funding opportunities is limited. By dedicating staff to this work the department can achieve the following operational targets:

Increase grant revenue - By actively seeking and securing grants the department will be able to increase funding for innovative programs and services that will benefit the community without relying on the County general fund. Programs such as the department's post-conviction relief, and racial justice act were created with grant funding.

These programs are a vital asset to the Public Defender's office by providing an essential avenue for addressing systemic inequities and ensuring justice is served beyond initial convictions. By revisiting cases where racial bias or other injustices may have influenced outcomes, these programs empower the office to uphold constitutional rights, rectify wrongful convictions, and promote fairness in sentencing. Such initiatives not only restore dignity and opportunity to affected individuals but also strengthen community trust in the legal system, by demonstrating a commitment to equity and the pursuit of justice for all.

Ensure compliance and accountability - With effective management of grant timelines, budgets, deliverables, and reporting, the department will ensure compliance with funding requirements and will position the department as a reliable grant recipient for future opportunities.

Promote long-term sustainability - By securing additional funding the department can promote department innovation, support emerging needs, and improve service delivery to its clients.

Additionally, the Department Analyst position will support the following administrative operations: recruitment, employee relations, disability management, budget and fiscal analysis, health and safety programs, and special projects as they arise.

The increased administrative capacity will allow the Public Defender, Assistant Public Defender, and Chief Deputy Public Defenders to focus their time on core activities such as supporting attorney growth and development, and working with county justice partners to ensure the best representation of Public Defender clients. Additionally, securing additional grant funding will enable the department to develop new innovative programs and expand existing ones ensuring all PDO clients receive the highest level of legal representation. Without the additional administrative support, the Public Defender's Office will not be able to locate or apply for new grants. For example, the Public Defender's Office did not have the capacity to apply for a recent State of California Racial Justice for All Implementation grant program. This grant estimated that funding would equal an average of \$375,000 over 24 months to support any combination of attorney salaries, experts, investigators, paralegals, or other ancillary needs for Racial Justice Act claims.

The Public Defender's Office intends to include this Department Analyst position as part of the department's Fiscal Year 2025-2026 funding requests. If funding is not approved through general fund, the Public Defender's Office will request continued funding through the Community Corrections Partnership (AB109) Special Revenue Fund.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

N/A

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	111,447		
Total Expenditures	111,447		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance	111,447		
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	111,447		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

All costs for salaries, benefits, and additional costs (phone, computer, etc.) for the Department Analyst position will be covered for one year by the CCP (AB109) special revenue fund.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Department Analyst - Time Limited	\$7,718.87 - \$9,383.34	1.0	0.0 <input type="checkbox"/>

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

The Public Defender’s Office will hire a 1.0 FTE time-limited Department Analyst for a one-year period.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Position Resolution

Attachment 2 - Community Corrections Partnership and Public Defender Budgetary Resolution

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

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