

# MONTANA PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION

## PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEES

*Revised October 31, 2014*

### **Budget Committee**

The committee receives briefings from staff about major budget and accounting issues, including budget requests from the agency and others for the executive planning process and hears public testimony about these requests. The committee may make recommendations to the full Commission on the adoption of budget items. The committee also hears updates from staff on current year budget to actual activity and accounting and audit issues. Members may be asked to participate in budget discussions with the Office of Budget and Program Planning and the Legislature.

### **Collective Bargaining Committee**

This committee receives briefings from staff about major collective bargaining issues and may be involved in labor negotiations or labor management committees. The committee hears public testimony.

### **Contract Steering Committee**

*(Created at the October 31, 2014 meeting by combining the Contracts Process and Approvals Committee and the Proficiency Determination Committee)*

The committee receives briefings from staff about major contractor-related issues, including rates for attorney and non-attorney services, information related to possible adjustments to these rates, and other contractor issues including proficiency determinations. The committee assists the Conflict Coordinator with pre-approval requests of an extraordinary nature, and acts as the final level of appeal in determining conflicts of interest. The committee may also consider requests from contractors for reconsideration of claims or pre-approvals for services that have been denied because agency personnel have determined them to be outside of the scope of the agency's legislative authority for payment or approval. The committee hears public testimony.

### **Eligibility/Cost Recovery Committee**

*Formed as an ad hoc committee at the October 24, 2011 meeting*

Assigned to work with staff to identify issues related to eligibility determination and cost recovery and bring forth proposed solutions.

### **Grants Committee**

*(The committee was abolished at the August 30, 2010 meeting.)*

### **Holistic Defense Committee**

*Formed as an ad hoc committee at the October 31, 2014 meeting*

The purpose of the committee is to look at restructuring staffing (including the addition of resource advocates) to provide a more holistic approach to defending clients. The committee will also make suggestions to staff for other ways to improve the delivery of holistic representation.

### **Information Technology Committee**

*(This committee is inactive)*

The committee receives briefings from staff about major information technology issues. The committee advises and updates the full Commission on new technology, and plans to focus on technology that can be used for training purposes. The committee hears public testimony.

### **Judicial Systems Committee**

*Formed as an interim committee at the July 23-24, 2009 meeting*

The purpose of the committee is to provide watchdog functions and facilitate exposure of any corrupt practices or ethical violations by prosecutors or judges.

### **Legislative Committee**

The committee receives briefings from staff about major legislative issues and is involved in drafting proposed amendments or new legislation affecting the agency. The committee communicates with the Budget committee and may be involved in the legislative session and with strategizing with the Governor's office regarding agency bills. The committee hears public testimony on any legislative matter.

### **Personnel Committee**

The committee coordinates the hiring process for the Chief Public Defender, the Chief Appellate Defender, and the Conflict Coordinator as well as the evaluation process for those positions reporting directly to the commission. They assist staff in developing agency-wide FTE performance evaluation forms and updating job descriptions. .The committee hears public testimony.

### **Proficiency Determination for Contract Attorneys Committee**

*(This committee was combined with the Contracts Process and Approvals committee at the October 31, 2014 meeting to become the Contract Steering Committee. It was originally formed as an ad hoc committee at the August 30, 2010 meeting to 1) work on review of the standard regarding continuing education for contract attorneys and recommendations for changes to the standard; and 2) develop a checklist for proficiency determination of contract attorneys per statute and policy.)*

### **Standards Committee**

This committee was renamed from Caseload Standards Committee to Standards Committee in July, 2008. The committee receives briefings from staff about Practice Standards issues, periodically reviews the Standards, and hears public testimony.

### **Strategic Planning Committee**

*Formed as an ad hoc committee at the October 24, 2011 meeting*

Assigned to revisit and revise the original Strategic Plan.

### **Treatment Court Committee**

*Formed as an ad hoc committee at the October 24, 2011 meeting*

Assigned to work with staff to identify issues related to treatment courts and bring forth proposed solutions.