



STATE OF MONTANA

Office of the State Public Defender

February 5, 2013

Report to the Public Defender Commission

Catherine Huston, Liaison for Investigators and Support Staff

SUPPORT STAFF:

Update on Support Staff Training:

Tentatively scheduled for April in Fairmont. In an effort for more meaningful training, a committee has been formed to gather input from all Support Staff and establish the training needs both overall and individually for each office. Some tentative topics for the training include:

- 1) Telephone Etiquette
- 2) Office Safety
- 3) Central Services Q and A
- 4) Conflict cases
- 5) Legislative Updates
- 6) Appellate Review and Updates
- 7) Effective Communication, Professional Ethics, Misc. Management in the workplace
- 8) IQ'S , Justware, Case Weights, etc.

Turnover, morale and pay continue to be a problem.

INVESTIGATORS:

Update on Senate Bill 133 (Investigator Firearms Bill):

The hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee was January 18th. Five investigators made the trip on their own time to testify as *proponents* to the bill. (Tammy Eckhardt-Lewistown, Cathy Huston-Havre, Mark Beck and John Otway- Missoula and Richard Peck-Glendive) There was no *opponent* testimony to the bill. The bill passed second reading 45-5 and passed third reading 44-5 (1 absent). It has been transmitted to the House. As of this report the next hearing has not been scheduled.

Comings and Goings:

Congratulations to Sheryl Wambsgans, former investigator in Region 8 – Bozeman on passing the Montana Bar Exam and taking an attorney position in the same office. We're happy she stayed with the OPD.

Investigator Training:

No news/updates at the time of this report.