



OFFICE OF THE STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER STATE OF MONTANA

February 24, 2014

To: Montana Public Defender Commission

From: Peter Ohman, Training Coordinator

Re: Training Report (1/1/2014 – 2/24/2014)

At the beginning of January I assumed the position of Training Coordinator for the Office of the State Public Defender (OPD). Over the past summer my predecessor, Eric Olson, invited me to be involved in the planning and development of various trainings around the State. Hopefully, I can continue with the quality programs Eric established and advance the training office to meet other needs of the Office.

One of the main projects I have been working on is providing desktop training to our attorneys. With the capable, patient assistance of computer supervisor, Kyle Belcher, we were able to present our first desktop CLE on January 31, 2014. It was a one hour training attended by approximately 20 OPD attorneys on the nuts and bolts of juvenile practice. Our next "desktop" training is set for February 28 at 3:00 p.m. This presentation will be made by David Burleigh, attorney in the Helena office, on the topic of DOC placements, prison classification and myriad other sentencing issues. We will see if the program fits into one hour.

An area where I believe there is room for improvement is providing new attorneys with training early in their OPD careers. We have the boot camp – which is excellent – but it only comes around once a year. I hope to use the foregoing trainings as templates for new attorney training. I will explain my hopes for how this can be implemented at the commission meeting.

We are sending one attorney to the Capital Case Defense Seminar in Monterey over President's Day. I had the good fortune to attend this conference years ago and I still think it is the best CLE I have ever attended. Hopefully Chris Abbott, who is attending, will be able to come back with some helpful materials for the masses.

Other activity includes submission of a grant application for funding to train attorneys who directly represent children in DN proceedings. There is a management training/regional meeting set for March 6 in Helena. The support staff training is calendared for April 30 – May 1 in Helena. The Double Tree in Missoula has been reserved for the annual conference in October 2014. The next round of Computer-based Training/Standards Verification questions should be up and running by the time of the commission meeting. Madison Mattioli has been doing a great job with the brief bank. Ed Sheehy is busy with sentence review but is also available to help attorneys with regular questions that come in directly or via the OPD attorney email system. Cathy Doyle, John Coulthard and I have had various discussions about the website and what we could do to improve it – we have some good ideas and welcome input.