

# **OPD FY 2026**

### **Annual Plan**

#### Mission

Providing the most compassionate and expert defense of clients and the Constitution.

#### Vision

Creating expert teams of advocates for justice, bringing respect and dignity to our clients to achieve holistic and equitable outcomes.

#### Office of State Public Defender FY 2026 Annual Plan

Pursuant to Montana Code Annotated § 2-12-105, OPD has prepared and filed this FY 2026 Annual Plan.

The Office of State Public Defender exists solely to provide effective assistance of counsel, by qualified and competent attorneys, to individuals in criminal and civil cases who are entitled to assistance of counsel at public expense. Mont. Code Ann. § 47-1-102.

To fulfill its purpose, OPD has adopted a single overarching goal:

### Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation

To reach this goal in FY 2026, each of OPD's four divisions have chosen three strategic outcomes, each with specific measures.

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#### **Division 1 - Public Defender Division**



## Strategic Outcome

# 1

## Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation

by Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Employees

### Key Measures

Keep and hold average daily vacancy rate for public defender positions to 6% or below within Division

Keep and hold annualized voluntary turnover rate for public defender positions to 15% or below within Division



### Strategic Outcome

#2

# Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation by Effectively Managing Employee Workload

### Key Measures

Hold the average and median assignments to FTE trial public defenders to between 100 and 120% of OPD Ethical Case Management (ECM) standards within the division

Hold or reduce the voluntary turnover rate due to workload for public defender positions within the division to 10% or less

Monitor, manage, and improve OPD's ECM Protocols with consideration to national workload standards for public defender



### Strategic Outcome

#3

### Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation

by Providing Effective, Timely Representation

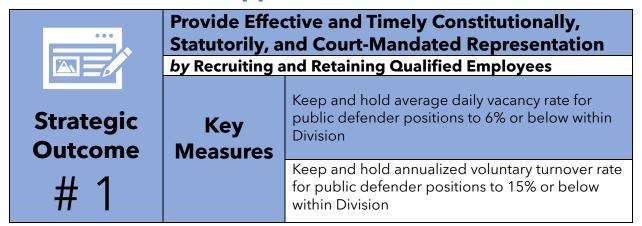
### Key Measures

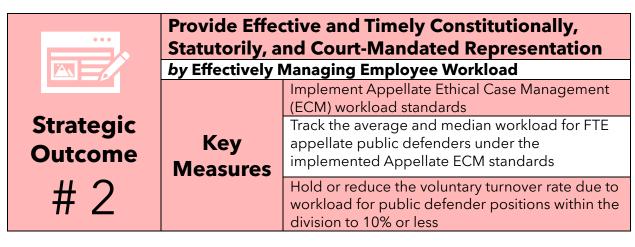
Hold or reduce the average and median Time to First Assignment from a divisional assignment queue to a non-conflict, FTE public defender three (3) or less days

Hold or reduce the percentage of substantiated client complaints client against FTE public defenders within the division to 7.5% or less

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### **Division 2 - Appellate Defender Division**





	Statutorily, a	Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation by Providing Effective, Timely Representation		
Strategic Outcome # 3	Key	Hold or reduce the existing backlog of appellate matters  Hold or reduce the average and median Time to First Assignment of an appellate matter		
	Measures	Hold or reduce the percentage of substantiated client complaints client against FTE public defenders within the division to 7.5% or less		

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#### **Division 3 - Conflict Defender Division**



## Strategic Outcome

# 1

#### Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation by Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Employees

### Key

Measures

Keep and hold average daily vacancy rate for public defender positions to 6% or below within Division

Keep and hold annualized voluntary turnover rate for public defender positions to 15% or below within Division



### Strategic Outcome

#2

#### Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation by Effectively Managing Employee Workload

### Key Measures

Hold the average and median assignments to FTE trial public defenders to between 100 and 120% of OPD Ethical Case Management (ECM) standards within the division

Hold or reduce the voluntary turnover rate due to workload for public defender positions within the division to 10% or less

Monitor, manage, and improve OPD's ECM Protocols with consideration to national workload standards for public defender



### Strategic Outcome

#3

### Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation

by Providing Effective, Timely Representation

### Key Measures

Hold or reduce the average and median Time to First Assignment from a divisional assignment queue to a non-conflict, FTE public defender three (3) or less days

Hold or reduce the percentage of substantiated client complaints client against FTE public defenders within the division to 7.5% or less

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### **Division 4 - Central Services Division**



	Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation by Ensuring Well-Trained, Effective Counsel			
	by Elisuing Wei			
Strategic Outcome # 2	Key Measures	Provide at least 125 hours of training to OPD's employees and contractors		
		Hold or reduce the percentage of substantiated client complaints client complaint against Contract Public Defenders to 7.5% or less		

	Provide Effective and Timely Constitutionally, Statutorily, and Court-Mandated Representation by Providing Effective, Timely Contract Representation		
Strategic Outcome # 3	Key	Hold or reduce the average and median Time to First Assignment from a divisional assignment queue to a contract public defender to seven (7) or less days	
	Measures	Increase by 10% the volume of appellate work accepted by contract public defenders	

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