

Fiscal Year 2009/2010 Budget Highlights and Goals

Public Defender

FY2009 Highlights

- Caseload continues to increase, yet quality legal representation to indigent clients (including more bench and jury trials,) continues at small cost to County.
- Public Defenders clients successfully graduate from Mental Health Court.
- Implemented an electronic management program to efficiently archive files.
- Efficient management of human resources to continue courtroom coverage and satisfy mandatory continuing legal education.
- Office staffing modified to face the challenges posed by recent Supreme Court rule changes.
- Public Defender compensation continues to be paid by State.
- Expanded the use of present office resources to address expansion of the criminal justice system.
- Continued revamping several administrative procedures.
- "E-court" implementation continuing.

FY2010 Goals

- Partner in the establishment and operation of County's first "Drug Court."
- Implementation of an integrated court information system for the Public Defender's Office.
- Courtroom representation
 - Horizontal representation for each appointed client and each full time public defender being responsible for an assigned courtroom
 - Maintain and preserve flexibility and professionalism in providing quality legal representation in criminal and related proceedings to indigent defendants at small cost to county.
- Investigations
 - Newly appointed clients are promptly interviewed.
 - Design and implement comprehensive procedures, investigating crime scenes, transporting defendants, and assisting in the preparation of materials which will be used at trial when the defendant's side of the case is presented.
- Reception/clerical
 - Coordination between client and attorney
 - Build and maintain data base of reports, motions, memos, briefs, etc.
 - Maintain open communication between staff members to foster team effort.