

Public Defender

RECOMMENDED BUDGET • FY 2025-26

RECOMMENDED BUDGET

The Public Defender's Office budget is recommended at \$6,963,908, which is an increase of \$772,221 (12.5%) when compared to the FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget. Revenue is recommended at \$2,211,980, an increase of \$1,027,191 (86.7%) compared to FY 2024-25. The General Fund support is 68.2% and is decreased by \$254,970 (5.1%) when compared to the FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET SUMMARY

Description	FY 2023-24 Actual	Current Year Adopted	CAO Recommended	Difference from Adopted
IG Rev - State	475,269	615,968	611,556	(4,412)
IG Rev - Federal	152,681	220,000	250,835	30,835
Miscellaneous Rev	5	0	0	0
Other Fin Sources	191,105	348,821	1,349,589	1,000,768
Total Revenue	819,060	1,184,789	2,211,980	1,027,191
Salaries & Benefits	4,464,816	5,407,245	6,287,390	880,145
Services & Supplies	497,981	779,892	628,968	(150,924)
Other Charges	158,615	0	0	0
Fixed Assets	140,006	0	0	0
Other Fin Uses	0	0	45,000	45,000
Intrafund Transfers	1,917	4,550	2,550	(2,000)
Total Appropriations	5,263,336	6,191,687	6,963,908	772,221
FUND 1000 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	4,444,276	5,006,898	4,751,928	(254,970)

MAJOR BUDGET CHANGES

Revenues

State Revenue

- \$21,583 Increase in State Revenue due to the award of Public Defense Pilot Program grant funds.
- (\$25,995) Decrease in Public Safety Sales Tax due to declining sales tax receipts in the statewide sales tax pool.

Federal Revenue

- \$30,835 Increase in Federal Revenue due to the award of Justice Assistance Grant program funds.

Other Financial Sources

- \$765,319 Increase in Operating Transfers In due to increased funding from the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP).
- \$251,480 Increase in Operating Transfers In due to increased funding from AB143 Criminal Fees Backfill funding.

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(\$16,031) Decrease in Operating Transfers In from the District Attorney/Public Defender Subaccount.

Appropriations

Salaries and Benefits

\$457,128 Increase due to the addition of 2.0 FTE Deputy Attorneys which are completely offset with revenue from the CCP.

\$226,997 Increase in Salaries and Benefits costs due to Board-approved compensation increases.

\$83,380 Increase in Deferred Compensation employer's contribution due to the Criminal Attorney bargaining unit dissolving and being included in the Salary and Benefits Resolution for Unrepresented Employees, which provides a higher employer contribution rate.

\$40,696 Increase in Retiree Health Program charges due to a rate holiday in FY 2024-25.

\$33,024 Increase in CalPERS employer's contribution due to the Criminal Attorney bargaining unit dissolving and being included in the Salary and Benefits Resolution for Unrepresented Employees, which has an employer paid member contribution.

\$30,776 Increase in Health Insurance due to the Criminal Attorney bargaining unit dissolving and being included in the Salary and Benefits Resolution for Unrepresented Employees, which provides for higher employer contributions for health plans.

\$11,413 Increase in CalPERS employer's contribution, primarily due to increases to the County's unfunded accrued liability payment.

\$3,692 Increase in Other Compensation due to the carryforward of hiring incentives.

(\$2,088) Decrease in Bilingual Pay due to the resignation of a qualified Spanish-speaking employee.

(\$4,873) Decrease in Workers' Compensation premium charges as the Department's share of overall County claims incurred has decreased from prior years, decreasing their Workers' Compensation insurance premium expense.

Services and Supplies

\$9,750 Increase due to adjustments across multiple objects to align the budget to actual costs.

\$8,100 Increase in Telephone Charges due to increased telecom costs.

\$5,900 Increase in Mileage due to increased Fleet costs.

\$4,000 Increase in Utilities due to Pacific Gas and Electric rate increases.

\$3,040 Increase in Rents and Leases due to established rate increases for the office building lease.

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\$2,753	Increase in Fuel due to increased fuel costs.
\$1,000	Increase in Office Expenses due to the addition of Deputy Attorneys.
(\$5,500)	Decrease in Computer Maintenance due to conversion projects concluding in FY 2024-25.
(\$11,600)	Decrease in travel-related objects due to decreased discretionary travel.
(\$28,218)	Decrease in Professional and Specialized Services due to conversion projects concluding in FY 2024-25.
(\$140,149)	Decrease in General Liability insurance premium expense as the Department's share of overall County claims incurred has decreased from prior years, decreasing their Liability insurance premium expense.

Other Financial Uses

\$45,000	Increase in Operating Transfers Out to Fleet for the purchase of a vehicle for the South Lake Tahoe office, which is completely offset with special revenue funds.
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Intrafund Transfers

(\$2,000)	Decrease in Intrafund Transfers due to decreased facilities maintenance charges.
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MISSION

The mission of the Public Defender's Office is to provide quality legal services in a compassionate and professional manner, providing constitutional balance to the El Dorado County legal system.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The functions of the Public Defender's Office are defined by United States law, California state law, and the County Charter. The Public Defender provides wide-ranging legal representation, including investigative services, to people appointed to the department by the courts. These people cannot afford a private attorney and may be facing incarceration or other consequences. Clients of the department include:

- Adults accused of felonies or misdemeanors, including both new cases and violations of probation (VOP), and those requiring mandatory community supervision (MCS) or post-release community supervision (PRCS);
- Juveniles accused of felonies or misdemeanors, including both new cases and VOPs;
- Mentally ill people who are gravely disabled (Lanterman-Petris-Short Act) conservatees on petitions for conservatorship;
- Probate conservatees and Limited Probate conservatees (seniors and developmentally delayed persons who are unable to care for themselves) on petitions for conservatorship, including legal work protecting them from financial fraud, undue influence, and/or abuse including jury trials and court trials;

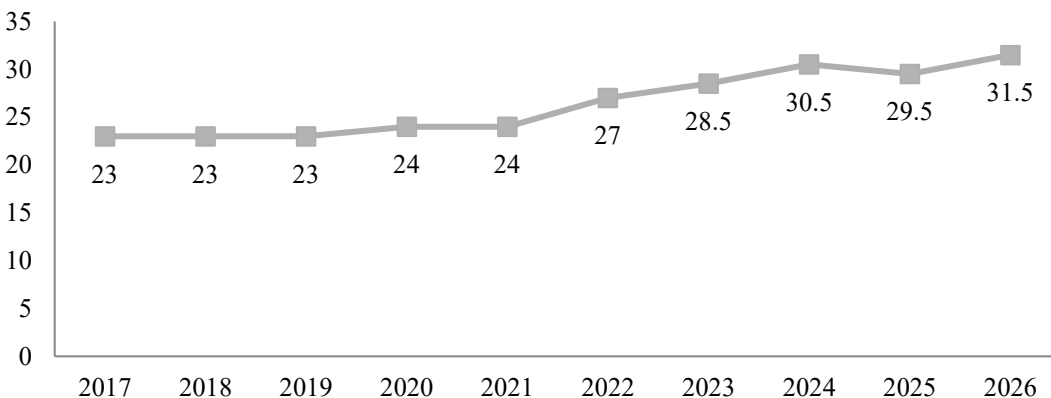
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- People who are facing involuntary psychiatric hospitalizations and/or people facing involuntary medication, including writ proceedings and contested hearings;
- Clients in specialty courts, such as Veterans' Court, Mental Health Diversion Court, Behavioral Health Court, Prop 36 Court, and Family Wellness Court with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, when accepted into those programs as part of the overall justice mandate to reduce crime and help people safely re-enter the community;
- People who are facing contempt of court charges brought by private attorneys and/or private people in Family Law Court or other civil matters, as the potential outcome is jail. This includes contested hearings and trials; and
- People who are referred to CARE Court, a new type of civil court case mandated by the State of California, intended to help manage the crisis of mental illness in our communities.

STAFFING TREND

The recommended staff allocation for FY 2025-26 is 31.5 FTEs, which includes the addition of 2.0 FTE Deputy Attorneys funded with CCP funds. After the adoption of the FY 2024-25 Budget, the Board approved to dissolve the Criminal Attorneys' Association and to add new classifications for employees that were in that bargaining unit to align the classifications with the qualifications and experience required for the existing Deputy County Counsel classification series on April 1, 2025 (Legistar #25-0501). With that item, 7.0 FTE Deputy Attorneys and 5.0 FTE Sr. Attorneys were added, and 12.0 FTE Deputy Public Defender I-IVs were deleted from the Public Defender's personnel allocation.



SOURCES & USES OF FUNDS

The department is primarily funded with discretionary General Fund revenue; however, the department does receive a share of the Public Safety sales tax (\$463,219), as well as funding from Public Safety Realignment (\$771,319). The Public Safety Realignment funding will be used for 2.0 FTE Deputy Attorneys, staff training, and additional eligible expenses. This budget also includes grant funding from the BSCC for the Public Defense Pilot Program (\$148,337), grant revenue from the Edward Byrne JAG Program (\$250,835), AB 143 Criminal Backfill funding (\$490,270), and Public Defender Sub Account funding (\$88,000).