

**Public Defender**  
**RECOMMENDED BUDGET • FY 2026-27**

**RECOMMENDED BUDGET**

The Public Defender’s Office budget is recommended at \$7,079,201, which is an increase of \$115,293 (1.66%) when compared to the FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget. Revenue is recommended at \$2,019,215, a decrease of \$192,765 (8.71%) compared to FY 2025-26. The General Fund support is 71.5% and is increased by \$308,058 (6.48%) when compared to the FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget. The increase in General Fund support is primarily due to increases in Salaries and Benefits, which include Board-approved salary increases, health premium increases, and increased CalPERS unfunded accrued liability payment.

**DEPARTMENT BUDGET SUMMARY**

Description	FY 2024-25 Actual	Current Year Adopted	CAO Recommended	Difference from Adopted
IG Rev - State	286,244	611,556	823,878	212,322
IG Rev - Federal	215,303	250,835	3,450	(247,385)
Other Fin Sources	285,820	1,349,589	1,191,887	(157,702)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>787,367</b>	<b>2,211,980</b>	<b>2,019,215</b>	<b>(192,765)</b>
Salaries & Benefits	4,869,300	6,287,390	6,505,944	218,554
Services & Supplies	515,346	628,968	570,907	(58,061)
Other Charges	166,623	0	0	0
Other Fin Uses	0	45,000	0	(45,000)
Intrafund Transfers	1,795	2,550	2,350	(200)
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>5,553,064</b>	<b>6,963,908</b>	<b>7,079,201</b>	<b>115,293</b>
<b>FUND 1000 GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>4,765,697</b>	<b>4,751,928</b>	<b>5,059,986</b>	<b>308,058</b>

**MAJOR BUDGET CHANGES**

Revenues

*State Revenue*

- \$178,373      Increase in state funding due to new Opioid Remediation Program funding.
- \$33,949      Increase in Public Safety Sales Tax due to growing sales tax receipts in the statewide sales tax pool.

*Federal Revenue*

- (\$247,385)    Decrease in federal funding due to the expiration of the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding.

*Other Financial Sources*

- \$87,433      Increase in use of District Attorney/Public Defender Subfund special revenue funding.

# Public Defender

## RECOMMENDED BUDGET • FY 2026-27

---

(\$245,135) Decrease in Operating Transfers In due to Criminal Fee Backfill funding ending in FY 2026-27.

### Appropriations

#### *Salaries and Benefits*

\$185,360 Increase in Salaries and Benefits due to the addition of 1.0 FTE Social Worker II and 0.60 FTE Paralegal for the Opioid Remediation Program mostly offset with revenue.

(\$86,134) Decrease in Salaries and Benefits due to the deletion of 1.0 FTE Paralegal assigned to the JAG funding that will expire in FY 2025-26.

(\$182,000) Decrease in Salaries and Benefits based on a vacancy rate estimated using the average cost of an Associate Attorney to reduce Net County Cost, based upon historical vacancy rates.

\$212,625 Increase in Salaries and Benefits expenses primarily due to Board-approved compensation increases and employee step increases.

\$58,901 Increase in CalPERS employer's contribution due to increases to the County's unfunded accrued liability payment.

\$25,411 Increase in Health Insurance premiums.

\$8,180 Increase in Retiree Health Program charges.

(\$3,789) 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*

\$10,700 Increase in Computer Software/Licenses and Online Subscriptions due to annual license increases.

\$5,450 Increase due to adjustments across multiple objects to align the budget to actual costs.

\$3,190 Increase in Rent and Lease: Buildings and Improvements due to annual contracted lease increases.

(\$7,403) Decrease in travel-related expenses due to grant projects concluding in FY 2025-26.

(\$13,500) Decrease in Professional and Specialized Services due to grant projects concluding in FY 2025-26.

(\$56,498) Decrease in General Liability insurance premium expense as the Department's share of overall County claims incurred and payroll has decreased from prior years, decreasing their Liability insurance premium expense.

# Public Defender

## RECOMMENDED BUDGET • FY 2026-27

---

### *Other Financial Uses*

(\$45,000) Decrease in Operating Transfers Out to Fleet due to a vehicle being purchased in FY 2025-26.

### *Intrafund Transfers*

(\$200) Decrease in Intrafund Transfers due to decreased facilities maintenance charges.

## 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;
- 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 Family Support attorneys or 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 newer type of civil court case mandated by the State of California, intended to help manage the crisis of mental illness in our communities.

# Public Defender

## RECOMMENDED BUDGET • FY 2026-27

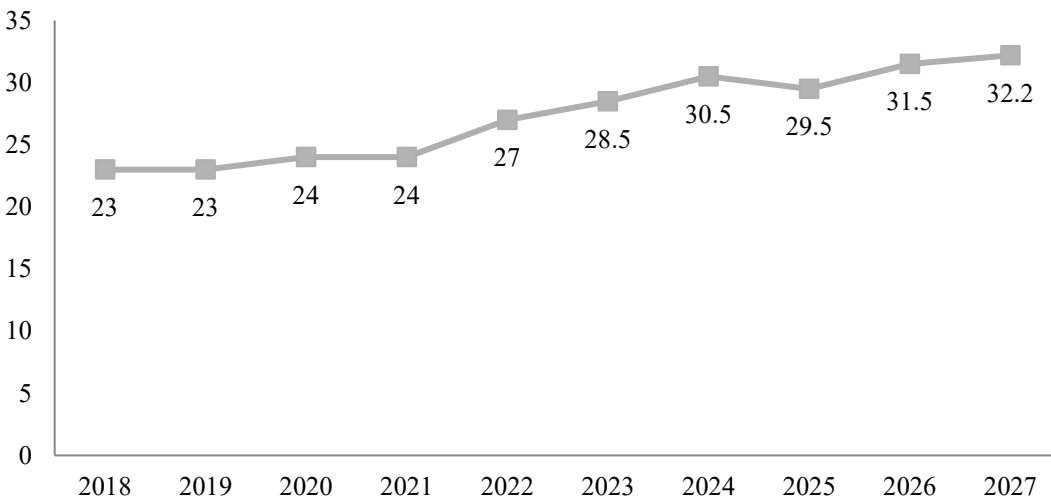
---

### STAFFING TREND

The recommended staff allocation for FY 2026-27 is 32.2 FTEs, which includes the addition of 1.0 FTE Social Worker I/II and 0.6 FTE Paralegal I/II funded with the Opioid Remediation Program and the deletion of 1.0 FTE Limited Term Paralegal I/II due to the expiration of JAG grant funding. After the adoption of the FY 2025-26 Budget, the Board approved the addition of 1.0 FTE Investigator I/II (Public Defender) and 0.1 FTE Sr. Office Assistant and the deletion of 1.0 FTE Investigative Assistant I/II on January 27, 2026, with Legistar file [26-0132](#).

During FY 2025-26, one vacant Deputy Attorney allocation was alternately filled with an Associate Attorney, four vacant Sr. Attorneys were alternately filled with Associate Attorneys, and one vacant Sr. Attorney was alternately filled with a Deputy Attorney. The Recommended Budget includes carrying over these underfills to allow for flexibility in the recruitment for these positions that are typically difficult to recruit for.

During FY 2025-26, one vacant Supervising Deputy Public Defender was alternately filled with an Assistant Public Defender. The Recommended Budget revises the allocation to match the current classification of the 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 (\$497,168), as well as funding from Public Safety Realignment (\$771,319). This budget also includes grant funding from the BSCC for the Public Defense Pilot Program (\$153,645), grant revenue from the Edward Byrne JAG Program (\$3,450), funding from the Opioid Remediation Program (\$173,065), AB 143 Criminal Backfill funding (\$245,135), and Public Defender Sub Account funding (\$175,433).