



Legislation Text

File #: 23-158, Version: 1

Memorandum

Date: February 14, 2023

To: The Honorable Lake County Board of Supervisors

From: Anita L. Grant, County Counsel
Carlos Torrez, Deputy County Counsel

Subject: Presentation of Initial Steps in the County's Ongoing Review of the Provision of Legal Services for Indigent Criminal Defendants

Executive Summary:

This office was asked several months ago to provide assistance in the course of the above-described review. It is important to note that the public defenders in this County have extremely demanding jobs which take a great deal of time, attention, and legal knowledge to perform. This work and the individuals who perform that work in Lake County are worthy of considerable respect.

It is our understanding that the ongoing review by the County is in no way directed toward the performances of the individual attorneys performing these services. The review is directed toward the improvement of the system for the provision of these services and the mechanisms to make such improvements.

The Administrative Office is, of course, leading this review. We have simply been asked to make certain recommendations. Those recommendations are as follows:

1. Reconstitute the Public Defender Advisory Committee to include an attorney who has substantial prior experience as a public defender but does not presently provide those services in Lake County, an individual who has previously been an indigent defendant in Lake County, and a member of the Board of Supervisors. Additionally, the committee should include persons whose voices are not always heard: Native Americans, Latino/Hispanic Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and members of the LGBTQ+ communities.
2. Initiate and develop a community-based approach to criminal defense services, utilizing the services of Lake County Behavioral Health, Lake County Social Services, and numerous service-based groups in the County
3. Retain the services of a former public defender to assist the County in ensuring the comprehensive provision of indigent defense services.

4. Continue to pursue grant funding to initiate any desired improvements to the indigent defense system.

If not budgeted, fill in the blanks below only:

Estimated Cost: _____ Amount Budgeted: _____ Additional Requested: _____ Future Annual Cost: _____

Purchasing Considerations (check all that apply):

☐ Not applicable

- ☐ Fully Article X. <https://library.municode.com/ca/lake_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_CH2AD_ARTXPU_S2-38EXCOBI>- and/or Consultant Selection Policy <http://lcnet.co.lake.ca.us/Assets/Intranet/Policy/Policies+26+Procedures+Manual/Ch4_2021v2.pdf>-Compliant (*describe process undertaken in "Executive Summary"*)
- ☐ Section 2-38 <https://library.municode.com/ca/lake_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_CH2AD_ARTXPU_S2-38EXCOBI> Exemption from Competitive Bidding (*rationale in "Executive Summary," attach documentation, as needed*)
- ☐ For Technology Purchases: Vetted and Supported by the Technology Governance Committee <<http://lcnet.co.lake.ca.us/Assets/Intranet/Intranet+Forms/Information+Technology/AdvPlan.pdf>> ("Yes," if checked)
- ☐ Other (*Please describe in Executive Summary*)

Consistency with Vision 2028 <<http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/Administration/Visioning/Vision2028.htm>>

(check all that apply):

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well-being of Residents | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Prevention, Preparedness, Recovery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> County Workforce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Collaboration | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Process Efficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear Lake |

Recommended Action: