




BOB DILLINGER
PUBLIC DEFENDER
SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable John Morroni, Commission Chair
Honorable Charlie Justice, Commission Vice-Chair
Honorable Dave Eggers
Honorable Pat Gerard
Honorable Janet Long
Honorable Karen Williams Seel
Honorable Kenneth Welch

From: Bob Dillinger 

Date: April 28, 2015

Re: Public Defender Budget

The Public Defender has reduced \$96,000 from the previous year's budget, and we have requested only a 1.5% increase in salaries, which was suggested by OMB.

The Public Defender's Office has hired a SOAR caseworker to concentrate on addressing the disability needs of Public Defender clients, and this caseworker is actively opening files and beginning the application process for these clients. The SOAR program allows for Social Security disability benefits to be received in three to six months, as opposed to the one to three years on a regular application. We have done SOAR on a very limited basis, and coincidentally have just been notified of the approval of SOAR benefits for one of our clients...the application process in this case took slightly under a full year. Now with our full-time SOAR person, we anticipate these cases can be settled much more quickly.

I believe continuing these services, as proposed, would be beneficial to the taxpayers and to the clients who are in need of these services.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me.

PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICES

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PUBLIC DEFENDER

The Public Defender's office provides legal advice, counsel, and defense services to needy and financially indigent citizens accused of crimes, as required by Florida law. The County portion of the budget funds Article V related technology requirements, the Jail Diversion, Incompetent to Proceed (ITP) programs and SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) is proposed to receive County funding in FY16.

0001 GENERAL FUND

Department Revenues by Fund / Account		FY15 Revised Budget (a)	FY16 Request		FY16 Request vs. FY15 Bud %	
0001	General Fund Tax Support	940,570	889,000		(51,570)	-5.5%
	Document Recording Fees (\$2 Fee)	151,530	110,410		(41,120)	-27.1%
Total Revenues & Fund Balance		1,092,100	999,410		(92,690)	-8.5%
Department Expenditures by Program				FTE by Program		
0001	Public Defender - Technology	256,100	160,640	n/a	(95,460)	-37.3%
	Jail Diversion - BCC Funds	612,430	612,430	n/a	-	0.0%
	Incompetent to Proceed	163,570	165,440	n/a	1,870	1.1%
	SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery	60,000	60,900	n/a	900	1.5%
Total Expenditures		1,092,100	999,410		(92,690)	-8.5%
Personnel Summary						
County-Funded FTE (Full-time equivalent positions)		0.0		0.0	0	*****
State-Funded FTE (Full-time equivalent positions)		228.0		228.0		
Total FTE (Full-time equivalent positions)		228.0		228.0		

Target Reconciliation

FY16 Budget Request Target (b)	\$	848,540
Target Variance	\$	(9,770) Under

PUBLIC DEFENDER TOTAL BUDGET	FY15 Budget	% of Total	FY16 Request	% of Total
County Portion (above, excluding grants)	1,092,100	7.1%	999,410	6.4%
(c) Direct State Support	14,288,736	92.9%	14,685,595	93.6%
Total Budget	15,380,836	100.0%	15,685,005	100.0%



(a) FY15 Revised budget as of 01/31/2015.

(b) The target is only applicable to the Jail Diversion -BCC Funds, Incompetent to Proceed and SOAR programs, excluding grant-supported expenditures. These programs are completely discretionary.

The Technology program is assumed to be subject to Article V requirements.

(c) State budget figures include positions and expenditures for the entire Sixth Circuit (Pinellas & Pasco).

FY16 State budget is not final at this time.

Agency:

Public Defender

Program Descriptions

NAME	DESCRIPTION
Public Defender-Technology Program	Article V of the State Constitution requires counties to provide funding for all reasonable and necessary technology and communications functions for the Judiciary, State Attorney and Public Defender. Funding is partially supported by Court Fees.
Public Defender-Jail Diversion-BCC Funds	This program is a collaborative effort of the Public Defender, State Attorney, Pinellas County Sheriff, the Judiciary, and local service providers to reduce the incidence and length of incarceration of individuals diagnosed with mental illness or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorder.
Public Defender-Jail Diversion-State DCF Grants	This is supplemental grant funding for the Jail Diversion Program. The availability and amounts of grants are variable and subject to approval by State authorities.
Incompetent to Proceed	Since FY07, the Board of County Commissioners has funded a program for case management assistance to non-violent criminal misdemeanor offenders who have mental health issues. These persons are not eligible for other jail diversion programs which are only available to felony offenders.
SOAR Program	The SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program allows for Social Security disability benefits to be received in three to six months, as opposed to the one to three years on a regular application. Funding is for one position in the Public Defender's Office to assist clients in having benefits available when they are released from jail.

