

ERIC F. RINEHART

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MEMO

DATE: May 31, 2024
TO: Patrice Sutton, County Administrator
FROM: Lake County State's Attorney's Office
RE: Request for new headcount: K10 Assistant State's Attorney

The State's Attorney's Office is requesting a new Assistant State's Attorney position due to the increased workload on our lawyers since the implementation of the SAFE-T Act.

Our office was graciously given one K10 ASA position during the FY2022 budget in anticipation of the SAFE-T Act going into effect on January 1, 2023 (We originally requested 2 attorney positions and one victim specialist). When the Act ultimately went into effect on September 18, 2023, our office immediately filled the K10 Attorney Safe-T Act position.

While we have attempted to manage an increased workload over the last year, the duties are becoming increasingly difficult to manage. The timelines on the detention process have placed a burden on all attorneys in our Felony Review Division.

Instead of a single court appearance in which a cash bond is decided, the SAFE-T Act requires a two-step process. The first step is called "First Appearance Court." At this court date, the State decides whether to file a detention petition. These petitions then need to be immediately drafted by an attorney. That petition is then heard during a second step called "the Detention Hearing." These Detention Hearings must occur relatively quickly as agreed upon by the judge and the attorneys – usually within 48 hours not counting weekends.

The attorneys in our Felony Review Division were already responsible for screening all felony charges (including during overnight hours), running first appearance court 5 days a week, handling search warrants and arrest warrant requests from all Lake County agencies, and preparing and presenting to the Grand Jury each week. This already overwhelming workload has increased exponentially with the Safe-T Act. The additional Safe-T Act duties of reviewing every new case for detention decisions, filing petitions, preparing for hearings, working with a victim specialist on victim notification, and running daily detention hearings is not sustainable for one attorney.

We have spent the last eight months learning to navigate the new requirements under the SAFE-T Act and have come to the realization that we need more staff to continue the

exemplary prosecution and service to victims that we pride ourselves on. We are asking the County to create and fund a second K10 Assistant State's Attorney dedicated to work under the SAFE-T Act. The total needed to fund this request is \$147,859.58. This includes \$104,359.58 in salary, \$40,000 in benefits, and \$3,500 in computer equipment for the position.

State's Attorney Rinehart and I are available for any additional questions that County Administration or the Lake County Board have on this request.

Respectfully submitted,



Lauren M. Callman
First Assistant
Lake County State's Attorney