



Lake County Public Defender

May 6, 2025

**Gregory Ticsay
Public Defender**

Department Overview

Primary Functions:

Provide constitutionally mandated legal representation to:

- **Indigent accused—adults and juveniles, charged with criminal offenses**
- **Parents accused of the abuse, neglect, dependency of children**
- **Respondents to Mental Health/Medication petitions**
- **Sexually Violent and Sexually Dangerous Persons Petitions**
- **Post-Conviction Petitioners**
- **Individuals accused of contempt of court**

2025 Department Budget



\$6,157,437

- **Approximately 89% of budget is related to personnel costs**
- **100% funded by the County**
- **Two thirds of Public Defender salary reimbursed by the State**
- **Nominal revenue generated by imposition of Public Defender Fees which is paid to general fund**
- **Budget decrease from FY24 due to personnel reduction (GAL division)**

Department Overview

The Public Defender's Office staffs 15 courtrooms and handles approximately 25 court calls daily. This includes:

- 5 Felony courtrooms (Staffed 5 days/week)**
- 6 Misdemeanor/Traffic courtrooms (Staffed 5 days/week)**
- 1 First Appearance courtroom (Staffed 7 days/week)**
- 1 Detention courtroom (staffed 5 days/week)**
- 2 Juvenile courtrooms (Staffed 6 days/week)**
- 1 Specialty & Fitness/MH courtroom (Staffed 5 days/week)**

Chief Public Defender

Supervisors:

- Felony
- Traffic/Misdemeanor
- Juvenile—Delinquency/Parent
- Special Defense/Training/Conflicts
- Investigations
- Business Manager/Support Staff

Current Staffing:

- 13 Felony Attorneys (2 vacancies)
- 13 Misdemeanor/Traffic Attorneys (1 vacancy)
- 2 Delinquency/Parent Attorneys
- 2 Specialty Court Attorneys
- 2 Investigators
- 1 Immigration Analyst
- 2 Social Workers
- 6 Support Staff
- 1 Paralegal

	2023	2024
New Case Appointments:	9,060	10,451 (↑15%)
Supplemental Appointments:	1,703	1,729 (↑1.5%)

- **Approximately 15% increase in new case appointments LY; TY 30% increase in felony appointments in 1Q 25**
- **PFA procedures have directly impacted new case appointments**
- **Change in case management system to eDefender has impacted statistics. We will continue to work to address deficiencies.**

Accomplishments in the Previous 12 Months:

- **Created processes to meet demands of implementation of SAFE-T Act**
- **Implementing new case management system—E-Defender**
- **Implemented new digital evidence management system—Axon**
- **Continue to refer clients to Specialty Court programs to address substance abuse and mental health issues and potentially reduce recidivism**
- **Implemented procedures to assure effective attorney/client communications with inmates housed in McHenry County Jail**
- **Increase in new hire applications following Compensation Study adjustments**
- **Connected clients with SA/MH treatment referrals and aided with employment and housing assistance**

Upcoming Challenges

- **Recruitment and Retention of Attorneys**
 - Inability to recruit qualified attorneys (3 vacancies currently)
 - Loss of staff due to lack of competitive salaries
- **Increased workloads**
 - Increased use of body cam video
 - Increase in number of appointments for violent and complex crimes
 - Appointed on every arrestee by default due to PFA
- **Digital Discovery Retention**
 - Need to protect confidentiality of client files
- **Pending Legislation establishing a Statewide Public Defender**
 - Caseload standards might impact staffing needs



Questions?