

# Annual Performance Report

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**Office of the State Public Defender**

**MEGAN A. RING**  
**Colorado State Public Defender**

# Performance Evaluation

## General Description

### Mission

The mission of the Office of the State Public Defender is to defend and protect the rights, liberties, and dignity of those accused of crimes who cannot afford to retain counsel. We do so by providing constitutionally and statutorily mandated representation that is effective, zealous, inspired and compassionate.

#### ***OSPD Enabling Legislation.***

*The general assembly hereby declares that the state public defender at all times shall serve his clients independently of any political considerations or private interest, provide legal services to indigent persons accused of crime that are commensurate with those available to nonindigents, and conduct the office in accordance with the Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct and with the American Bar Association standards relating to the administration of criminal justice, the defense function. C.R.S. 21-1-101(1).*

### Vision

It is the vision of the Office of the State Public Defender that every OSPD client served receives excellent legal representation through the delivery of high quality legal services and compassionate support from a team of dedicated Public Defenders.

### Description

The Office of the State Public Defender (OSPD) is a single purpose program that is devoted to providing effective criminal defense representation to indigent persons charged with crimes except where there is a conflict of interest. Our clients are indigent people who, faced with the possibility of incarceration, are unable to afford private counsel and without counsel would otherwise be denied their constitutional right to representation throughout the criminal proceedings. Attorneys, investigators and legal support staff are necessary to provide effective representation of counsel as mandated by the federal and state constitutions, Colorado Revised Statutes, Colorado Court Rules, American Bar Association standards, and the Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct. The OSPD system is the most efficient means of meeting these requirements.

The OSPD is an independent agency within the Judicial Branch of Colorado state government. The Courts appoint the OSPD when a defendant qualifies for public defender services pursuant to statute, applicable case law and Chief Justice Directives.

To support the OSPD in the representation of their FY 2022-23 projected caseload, the OSPD was appropriated \$129,853,751 and 1050 FTE. This is comprised of approximately 577 attorneys; 173 investigators, 69 paralegals; 23 social workers; 154 administrative assistants and 54 centralized management and support positions. In addition, to support OSPD in the digital age, the OSPD was appropriated \$4,110,754 in IT Capital to address the proliferation of electronic records and digital media that has impacted the workload, storage costs, and business strategies across all industries including the criminal legal system.

## Priorities

In keeping with the Office’s mission and vision, we have developed the following goals, strategies and measures.

**Goals:**

1. Provide effective attorney services and advocacy in both the trial and appellate courts throughout the state of Colorado for indigent clients.
2. Hire and retain a sufficient number of quality staff to effectively manage the ever-increasing workload in each office in the state.
3. Provide a high quality and quantity of staff development, training, technology support and other resources to adapt our response to the constantly changing criminal legal system so that our advocacy and legal services are commensurate with those available for non-indigent persons as is required by our statute.

**Strategies:**

1. Hire a sufficient number of high quality staff and retain an adequate level of experienced staff in order to effectively manage the assigned caseload.
2. Track and analyze trends in caseloads and adjust staffing levels.
3. Provide training to address the changing legal climate.
4. Continually evaluate administrative processes and organizational infrastructure needs such as office space, technology and staffing.
5. Work all cases as efficiently as possible, while retaining a high quality of effective and reasonable representation.

**Performance Measures**

		FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25
		(actual)	(actual)	(projected)	(projected)	(projected)
<b>MEASURE 1:</b>						
	<b>Target</b>	<b>119,229</b>	<b>136,144</b>	<b>135,034</b>	<b>139,085</b>	<b>143,258</b>
Number of new trial court cases.	Actual	113,453	127,391			
<b>MEASURE 2:</b>						
	<b>Target</b>	<b>165,029</b>	<b>175,221</b>	<b>184,968</b>	<b>190,517</b>	<b>196,233</b>
Number of active trial court cases.	Actual	159,292	179,581			

		FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25
		(actual)	(actual)	(projected)	(projected)	(projected)
<b>MEASURE 3:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Percent of trial court attorney staff allocated vs. total required for closed trial court cases.		Actual	80%	79%		
<b>MEASURE 4:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>
Number of attorney applications received.		Actual	500	410		
<b>MEASURE 5:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Percent of total attorney staff allocated vs. total required for closed trial court cases and appellate cases.		Actual	81%	80%		
<b>MEASURE 6:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Annual rates of attrition:						
Attorneys	Actual	15%	21%			
Investigators	Actual	9%	10%			
Administrative Assistants	Actual	19%	30%			
Total All Employees	Actual	14%	19%			
<b>MEASURE 7:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>70%</b>
Percent of experienced, fully capable staff (journey level or higher):						
Attorneys	Actual	39%	39%			
Investigators	Actual	57%	53%			
Administrative Assistants	Actual	41%	36%			
Total All Employees	Actual	45%	43%			
<b>MEASURE 8:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Percent compliance with minimum standards for total staffing requirements.		Actual	83%	80%		
<b>MEASURE 9:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Maintain established standard percentages for reasonable staff supervision, management and development.		Actual	10%	9%		
<b>MEASURE 10:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>495</b>
Number of new appellate cases.		Actual	256	379		
<b>MEASURE 11:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>1,870</b>	<b>1,627</b>	<b>1,629</b>	<b>1,596</b>
Number of active appellate cases.		Actual	1,602	1,556		

		FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25
		(actual)	(actual)	(projected)	(projected)	(projected)
<b>MEASURE 12:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Percent of appellate attorney staff allocated vs. total required for appellate cases awaiting filing of initial brief.		Actual	85%			
<b>MEASURE 13:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>105,353</b>	<b>129,507</b>	<b>134,333</b>	<b>138,362</b>
Number of trial court cases closed.		Actual	107,099	130,421		
<b>MEASURE 14:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>193</b>
Days of training provided.		Actual	69	182		
<b>MEASURE 15:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
Number of CLE credits provided to all attorneys.		Actual	12	14		
<b>MEASURE 16:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Hours of ethics training provided, focusing on Colorado criminal law.		Actual	2.2	2		
<b>MEASURE 17:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
Number of administrative processes and organizational infrastructure evaluations performed.		Actual	15	15		
<b>MEASURE 18:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>378</b>
Number of appellate cases for which an Opening Brief has been filed.		Actual	433	310		
<b>MEASURE 19:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>324</b>
Number of backlogged appellate cases.		Actual	287	299		