



LAW OFFICES OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY
PUBLIC DEFENDER

THE
STRATEGIC PLAN
2020-2025

FIGHTING FOR OUR CLIENTS' FUTURES

LAW OFFICES OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER
THE STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION:

The Los Angeles County Public Defender’s Office is the finest client-centered criminal defense firm in the nation, providing a beacon for evolutionary and revolutionary changes in the justice system.

MISSION:

By 2025, measurably reduce incarceration and the collateral consequences of contact with the criminal justice system in Los Angeles County.

VALUES:

Advocacy: *We are zealous Defenders, working relentlessly to meet the needs of our clients.*

Compassion: *We listen to our clients, respect their life experience, and tell their story.*

Dedication: *We are passionate about indigent defense.*

Collaboration: *We work with County and community stakeholders to achieve our clients’ goals.*

Law Offices of the Los Angeles County Public Defender

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS, STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

I. Client-Focused Services as a Public Value

Our success is the ability to provide the highest quality representation to our clients. We will expand our 6th amendment mandate and extend our services to clients and their families beyond their criminal case.

GOAL LEADER: Chief Deputy, Justine Esack

Strategy I.1: Adult and Juvenile Trial Advocacy. Assure attorneys have access to the trial resources needed to assertively litigate on behalf of clients.

Strategy Leader: Haydeh B. Takasugi & Jacques Cain

Objective I.1.1: Team-Based Representation – By **6/2023**, develop criteria and internal procedures for the use of trial teams in the defense of clients; by **6/2024**, begin implementation.

TEAM LEAD: Verah Bradford

Maria Sapene – Investigator
Sonjia White – DIC - Inglewood (Juvenile)
Garrett Miller – Felony Attorney
Mary-Alice Burns – Senior Paralegal,
Angela Cheung – Felony Attorney
Sonia Marquez -- Mental Health Clinical Supervisor

Objective I.1.2: Workload Determination – By **6/2023**, complete an in-depth attorney workload analysis to determine adequate staffing requirements.

TEAM LEAD: Jeff Gilliam

Shelan Joseph - Special Circumstance Attorney
Monica Thelan - Special Circumstance Attorney
Michael Saltzman - Felony Attorney
Kate Degovia – Felony Attorney - Collab & Restore
Jessica Weinhold – Psychiatric Social Worker
Maria Sapene - Investigator

Objective I.1.3: Investigation Practice – By **6/2021**, modernize our investigation methods through the use of the latest technologies, so we can aggressively and thoroughly defend clients.

TEAM LEAD: Al Menaster

Tamara Gayden – Supervising Investigator
George Moreno – Investigator
Tammy Duong – investigator
Roger Moore – Investigator
JR Rodriguez – Investigator

Strategy I.2: Holistic Advocacy. Ensure that clients have seamless access to both legal and non-legal services necessary to address their unique set of circumstances.

Strategy Leader: Christina Behle

Objective I.2.1: Support Resources – By **6/2022**, establish formal agreements with County Departments and community agencies to provide supportive, non-legal services for our clients.

TEAM LEAD: Mitch Bruckner

The Community Support initiative (CSI) Team:

Tom Moore – Head Deputy
Nick-Stewart-Oaten - Appellate Attorney
Nancy Richards-Chand – DIC – Collaborative Courts
Shelan Joseph - Special Circumstance Attorney
Dana Cherry- Social Worker Manager
Carolyn Miner – Felony Attorney
Katherine DeGovia – Attorney Collab & Restore
Yoori Chung – Misdemeanor Attorney
Marta Eggers – Misdemeanor Attorney
Shannon Belsheim – Misdemeanor Attorney
Phillip Okonman - Misdemeanor Attorney
Joseph Searcy - Paralegal
Sheryl Fears - LOSA
Alma Gutierrez – Senior Typist
Eva Maria Alba - LOSA
Randy Kaplan – Felony Attorney
Patricia Ysabel Maglabe - LOSA

Objective I.2.2: Bridge Services – By **6/2025**, provide linkage to legal and non-legal services for clients upon their release from custody, including, but not limited to housing, employment, health, and mental health assistance.

TEAM LEAD: Irene Nunez

The Community Support initiative (CSI) Team:

Tom Moore – Head Deputy
Nick-Stewart-Oaten - Appellate Attorney
Nancy Richards-Chand – DIC - Collaborative Courts
Shelan Joseph - Special Circumstance Attorney
Dana Cherry- Social Worker Manager
Carolyn Miner – Felony Attorney
Katherine DeGovia – Attorney Collab & Restore
Yoori Chung – Misdemeanor Attorney
Marta Eggers – Misdemeanor Attorney
Shannon Belsheim – Misdemeanor Attorney
Phillip Okonman - Misdemeanor Attorney
Joseph Searcy - Paralegal
Sheryl Fears - LOSA
Alma Gutierrez – Senior Typist
Eva Maria Alba - LOSA
Randy Kaplan – Felony Attorney
Patricia Ysabel Maglabe - LOSA

Strategy I.3: Civil Representation. Provide quality civil justice defense to indigent and underrepresented populations on issues that affect their quality of life, including immigration rights, tenant-landlord issues, and consumer and workplace protection.

Strategy Leader: Crisostomo Mercurio & Graciela Martinez

Objective I.3.1: Operating Model – By **12/2020**, develop a collaborative inter-department and inter-sector model and accompanying policies and procedures for civil representation of clients.

TEAM LEAD: TBD

Rachel Hall – Misdemeanor Attorney
Lauren Altes – Misdemeanor Attorney
Rogelio Gomez – Felony Attorney
Magaly Gil - Felony Attorney
Murrey Correa – Felony Attorney (Misd Trainer)
Jessica Lopez - Paralegal
Katrina Eiden – Misdemeanor Attorney
Evan Franzel – Misdemeanor Attorney
Dana Cherry – Social Worker Manager
Holly Evans – DIC – Homeless Mobile Unit
Yoori Chung - Misdemeanor Attorney
Jeanette Hernandez – Paralegal
Elsa Leyva – immigration Attorney
Glendy Ortiz – Immigration Attorney

Objective I.3.2: Civil Unit Pilot– By **12/2021**, obtain resource support to initiate a pilot program, including the establishment of a civil unit and the hiring of dedicated civil attorneys.

TEAM LEAD: TBD

Rachel Hall – Misdemeanor Attorney
Lauren Altes – Misdemeanor Attorney
Rogelio Gomez – Felony Attorney
Magaly Gil - Felony Attorney
Murrey Correa – Felony Attorney (Misd Trainer)
Jessica Lopez - Paralegal
Katrina Eiden – Misdemeanor Attorney
Evan Franzel – Misdemeanor Attorney
Dana Cherry – Social Worker Manager
Holly Evans - DIC
Yoori Chung - Misdemeanor Attorney
Jeanette Hernandez – Paralegal
Elsa Leyva – immigration Attorney
Glendy Ortiz – Immigration Attorney

GOAL LEADER: Chief of Staff, Bill Stone

II. Justice and Fairness

Our responsibility is to confront injustice and ensure fairness. We will identify biases and inequities, broaden public awareness, and work to pursue systemic change.

Strategy II.1: Legislative and Professional Advocacy. Champion criminal justice reform at the state and national levels and through professional affiliations for the benefit of our clients.

Strategy Leader: Nick Stewart-Oaten & Graciela Martinez

Objective II.1.1: Public Policy Committee – By **12/2020**, establish a team to coordinate advocacy efforts throughout the County and State, including legislation, policy, and social media.

TEAM LEADS: Jimmy Chu & Jane Newman

Donna Tryfman – Felony Attorney
Mark Harvis - Appellate Attorney
Marta Eggers – Misdemeanor Attorney
Bobby Hill – Felony Attorney
Susie Cooley - Misdemeanor Attorney
Danielle Humphrey-Iddrissu - Misdemeanor Attorney
Judith Green – PIO

Objective II.1.2: In-Custody Outreach – By **12/2023**, establish formal agreements with the Probation and Sheriff's Departments that permit Public Defenders to conduct informal group sessions for wards and inmates regarding their rights and our roles.

TEAM LEADS: Jimmy Chu & Casey Lilienfeld

Team members TBD

Strategy II.2: Public Awareness. Expand county-wide knowledge and understanding of the inadequacies in the criminal justice system that disproportionately impacts people of color and women.

Strategy Leader: Casey Lilienfeld & Sanders Smith

Objective II.2.1: Informational Campaign - By **12/2021**, broaden the role and required skills of the Public Information Officer to include, but not be limited to social media posts, speech writing, and brochure preparation; by **6/2022**, develop and implement a three-year plan through traditional conventional news outlets, targeted social media, and speaking engagements to broaden awareness of the biases and inequities in the criminal justice system.

TEAM LEAD: Traci Blackburn

Ruby Mejia – Felony Attorney
Flora Demuth – Juve Resource Attorney
David Fujimoto - DIC – East Los Angeles
Elizabeth Cirelli - Misdemeanor Attorney
Drew Havens - Misdemeanor Attorney
Travis Glick - Misdemeanor Attorney
Tamara Kagel - Misdemeanor Attorney
Mychele Sims - Investigator
Katrina Eiden - Misdemeanor Attorney

Objective II.2.2: Community Engagement - By **6/2021**, each Branch will establish a community involvement program, including attendance at community meetings, participation in local educational programs, and attendance at community social events.

TEAM LEAD: Gail Bristo & Jeff Gilliam & Mitch Bruckner

Shelan Joseph - Special Circumstance Attorney
Natalie Rojano – Psychiatric Social Worker
Rikki Sender – Felony Attorney
Juan Perez – Felony Attorney
Ashley Cormier - Paralegal
Winnie Young – Felony Attorney
Drew Havens – Misdemeanor Attorney
Audry Ward - Investigator
Jodi Lin – Felony Trials
Howard Stern - Misdemeanor Attorney
Johana Lucas-Cruz - Misdemeanor Attorney
Lauren R. Ellis - Misdemeanor Attorney

Objective II.2.3: Participatory Defense – By **6/2021**, pilot, a minimum of three value-added collaborative arrangements with family and community groups to assist with the defense of clients; implement a plan to extend these approaches throughout the County.

TEAM LEAD: Gail Bristo & Jane Newman

Shelan Joseph – Special Circumstance
Toral Malik - DIC - Inglewood
Melissa Monteleone – Senior Paralegal

GOAL LEADER: The Public Defender, Ricardo Garcia

III. Public Defender Redesign

Our current organization structure was established during an era when departments operated independently of each other and adherence to hierarchical models was the overarching design feature. We will reimagine our department to be more flexible and boundary-spanning in meeting our clients' needs.

Strategy III.1: Dual System Structure. Implement a hybrid structure – a traditional management structure focused on continuous process improvements and a loosely coupled network structure focused on strategic initiatives and large-scale change.

Strategy Leader: Marco Saenz & Sanders Smith

Objective III.1.1: Office Design - By **6/2020**, reconfigure the Office to emphasize best practices in trial advocacy, collaborative and holistic approaches to client representation, and more effective and efficient distribution of resources; by **12/2020**, obtain CEO approval for the new organization design and additions, deletions, position reclassifications, and space remodels.

TEAM LEAD: Rose Reglos

Team members TBD

Objective III.1.2: Shared Governance – By **12/2022**, create a “cascade” of formal decision-making committees throughout the Office as a governance framework for assessing new ideas and improving practice.

TEAM LEADS: Deborah Werbal & Jacques Cain

Team members TBD

Strategy III.2: Value-Added Partnerships - Establish formal collaborative relationships with other County departments, academic institutions, and community-based organizations to stimulate and advance new ideas on indigent advocacy.

Strategy Leader: Verah Bradford

Objective III.2.1: Regional Resource Networks – By **6/2024**, build regional networks, each supporting a major geographical area, to provide County and community intellectual resources to support client representation.

TEAM LEADS: TBD

Veronica Ramos – Felony Attorney
Ashley Price – Felony Attorney (ODR)
Ramon Quintana – Division Chief

GOAL LEADER: Admin Deputy, Jon Trochez

IV. Healthy People, Healthy Environment

Our work depends greatly on the willingness of our employees to provide zealous, inspired, and long-term service to our clients – to go a step beyond. We will support our staff by developing a set of organizational and workplace programs and practices that enhance their overall well-being.

Strategy IV.1: Work Environment. Upgrade/remodel the physical facilities to ensure a safe, comfortable, and productive workspace.

Strategy Leader: Sean McDonald

Objective IV.1.1: Physical Space – By **6/2025**, obtain CEO approval of a strategic space plan to improve the overall quality of our operational facilities; by **12/2025**, begin work on facilities renewal.

TEAM LEAD: TBD Team members TBD

Strategy IV.2: Employee Well-Being – Initiate education and training programs, professional services, and individual opportunities to contribute to employees’ overall health.

Strategy Leader: Rose Reglos

Objective IV.2.1: Wellness Assessments – By **12/2021**, complete both a Department-wide employee wellness survey and a review of public sector stress, burnout, and health programs to identify key components and best practices.

TEAM LEAD: Traci Blackburn

Rudy Rousseau – Division Chief
Haydeh Takasugi – Head Deputy
Stacey Donoso - Misdemeanor Attorney
Jody Marksamer - Misdemeanor Attorney
Verah Bradford – Head Deputy
James Coady – Head Deputy
Dana Cherry – Social Worker Manager
Nilda Cedeno – Management Secretary
Rhonda Chiles – Senior Secretary
Rhonda Cameron – Supervising Paralegal

Objective IV.2.2: Wellness Program – By **12/2022**, implement a comprehensive employee wellness program for managing stress, burnout, and related health issues.

TEAM LEAD: Jose Colon

Rudy Rousseau – Division Chief
Haydeh Takasugi – Head Deputy
Stacey Donoso - Misdemeanor Attorney
Jody Marksamer - Misdemeanor Attorney
Verah Bradford – Head Deputy
James Coady – Head Deputy
Dana Cherry – Social Worker Manager
Nilda Cedeno – Management Secretary
Rhonda Chiles – Senior Secretary
Rhonda Cameron – Supervising Paralegal

Strategy IV.3: Workforce Development. Prepare our diverse workforce for success in their careers through education, training, and other learning opportunities.

Strategy Leader: Greg Mc Cambridge

Objective IV.3.1: Training and Development – By **12/2020**, conduct a series of training and development need assessments; by **6/2022**, develop a comprehensive training program targeting all job classification levels; by **6/2023**, mandate a minimum number of hours of training and development for all employees every two years.

TEAM LEADS: Rose Reglos & John Alan

Sam Leonard – Felony Attorney - DNA
Randy Kaplan – Felony Attorney
Melanie Schoenberg – DIC - Airport
Debbie Uter - Supervising LOSA
Alexi Weiden – Psychiatric Social Worker

Strategy IV.4: Human Resource Policy and Process Review. Examine and, as appropriate, initiate changes to the Office's human resource policies, procedures, and practices to better align with today's dynamic environment and emergent employee requirements.

Strategy Leader: Crisostomo Mercurio

Objective IV.4.1: Department HR Handbook – By **6/2022**, review identified high priority policies and procedures, such as, but not limited to promotions, transfers, and performance evaluations and, as appropriate, initiate changes.

TEAM LEADS: Rob Kayne & Jeanmarie Klingenbeck

Bernie Dillon – Human Resource Manager
Nancy Salas – Management Analyst
Sarah Weil Reback – Felony Attorney
Danielle O'Sullivan – Felony Attorney
Reema Khan – Felony Attorney
Vera Kouljian – DIC (Juve)
Brian Woo – Juvenile Attorney

Objective IV.4.2: Support Personnel Resources – By **12/2024**, complete a gap analysis of actual versus needed support personnel (i.e. investigators, paralegals, social workers, administrative) at the operational site-specific level; by **6/2025**, design and implement an internal plan for reducing identified gaps through internal shifts and/or as part of the human resource hiring plan. –

TEAM LEAD: Suzie Oh

Martha Contreras - Lieutenant (Investigator)
Rhonda Cameron – Supervising Paralegal
Glenda Rodil – Manager Admin Services
Albert Lew – Information Technology Manager
Sandra Contreras – Senior Secretary

GOAL LEADER: Chief Information Officer, Mohammed Al Rawi

V. Organizational Operations & Systems

Our ability to take full advantage of our staff's talents necessitates a highly supportive infrastructure. We will adopt leading edge and innovative technologies that make information and advanced data analytics digitally readily available.

Strategy V.1: Information Technology (CCMS). Increase the use of technological tools to optimize decision making and our ability to meet client needs.

Strategy Leader: Marco Saenz & Jeanmarie Klingenbeck

Objective V.1.1: System of Record – By **12/2020**, modernize the PD 23 legacy systems into one cloud-based platform, representing a scalable System that is agile enough to meet future Business needs.

TEAM LEAD: Sean McDonald - Goal will be completed without need for a Team

Objective V.1.2: Data Accessibility – By **12/2020**, enable all professional personnel access to client-case data, documents, and digital evidence both offline and online.

TEAM LEAD: Debra Werbel

Team members TBD

Objective V.1.3: Data Analytics – By **6/2021**, develop the initial set of CCMS data analytics to guide resource decisions, program effectiveness, and policy considerations; by **6/2024**, expand the systems to additional decision-making areas.

TEAM LEADS: Diana Tsang & Sean McDonald

Team members TBD

Strategy V.2: Infrastructure Modernization. Develop and implement a five-year plan to add proven existing technologies and upgrade outdated” legacy” information systems.

Strategy Leader: Jose Colon

Objective V.2.1: Data Network – By **12/2025**, install a high-speed network and Wi-Fi infrastructure at all major operational locations.

TEAM LEAD: TBD

Team members TBD

Objective V.2.2: Computer Capability – By **6/2022**, upgrade all existing computers and deploy 900 new laptop and 300 new desktop computers.

TEAM LEAD: TBD

Team members TBD

Objective V.2.3: Phone System – By **6/2024**, Replace/Upgrade the Centrex system to a VoIP telephony infrastructure.

TEAM LEAD: TBD

Team members TBD

Objective V.2.4: Information/Communication Portal – By **6/2021**, provide a single internal communication portal to improve the flow, accessibility, and quality of information throughout the Office.

TEAM LEAD: Diana Tsang

Team members TBD

Strategy V.3: Innovation Initiatives: Research cost-efficient opportunities to adopt new technologies that improve client services and/or increase overall efficiencies.

Strategy Leader: Irene Nunez

Objective V.3.1: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) – By **6/2025**, install a cloud-based evidence processing system to automatically transcribe, index, and categorize digital evidence.

TEAM LEAD: TBD

Team members TBD

Strategy V.4: Policy Manual. Develop and implement an updated Policy Manual.

Strategy Leader: Jacques Cain & Christina Behle

Objective V.4.1: Policy Review – By **12/2021**, complete a systematic assessment and, as appropriate, revisions of the Departmental Handbook with a focus on improved efficiency, effectiveness, and empowered space for local decision-making.

TEAM LEAD: LEAD Rob Kayne

**Mike Suzuki – Division Chief
Gail Bristo – Head Deputy
Jacques Cain - Head Deputy
Christina Behle - Head Deputy
Sean McDonald – Head Deputy**

Objective V.4.2: Legal Alignment – By **12/2021**, ensure that all policies conform to State and Federal regulations.

TEAM LEAD: AI Menaster

**Natasha Brown – Appellate Attorney
Robin Bernstein-Lev – Appellate Attorney
Marta Egger – Misdemeanor Attorney**