

# 21 Public Defender-At a Glance

**Mission** To provide zealous representation and to fight for equal justice for the indigent accused.

**Budget Summary**

	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>
<b>Expenditures and Transfers:</b>			
GSD General Fund	\$ 6,616,500	\$ 6,894,600	\$ 7,358,300
Special Purpose Funds	15,500	9,500	0
<b>Total Expenditures and Transfers</b>	<u>\$ 6,632,000</u>	<u>\$ 6,904,100</u>	<u>\$ 7,358,300</u>
<b>Revenues and Transfers:</b>			
Program Revenue			
Charges, Commissions, and Fees	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Other Governments and Agencies	2,121,700	2,148,000	2,219,700
Other Program Revenue	0	0	0
<b>Total Program Revenue</b>	<u>\$ 2,121,700</u>	<u>\$ 2,148,000</u>	<u>\$ 2,219,700</u>
Non-program Revenue	0	0	0
Transfers From Other Funds and Units	0	0	0
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<u>\$ 2,121,700</u>	<u>\$ 2,148,000</u>	<u>\$ 2,219,700</u>
<b>Expenditures Per Capita</b>	\$ 10.23	\$ 10.48	\$ 11.01

**Positions** Total Budgeted Positions 84 84 86

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## Accomplishments

- The Public Defender's Office continues providing system wide representation to adults and children facing criminal or delinquent charges in Nashville who cannot afford to hire an attorney.
  - We expanded "vertical representation" to General Sessions Court this year, which means clients have the same lawyer throughout their case. The American Bar Association has identified this model as the best practice and one of ten essential components of a quality public defense system.
  - We implemented limited workload controls in General Sessions Court to prevent lawyers from having too many new clients on a single docket. The Tennessee Rules of Professional Responsibility require attorneys to control their workloads to insure ethical representation of every client. Similarly, the American Bar Association has identified workload controls as an ethical obligation of all lawyers, including public defenders.
  - All employees began diligently tracking how they spend their time at work through our case management system. We expect this information will allow the Office to develop reliable, data-driven annual workload standards based on measurements that correlate to effective representation.
  - Our Kids' Rights program, which provides educational advocacy for special needs students in Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS), secured an agreement from MNPS to conduct trainings and make policy changes to ensure MNPS staff identify children with educational disabilities in a timely manner and provide them with appropriate support services.
  - Our Office has spent countless hours on community and educational events, including our Bringing Justice to You forums (in collaboration with MNPS, the Criminal Court Clerk, the District Attorney and General Sessions Judge Casey Moreland) and coaching students from three different high schools in the annual Tennessee Bar Association Mock Trial Competition.
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## Goals

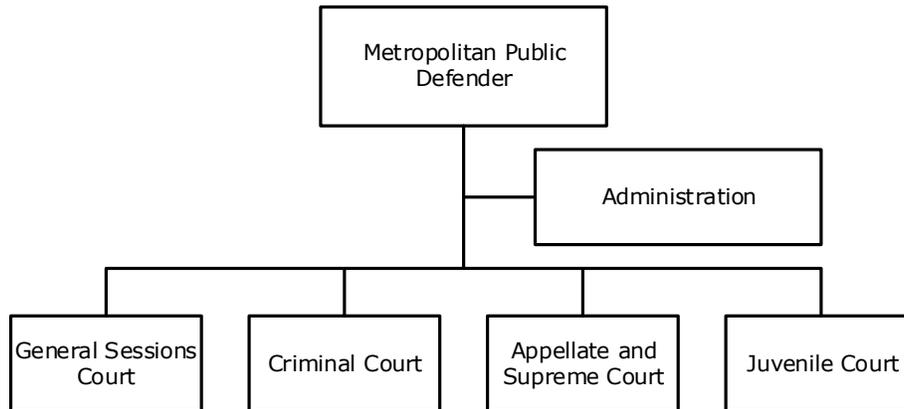
- Complete an employee time-study project using the same model adopted by public defense systems in Missouri and Texas. This study will produce updated and statistically reliable workload standards for our Office, and allow us to be a transparent and accountable agency.
  - Develop and implement a communication strategy to improve our connection with the Nashville communities most affected and impacted by our work. Improve how we educate our client's families, neighbors, churches, employers -- and the community at-large -- about our mission, how we can help them, and how they can help us improve outcomes for our clients and enhance public safety.
  - Continue efforts to reach manageable workloads.
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## Strategic Issues

- Excessive workloads are our biggest challenge. We remain significantly understaffed for the number of clients we represent, and people we serve. To provide effective representation, the Office must insure it has sufficient time and resources to meet ethical standards of practice. Increased resources or reduced workloads are the only options to address this issue.
- We have seen a dramatic rise in the number of people seeking our help for negative consequences of criminal convictions, especially court costs and driver's license issues. Addressing these needs is the best solution for everyone, but doing so has placed even more of a strain on our already limited resources.
- Stagnant and low salaries are contributing to attorney turnover. Metro's 2014 compensation assessment found our Assistant Public Defenders are paid far below market value.
- Finding the time and resources to identify and implement strategies for: 1) improving our efficiency without compromising quality service; and 2) increasing public awareness about the Office and the value we bring to the community.

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## Organizational Structure



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## Programs

### Administration Team

Administration Team  
Non-allocated Financial Transactions

### Appellate Court Team

Appellate Court Team

### Criminal Court Team

Criminal Court Team

### General Sessions Team

General Sessions Team

### Juvenile Court Team

Juvenile Court Team

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## Budget Changes and Impact Highlights

Recommendation			Impact
<b>Professional Specialist</b>			
Salary and Benefits	GSD	\$83,700 1.00 FTE	Increase in funding for additional staff to supervise employees in the intake and reception areas, direct front desk interactions and provide support for the General Session Lawyers due to increased demands for services. This position will be partially funded by revenues received from the State of TN
<b>Legal Secretary 1</b>			
Salary and Benefits	GSD	55,400 1.00 FTE	Increase in funding for additional staff to provide support in our reception and intake area to support the increase in the amount of customers the department serves
<b>Criminal Investigator</b>			
Salary and Benefits	GSD	64,900 1.00 FTE	Increase in funding for additional staff for the juvenile court team to meet constitutional and ethical standards and to provide adequate and effective representation to the Juvenile Court clients
<b>2011 JAG Grant</b>			
Funding Reduction	SPF**	(9,500) (1.00 FTE)	To adjust the budget due to the expiration of the JAG 2011 Grant
<b>Non-allocated Financial Transactions</b>			
Fringe Benefit Savings	GSD	(98,800)	Savings realized through reduced cost for fringe benefits
Internal Service Charges*	GSD	23,200	Delivery of centrally provided services including information systems, fleet management, radio and surplus property
Pay Plan Adjustment	GSD	335,300	Support the hiring and retention of a qualified workforce
<b>General Services District Total</b>		\$463,700 3.00 FTEs	
<b>Special Purpose Fund Total</b>		\$(9,500) (1.00 FTE)	
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$454,200 2.00 FTEs	

\* See Internal Service Charges section for details

\*\* SPF – Special Purpose Funds