

Office of the Public Defender

MISSION

The mission of the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) is to provide superior legal representation to indigent defendants in the State of Maryland by safeguarding fundamental individual rights and ensuring access to the guaranteed protections afforded by the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Maryland Constitution and Declaration of Rights, and the laws of Maryland.

VISION

The vision of the OPD is to have an attorney available and present at each critical stage of all criminal proceedings and to ensure that our attorneys and staff have the knowledge, tools, training, and leadership to provide superior legal representation for all indigent persons charged with incarcerable crimes.

KEY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Goal 1. The OPD will provide sufficient and balanced attorney resource distribution throughout the Agency, in accordance with the currently available best practice standards for defender caseloads.

Obj. 1.1 Full time attorneys in the Appellate Division will maintain workloads consistent with currently available best practices.

Performance Measures		2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of appellate matters		440	413	602	658	642	652	656
Number of appellate attorneys		28	28	28	29	33	33	33
Annual appellate caseload per attorney		16	15	17	23	20	20	20
Number of matters in the Appellate Court of Maryland		N/A	N/A	582	649	534	616	620
Number of Certiorari Petitions filed		N/A	N/A	18	17	7	10	13
Number of matters in the Supreme Court of Maryland		N/A	N/A	9	9	11	11	13
Best Available Standard	Best Available Standard							
	Caseload Study	0	Standard	36	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard			8

Obj. 1.2 Full time attorneys in the Post Conviction Defenders Division maintain workloads consistent with currently available best practices.

Performance Measures		2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.	
Number of post conviction defender matters		1,106	1,336	1,498	1,611	1,522	1,533	1,523	
Number of post conviction defender attorneys		24	24	25	26	26	26	26	
Annual post conviction defender workload per attorney		76	79	59	62	59	59	59	
Number of motions to reopen post conviction cases		30	71	57	21	51	52	51	
Number of matters in which post conviction relief was granted		62	43	N/A	24	52	55	60	
Number of parole revocations cases opened		46	416	386	516	338	343	338	
Number of inmates released after parole revocation hearing		1	N/A	48	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Number of mental health matters		10,012	10,590	9,651	8,785	9,045	8,722	8,692	
Best Available Standard	Best Available Standard	Caseload Study	0	Standard	26	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard			2

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Obj. 1.3 Full time attorneys in the Mental Health Division will maintain workloads consistent with currently available best practices.

Performance Measures				2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of mental health matters				10,012	10,590	9,651	8,785	9,045	8,722	8,692
Number of mental health attorneys				11	11	12	13	20	20	20
Annual mental health workload per attorney				910	963	804	676	452	436	434
Best Available Standard	OPD	Caseload Study	0 Standard	883	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard					0

Obj. 1.4 Full time attorneys in the Parental Defense Division will maintain workloads consistent with currently available best practices.

Performance Measures			2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of Parental Defense matters			1,400	1,016	901	871	1,016	1,058	1,168
Number of Parental Defense attorneys			31	31	32	36	36	36	36
Annual Parental Defense workload per attorney			45	33	28	24	28	29	32
Best Available									
Standard	Oregon	Caseload Study	0 Standard	Varies	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard				12

Obj. 1.5 Meet the standards under the best practices currently available for Felony attorney workloads for Circuit Court matters.

Performance Measures	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of Circuit Court matters (district operations)	20,795	20,765	24,205	20,637	21,269	21,920	22,677
Number of authorized Circuit Court attorneys (district operations)	190	188	253	229	189	189	189
Number of Circuit Court matters paneled to private attorneys (district operations)	2,285	3,389	2,208	2,139	1,965	2,018	2,079
<i>Average Matters Per Attorney in Circuit Court (standard in parenthesis)</i>							
1 - Baltimore City - urban (156)	73	70	131	81	98	109	121
2 - Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset, Dorchester - rural (191)	138	119	65	99	125	136	154
3 - Queen Anne, Caroline, Elkton, Kent, Talbot - rural (191)	222	258	47	112	177	179	184
4 - Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's - rural (191)	81	60	52	69	121	120	119
5 - Prince George's - suburban (140)	69	69	119	62	79	81	81
6 - Montgomery - suburban (140)	110	64	98	50	79	82	81
7 - Anne Arundel - suburban (140)	93	79	138	82	80	84	86
8 - Baltimore - suburban (140)	97	118	144	119	115	107	105
9 - Harford - rural (191)	10	83	87	76	96	96	91
10 - Howard, Carroll - rural (191)	102	98	64	72	95	102	115
11 - Frederick, Washington - rural (191)	97	77	74	78	79	80	79
12 - Allegany, Garrett - rural (191)	182	167	66	61	118	113	110
Best Available							
Standard	National	Caseload Study	0 Standard	Varies	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard		792

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Obj. 1.6 Meet the standards under the best practices currently available for Misdemeanor attorneys for District Court matters.

Performance Measures	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of District Court matters (district operations)	89,846	90,688	81,893	85,173	87,664	91,110	89,435
Number of authorized District Court attorneys (district operations)	165	0	141	181	157	157	157
Number of District Court matters paneled to private attorneys (district operations)	3,188	9,046	7,639	8,769	7,348	7,820	7,684
Number of matters paneled under the Workload Reduction Program	N/A	N/A	N/A	6,724	5,123	5,324	5,226
<i>Average Matters Per Attorney in District Court (standard in parenthesis)</i>							
1 - Baltimore City - urban (728)	326	245	179	278	252	272	246
2 - Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset, Dorchester - rural (630)	558	656	N/A	588	495	502	456
3 - Queen Anne, Caroline, Elkton, Kent, Talbot - rural (630)	511	357	N/A	344	227	236	214
4 - Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's - rural (630)	445	595	N/A	334	380	364	349
5 - Prince George's - suburban (705)	525	290	450	427	346	332	345
6 - Montgomery - suburban (705)	403	210	254	441	214	235	245
7 - Anne Arundel - suburban (705)	596	589	698	719	681	708	725
8 - Baltimore - suburban (705)	480	798	552	535	461	468	465
9 - Harford - rural (630)	320	391	288	493	367	416	469
10 - Howard, Carroll - rural (630)	244	248	256	237	298	342	307
11 - Frederick, Washington - rural (630)	461	378	463	518	578	596	619
12 - Allegany, Garrett - rural (630)	288	279	429	483	185	183	166
Best Available							
Standard	National	Caseload Study	0 Standard	Varies	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard		165

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Obj. 1.7 Meet best practice under currently available standards for Juvenile Court cases.

Performance Measures	2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of Juvenile Court matters (district operations)	3,507	2,852	3,601	5,021	5,883	6,211	7,103
Number of authorized Juvenile Court attorneys (district)	45	33	41	39	41	41	41
Number of Juvenile Court matters paneled to private attorneys (district operations)	667	568	783	1,285	1,221	1,352	1,393
<i>Average Matters Per Attorney in Juvenile Court (standard in parenthesis)</i>							
1 - Baltimore City - urban (182)	37	44	33	56	87	86	90
2 - Wicomico, Worcester, Somerset, Dorchester - rural (271)	163	110	N/A	N/A	333	319	331
3 - Queen Anne, Caroline, Elkton, Kent, Talbot - rural (271)	87	136	N/A	N/A	134	107	140
4 - Charles, Calvert, St. Mary's - rural (271)	42	69	N/A	N/A	122	80	127
5 - Prince George's - suburban (238)	84	77	55	69	69	84	101
6 - Montgomery - suburban (238)	55	60	37	70	92	119	135
7 - Anne Arundel - suburban (238)	37	49	70	108	194	212	271
8 - Baltimore - suburban (238)	67	76	52	82	120	144	164
9 - Harford - rural (271)	84	100	N/A	N/A	197	371	475
10 - Howard, Carroll - rural (271)	128	90	N/A	N/A	170	129	136
11 - Frederick, Washington - rural (271)	55	93	N/A	N/A	196	151	182
12 - Allegany, Garrett - rural (271)	75	55	N/A	N/A	117	203	614
Best Available Standard Oregon Caseload Study	0 Standard	Varies	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard				46

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Goal 2. The OPD will provide a sufficient information technology infrastructure to efficiently support all Agency Operations.

Obj 2.1 Meet the standards for best practices currently available for attorney to Social Worker ratio.

Performance Measures (Fiscal Year)				2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of Social Workers				N/A	N/A	27	29	59	59	59
Ratio of Attorneys to Social Workers				N/A	N/A	19.6:1	20.1:1	9.9:1	9.9:1	9.9:1
Best Available Standard	OPD	Caseload Study	0	Standard	8:1	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard				0

Obj 2.2 Meet the standard for best practices currently available for attorney to administrative support ratio.

Performance Measures (Fiscal Year)				2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of attorneys to clerks and secretaries				N/A	N/A	126	143	160	160	160
Ratio to clerks and secretaries				N/A	N/A	4.21:1	4:1	3.6:1	3.6:1	3.6:1
Best Available Standard	OPD	Caseload Study	0	Standard	3:1	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard				19

Obj 2.3 Meet the standard for best practices currently available for attorney to paralegal ratios.

Performance Measures (Fiscal Year)				2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of Paralegals				N/A	N/A	30	37	37	37	37
Best Available Standard	OPD	Caseload Study	0	Standard	11:1	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard				10

Goal 3. The OPD will provide superior, effective representation for public defender clients.

Obj. 3.1 OPD will provide client centered tenacious advocacy.

Obj. 3.2 OPD will incorporate multidisciplinary expertise in legal representation.

Obj. 3.3 OPD will seek to reduce incarceration and unjust convictions.

Performance measure (Fiscal Year)				2021 Act.	2022 Act.	2023 Act.	2024 Act.	2025 Act.	2026 Est.	2027 Est.
Number of matter referred for forensic mental health division				N/A	N/A	1,128	968	926	932	948
(Post Conviction) Years of sentences reduced				N/A	450	758	553	584	600	650
(Post Conviction) Number of life sentences reduced				N/A	17	12	4	13	15	19
(Post Conviction) Number of inmates released during reporting				N/A	N/A	48	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Best Available Standard	N/A	Caseload Study	0	Standard	0	Number of Attorneys needed to meet standard				0