



COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

July 2, 2025

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

Re: Indigent Legal Services – 4th Upstate Quality Improvement and Caseload Reduction

Dear Honorable Members:

The attached resolution requests authorization to enter into a contract with the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services to accept grant funding for a three-year period in the amount of \$300,000. The resolution also requests authorization to establish a grant budget for the same amount. Funds will be used to help improve the quality of representation to indigent defendants and reduce caseloads through the efforts of the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, I encourage you to contact the Office of the County Attorney. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark C. Poloncarz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/kmw
Enclosure

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Office of the County Attorney
RE: Indigent Legal Services – 4th Upstate Quality Improvement and Caseload Reduction
Date: July 2, 2025

SUMMARY

It is recommended that the Legislature authorize the County Executive to enter into a contract with the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services to accept grant funding in the amount of \$300,000. In addition, the resolution requests authorization to establish a grant budget in the amount of \$300,000 and to subcontract with the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc. to deliver the services required through the grant.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no fiscal implications on the operating budget. All services will be fully reimbursed through New York State in the amount of \$300,000.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Legislative approval is required for the County Executive to enter into contract, establish grant budgets and enter into subcontracts with community agencies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services has made \$300,000 available to Erie County to improve the quality of representation to indigent defendants and reduce caseloads in indigent legal service provider programs. Erie County will improve the quality of representation to indigent defendants and reduce caseloads through the efforts of the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc., which contracts with Erie County to provide all mandated indigent defense services. This agency is one of two agencies that have provided said services for the County under contract for many years.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Failure to approve this resolution will serve to hinder the improvement of State mandated indigent legal services in Erie County.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

Grant budgets will be established by the Division of Budget and Management. Contracts will be executed after final review by the Department of Law as to form.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

RE: Indigent Legal Services – 4th Upstate Quality Improvement and Caseload Reduction

WHEREAS, the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services will provide a three-year grant totaling \$300,000 to the County to improve the quality of representation to indigent defendants and reduce caseloads in indigent legal service provider programs; and

WHEREAS, Erie County will contract with the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc. to deliver the services required through the grant.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby authorizes the County Executive or Deputy County Executive to enter into contract with the NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services in the amount of \$300,000 to be made available as a multi-year grant to the Department of Law (Fund 281, Funds Center 16010) as follows:

Erie County Department of Law
Fourth Upstate Quality Improvement and Caseload Reduction Grant
160CR4ILSF2326
July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026

REVENUES	BUDGET
409000 State Aid Revenues	<u>\$300,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$300,000</u>
 APPROPRIATIONS	 BUDGET
516601 Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo	<u>\$300,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$300,000</u>

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive is hereby authorized to enter into a three-year subcontract with the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc. to deliver said services from July, 1 2023 to June 30, 2026; and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given for the Division of Budget and Management to adjust grant appropriations and revenues including those required to comply with the grantor funding changes provided there are no changes to authorized personnel levels or county share amounts; and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given to the County Executive to amend contracts as necessary to implement any no-cost extensions that may be permitted by the grantor; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the County Executive's Office, Comptroller's Office, Department of Law, and Division of Budget and Management.