



New Position Request & Justification Form

Instructions: This form is to be completed by the department when requesting a new position and submitted simultaneously to the department's assigned budget analyst and Human Resources analyst. If approved, this form will be attached to the Human Resources' staff report to the Board of Supervisors as justification for the recommended action. Please allow ten (10) business days for review and approval by DFS, CAO and Human Resources staff.

Basic Information

Date request submitted: 2/27/2026

Department making the request: Public Defender's Office

Contact Person: Tracie Olson

Telephone Extension: 530-666-8165 x 8167

Class of position requested: **4 Deputy Public Defenders; 1 Paralegal; 1 Mitigation Specialist; 1 Investigator; 1 Clerical**

FTE requested: 8 new FTE positions = 4 attorneys and 4 support staff

Type of position: ☒ Permanent ☐ Extra Help
☐ Limited Term (funding expires:) If extra help list dates: to

Org Unit #: 2101

Org Unit Name:

Accounting Unit:

Direct supervisor/manager:

Location (address): 814 North Street, Woodland, CA 95695

Justification for Requested Position

Why is the position needed? (Explain the job duties of this position and if this position will supervise. What alternatives were considered before requesting this position?)

The Public Defender's FY 2026–2027 request is \$1,404,000 to add 4 attorneys (\$820,000) and 4 support staff (\$584,000). A detailed justification is provided in the February 27, 2026 Budget Reduction Analysis memorandum.

The Office is operating below national workload standards while managing the highest appointment volume in recent years. In 2025, it handled approximately 3,813 new cases (1,151 felonies and 2,662 misdemeanors), in addition to juvenile matters, supervision violations, immigration, post-conviction litigation, and daily court coverage. A conservative application of national workload standards shows the Office operating at roughly half of recommended attorney felony and misdemeanor attorney capacity, with investigator and mitigation staffing similarly below recommended levels.

At the same time, case complexity has increased significantly. Modern litigation routinely involves extensive digital and forensic evidence, large volumes of electronic discovery, and specialized statutory requirements such as the Racial Justice Act. Even if filings were static, the time required per case has grown substantially.

The requested 4 attorneys and 4 support staff will increase core constitutional capacity, improve case processing efficiency, and reduce ethical risk tied to excessive workloads. This request represents a measured step in a multi-year strategy to restore sustainable indigent defense operations, particularly in felony and misdemeanor workloads.

For context, in FY 2025–26 the District Attorney’s Office operates with \$30,006,051 and 121 positions, compared to \$12,184,085 and 51 positions for the Public Defender. While much of this disparity reflects the significantly greater availability of external funding for the District Attorney, the Net County Cost difference alone exceeds the amount requested in this proposal.

How does this position assist in accomplishing the goals of the Board of Supervisors strategic plan? (Explain how this position contributes to the strategic plan and department goals.)

The Board’s Strategic Plan emphasizes **Operational Excellence** and **Thriving Residents**—a strong workforce delivering high-quality services and reducing disparities through essential supports.

Deputy Public Defenders are critical to these goals. They ensure the constitutional right to counsel is meaningful, protect against wrongful convictions and excessive punishment, and connect clients to treatment and stabilizing services that improve long-term outcomes.

Underfunding the Office undermines these objectives. Excessive caseloads create ethical risk, increase the likelihood of conflicts, and may force appointment declines, shifting cases to higher-cost private counsel. Chronic under-resourcing also increases delays, inefficiencies, and long-term fiscal exposure.

Adequate funding is therefore essential not only to protect individual rights, but to sustain the County’s commitment to fairness, efficiency, and equity.

Budget impact of this position. (Explain how this position will be funded.)

Possible sources of funding:

- **General Fund.**
- **2025-26 Prop 172 funds.** Public defender offices are authorized to receive Prop 172 funds (e.g., Santa Barbara, Napa, Ventura, San Joaquin, Nevada, Riverside & Kern allocate funding to their public defender offices).
- **Cache Creek funds.** In the past, the county allocated a portion of funds received from the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation to the public defender’s office to offset the additional caseload caused by the presence of Cache Creek Casino & Resort (e.g., DUIs, assaults, thefts, etc. that occurred on the premises of or due to the operations of the casino).

Total: \$1,404,000 for 8 positions (4 attorneys and 4 non-attorneys)

- 4 Deputy Public Defenders: \$205,000 x 4 = \$820,000
- 1 Paralegal. \$131,000
- 1 Mitigation Specialist. \$175,000
- 1 Investigator: \$175,000
- 1 Clerical: \$103,000

Approved By:

Tracie Olson, Chief Public Defender

Date: 2/27/2026



Existing Position Change Request & Justification Form

Instructions: This form is to be completed by the department when requesting a change to an existing position, and submit simultaneously to the department's assigned budget analyst and Human Resources analyst. If approved, this form will be attached to the Human Resources' staff report to the Board of Supervisors as justification for the recommended action. Please allow ten (10) business days for review and approval by DFS, CAO and Human Resources staff.

Basic Information

Date request submitted:

Department making the request:

Contact Person:

Telephone Extension:

Classification of position:

Type of Change:

Accounting Unit:

Direct supervisor/manager:

Location (address):

Justification for Requested Position

Why is there a need to change this position? (If converting a limited term to permanent, why was this position originally approved as a limited term? Why is there a need to convert this position? If changing the classification, explain the job duties of the new position and how will the job duties of the old position be completed?)

How does changing this position assist in accomplishing the goals of the Board of Supervisors strategic plan? (Explain how this position contribute to the **strategic plan** and department goals.)

Budget impact of this position. (Explain how this position will be funded on an on-going basis.)

Approved By:

Date: