

More Cost Effective

The Legislature should invest in and expand the most cost effective models of public defense - nonprofits, consortia, and law firms - that can take the most cases and train new attorneys.

The State Trial Division, hourly panel, and Temporary Hourly Increase Program (THIP) are the most expensive public defense models that take the fewest amount of cases.

Contractor COLA

Without a cost of living increase, nonprofits, consortia, and law firms will receive an effective reduction in their pay for the next two years. The crisis will worsen if the providers covering the vast majority of cases can't afford to keep the lights on.



The most cost effective delivery of public defense is contracted providers - nonprofits, consortia, and law firms.

Keep Consortia

Consortia and law firms combined provided 60% of public defense representation before SB 337 (2023). The timeline to eliminate consortia is destabilizing to the workforce, at a time when Oregon cannot afford to lose more public defenders. Consortia attorneys are generally highly qualified and experienced attorneys who can take major felony cases. Ensuring Oregonians receive effective representation is the priority of all providers and oversight and accountability measures can and should be addressed by the Legislature as needed.

Continue Funding Nonprofits

All 3 law schools have Criminal Defense Clinical Legal Programs through nonprofit public defense offices. It is a pipeline from law school to public defense. Give nonprofits the funding to hire more attorneys and to hire the law students they've trained through the clinics.

The State Trial Division, hourly panel, and THIP are not set up to train new attorneys. Training programs are already established in nonprofits.

OREGON MUST BE COMPETITIVE

Oregon has a shortage of attorneys overall. Most other practice areas can offer better pay. To retain the public defense providers we have, compensation must be increased and caseloads must be reasonable. Oregon should reimburse law student costs for working in public defense.