JANA FURLOW, COURT ADMINISTRATOR
ROSA OLVERA, COURT COORDINATOR
TERESA POPNOE, COURT SECRETARY
J'LYN SAUSEDA, COURT REPORTER
JON KEY, COURT BAILIFF



# 106<sup>th</sup> Judicial District CARTER T. SCHILDKNECHT DISTRICT JUDGE

July 19, 2013

PHONE: 806/872-3740
FAX: 806/872-7810
Physical Address:
400 SOUTH 1<sup>ST</sup>, SUITE 301
Mailing Address:
P.O. BOX 1268
LAMESA, TEXAS 79331
email: djudge@co.dawson.tx.us



Joel Lieurance, Policy Monitor Texas Indigent Defense Commission 209 West 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 202 Austin, TX 78701

Re: Responses to the June 11, 2013, Review of Gaines County's Indigent Defense System as applied to the 106<sup>th</sup> District Court, Gaines County, Texas

Dear Mr. Lieurance:

In response to the report of the monitoring review of Gaines County's indigent processes, I am addressing each of the recommendations that applies to the District Court.

"Core Requirement 4. Appoint counsel promptly.

Recommendation 3: Gaines County and the 106<sup>th</sup> District Court must implement procedures to ensure that determinations of indigence in felony cases fall within the time frames set by the FDA."

The Indigent Defense Plan for the 106<sup>th</sup> District Court includes specific provisions for prompt magistration and assistance in completing the necessary forms for requesting appointment of counsel. Included as a part of these provisions is the statement as follows: "The magistrate shall, within 24 hours, transmit the felony defendant's 'Request for Appointment of Counsel and Determination of Indigence' to the District Judge." Transmit means to send or transfer from one person or place to another. Except on rare occasion, the requesting defendant has an attorney appointed on the same day the request is received in the District Judge's office, and with the exception of weekends or holidays, that is the next day after the request is transmitted.

I do not understand exactly how the monitor arrived at the figures presented in the Monitoring Review Report. No one discussed with me anything about the determination of indigence or the timely appointment of counsel. In our office files we keep the requests for appointed counsel. No one reviewed these. In Gaines County we have many defendants who initially indicate that they or their family are intending to retain an attorney and do not want to ask for an appointed attorney. Some of these defendants later request an appointed attorney. One of my questions is how the date of the request for counsel was determined.

DAWSON GAINES GARZA LYNN

Page Two
Joel Lieurance, Policy Monitor
Texas Indigent Defense Commission
July 19, 2013

I will speak with the appropriate officials in Gaines County to be sure they understand and will follow the provisions in the Indigent Defense Plan for assistance in completing the necessary forms for requesting appointed counsel and for transmitting them to the District Court.

"Core Requirement 5. Institute a fair, neutral and non-discriminatory attorney selection process.

Recommendation 8: The parties to the contract for felony defense services must follow the terms of the contract according to the contract's caseload limitations. Excessive caseloads could compromise the quality of representation provided for indigent clients."

The 106<sup>th</sup> District Court is very lenient toward indigent defendants and appoints counsel for defendants with annual average income up to and including 200% of the Federal poverty guidelines, which substantially exceeds the 125% requirement set out by the State.

Except on rare occasion, the Court appoints counsel the same day the Court receives an application requesting appointed counsel. Because of the prompt appointment of counsel following request, many times a defendant retains counsel within a few days after having counsel appointed. Also, in numerous cases, appointed counsel immediately withdraws because of a legal conflict discovered during the initial intake interview. These cases, although the appointed attorney's representation is brief, are counted in the appointed attorney's caseload.

The 106<sup>th</sup> District Court also may appoint counsel in the interest of justice when a defendant wants to proceed with his case more quickly than he can retain an attorney or for some other justifiable reason. There are times when this happens during arraignment in open court. In these cases, at the defendant's request, the appointed attorney's representation may be very brief but still count in his caseload.

As stated in your Monitoring Review Report dated June 11, 2013, "The NAC standards are a good starting point in assessing caseloads but should not be accepted as universal standards." The provision of criminal defense services does not lend itself to pure numerical analysis. Arbitrary standards set outside the Court's discretion infringe on the independence of the judiciary. The judge sitting in a case is in the best position to evaluate and determine if an attorney's quality of representation is compromised. This can occur with a retained attorney as well as with an appointed attorney. I have removed attorneys from the appointment list when I felt that the attorney did not provide the quality of representation that the court expects. I have never felt that the contracting attorney's representation fell below that which the court expects. In fact, because of the priority that the contracting attorney places on his work as appointed counsel in this court, I have found that his representation of clients is more timely, efficient, and many times exceeds the quality and effectiveness of other attorneys, appointed or retained.

Page Three Joel Lieurance, Policy Monitor Texas Indigent Defense Commission July 19, 2013

Late in 2011, this court felt harassed and pressured by Fiscal Monitor Carol Conner to add additional language about caseload limitations to our contracts. In response to that pressure, I added the language, "the ABA's recommended caseload limitations," to our contracts. That specific language will be removed from future contracts and more appropriate language will be added that requires the judge to monitor caseloads to determine if the quality and effectiveness of representation is compromised in any manner.

"Recommendation 9: The County must ensure that procedures are in place to meet the requirements of 1 TAC § 174.25 and Article 26.05(c) so that itemized fee vouchers are submitted and approved by the appointment authority prior to payment by the financial officer."

To comply, the District Judge will ensure that fee vouchers for the District Court are submitted to the judge for approval prior to payment by the financial officer.

A copy of a letter dated February 10, 2012, that I wrote to Wesley Shackelford, Deputy Director/Special Counsel, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, addressing this same issue is enclosed.

Sincerely,

Childenecht Carter T. Schildknecht 106<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Judge

Enclosure: Letter dated February 10, 2012, to Wesley Shackelford

The Honorable Lance Celander, Gaines County Judge c:

Mr. Rick Dollahan, Gaines County Auditor

The Honorable Tammy Clark, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1

The Honorable B. W. Baucum, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2

Mr. Arthur Aguilar, Jr., Contract Defender

Mr. James D. Bethke, Executive Director, Texas Indigent Defense Commission

JANA FURLOW, COURT ADMINISTRATOR
ROSA OLVERA, COURT COORDINATOR
MILLIE COHORN, COURT SECRETARY
J'LYN SAUSEDA, COURT REPORTER



106<sup>th</sup> Judicial District
CARTER T. SCHILDKNECHT
DISTRICT JUDGE

PHONE: 806/872-3740
FAX: 806/872-7810
Physical Address:
400 SOUTH 1<sup>ST</sup>, SUITE 301
Mailing Address:
P.O. BOX 1268
LAMESA, TEXAS 79331
email: djudge@co.dawson.tx.us

February 10, 2012

COPY

Mr. Wesley Shackelford Deputy Director/Special Counsel via fax: 512-463-5724

Re: Contract Defender Program / Dawson, Gaines, Garza, Lynn Counties

Dear Mr. Shackelford:

I am writing in response to your letter to Arthur Aguilar, Jr. dated January 27, 2012, which was copied to me. I hope that this letter will help you to understand the program and the contracts between Mr. Aguilar and the four counties in the 106<sup>th</sup> Judicial District. Previously I have provided to Carol Conner all materials requested by her and have discussed this program and contract at length with you by telephone and also with Jim Bethke in person in my office during a visit on January 12, 2012.

It appears to me that because our program does not fit the mold that other counties are using, there is either an inability or unwillingness to understand how our program satisfies the requirements of CCP 26.05 and TAC \$\$174.10 - 174.25.

I have thoroughly reviewed CCP 26.05 and the TAC \$174 provisions. When the contracts are issued for 2013, I am willing to amend the language by adding the provision you request covering submitting a fee voucher to me prior to payment. I will do that to comply with the requirements even though my position is that it is already satisfied by the contract language as it exists. A voucher is a document that serves to recognize a liability and authorize the disbursement of cash that shows on its face the fact, authority, and purpose of disbursement. A careful reading of item number 4 in our contract shows that payment is determined by services performed during the prior year as itemized in the year-end report required in item number 9 of our contract. By signing each contract as the appointing authority when it is presented to each commissioners court, I am approving that payment according to the services that had been itemized to me as required in item number 9.

Nowhere in CCP 26.05 or TAC \$\$174.10 - 174.25 can I find the requirement for a monthly voucher. The only time I find the word "monthly" is in Texas Government Code \$71.0351 referred to in TAC \$174.10(5), which provides for reports to be sent to the OCA "on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis." However, \$71.0351 was repealed effective September 1, 2011. Our county financial officers report to me that they currently receive all the information they need from Mr. Aguilar to complete their indigent defense expenditure reports.

Please understand that from the inception of the Texas Fair Defense Act, this court and the counties covered by it have taken very seriously our legal and ethical obligations to provide legal representation for indigent defendants and to pay counsel appropriately for those services. This is and should be the guiding principle behind indigent defense policies and standards.

Sincerely,

Carter T. Schildknecht

c: Jim Bethke, Executive Director,

Texas Indigent Defense Commission - via fax 512-463-5724

Arthur Aguilar, Jr. - via fax 806-687-3502



#### **COUNTY OF GAINES**

Lance T. Celander County Judge P. O. Box 847 Seminole, Texas 79360

(432) 758-5411 -:- FAX (432) 758-4031

**Danny Yocom** Commissioner Precinct 1

> **Craig Bett** Commissioner Precinct 2

Blair Tharp Commissioner Precinct 3

**Biz Houston** Commissioner Precinct 4

JOEL LIEURANCE, POLICY MONITOR **TEXAS INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION** 209 WEST 14TH STREET, ROOM 202 **AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701** 

RE: RESPONSES TO THE JUNE 2013 REVIEW OF GAINES COUNTY'S INDIGENT DEFENSE SYSTEM AS APPLIED TO THE COUNTY LEVEL MISDEMEANOR COURT, GAINES COUNTY, TEXAS.

#### MR LIFURANCE:

I AM ADDRESSING EACH OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT APPLIES TO MISDEMEANOR COURT. IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE MONITORING REVIEW OF GAINES COUNTY'S INDIGENT PROCESSES.

#### CORE REQUIREMENT 1. CONDUCT PROMPT AND ACCURATE MAGISTRATION PROCEEDINGS.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1: GAINES COUNTY MUST IMPLEMENT PROCEDURES TO ENSURE ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THE NECESSARY FORMS FOR REQUESTING COUNSEL AT THE TIME OF THE ARTICLE 15.17 HEARING.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED HIGHLIGHTED FORM WHICH IS DATED AT THE TIME OF A MAGISTRATE HEARING AND A REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL AND DETERMINATION OF INDIGENCE FORM (SEE ATTACHMENT "A" AND "B". I REVIEWED THE PROCESS WITH THE HEAD JAIL ADMINISTRATOR AND THE PROCESS OF ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THE FORM IS DONE BY SPECIFIC JAIL PERSONNEL BEFORE BONDING OUT.

#### CORE REQUIREMENT 4. APPOINT COUNCEL PROMPTLY.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

4: GAINES COUNTY MUST IMPLEMENT PROCEDURES TO ENSURE TIMELY DETERMINATIONS OF INDIGENCE IN MISDEMEANOR CASES. IN PARTICULAR, THE COURT MUST RULE UPON ALL REQUESTS FOR COUNSEL.

SEE SEVERAL ATTACHED HIGHLIGHTED INDIGENCE REQUESTS. ATTACHMENTS "C" "D" "E".

5, 6, 7: PLEASE SEE ATTACHMENT "F". THIS WILL BE PRESENTED IN ALL FUTURE PRETRIAL HEARINGS OF ALL MISDEMEANOR COURT WITH SIGNATURES FROM EACH DEFENDANT BEFORE THE STATE'S PROSECUTOR IS ALLOWED TO TALK TO DEFENDANT(S).

## CORE REQUIREMENT 6. PROMULGATE STANDARD ATTORNEY FEE SCHEDULE AND PAYMENT PROCESS.

THE COUNTY MAKING SURE THAT PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF 1 TAC 174.25 AND ARTICLE 26.059(c) SO THAT ITEMIZED FEE VOUCHERS ARE SUBMITTED AND APPROVED BY THE APPOINTING AUTHORITY PRIOR TO PAYMENT BY THE FINANCIAL OFFICER.

SEE ATTACHMENTS "G", WHICH IS OUR ATTORNEY LISTS IF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER HAS A CONFLICT AND SEE ATTACHMENTS "H" "I" "J" EXAMPLES OF SIGNED FEE VOUCHERS ON MY BEHALF AFTER PLEA AGREEMENT/DISPOSED CASE(S).

SINCERELY,

GAINES COUNTY JUDGE

NO.	
THE STATE OF TEXAS	COUNTY COURT
VS.	
	GAINES COUNTY,TX
Certificate of Defendant's Rights Article 15.1	7, Texas Code of Criminal Procedure
You are accused of the offense of:	(A)
2. The accusation filed against you is supported by a $\ensuremath{\square}$ cor	nplaint, a affidavit, or a warrant signed by:
3. You have the right to retain counsel. You have the right can not afford counsel. If you can not afford counsel ar you must complete a form under oath which will be used of counsel. You will be provided reasonable assistance right to have an attorney present during any interview will you have the right to terminate any such interview at an	nd desire to request the appointment of counsel, I to determine if you qualify for the appointment In filling out this form, if you desire. You have the Ith peace officers or attorneys representing the state.
4. You have the right to remain silent.	
5. If you are accused of a felony offense, you have the rig	ht to an examining trial before indictment.
6. You are not required to make a statement and any state	ement made by you may be used against you.
7. You will be allowed reasonable time and opportunity to	consult with counsel.
CI	ERTIFICATE
This is to certify that I, the undersigned Judge/Magistrate or rights guaranteed the Defendant under Article 15.17 of the of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure; and that I furthe appointment of counsel, and I asked the Defendant wheth of counsel. The Defendant did, did not, request	of the rights guaranteed the Defendant under Article 15.17 If informed the Defendant of the right to request the Defendant wanted to request the appointment
DoneO'Clock,A.M. on the 21ST_Day of JULY,	2013.
	COUNTY JUDGE
D14-4	
Bond set at \$	COUNTY COURT
	GAINES COUNTY, TEXAS
I acknowledge that I was given the above warnings and th	at I understand my rights as explained to me
in writing.	DATE:
A0000ED.	WATER
Accused refused to sign acknowledgment or warning.	COUNTY JUDGE
COMPATTY OF GRANUES	
A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A	COUNTY COURT
Seminole, Texas 79360	GAINES COUNTY, TEXAS

# request for appointment of counsel and determination of indigence

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REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF COUNSI	el and determination of indigence 8-6-13
"On this 2 day of A1145  20  20  3 I have been advise by counsel in the trial of the charge pending against me. I am without means court appoint of	ed by a Magistrate of Gaines County, Texas of my right to representation s to employ counsel of my own choosing, so I hereby request that the
Charge: MCA Printed Name:	ten (II C M)
A person who requests a determination of indigence and appointm concerning his/her financial resources and, if requested, must respond under respons Name: Name: Address	nent of counsel shall complete under value of following questions oath to examination regarding his financial resources by the judge
Live Wis Previous	
Marital Names  A 9 4 Curren Superv Addres	
Previou Addret  Your C  Are you or your dependence	
List sources of income & average annual amounts:  A. Take home wages and/or salary  B: Net Self Employment Income  C. Government Program Income  D. Unemployment/Disability/Retirement Income  E. Alimony/Child Support Income  F. Annuities/Dividends/Interest Income  G. Rental/Royaity Income  H. Trus/Estate Income  I. Available Spouse Income  List ali assets/property owned and value	List your outstanding obligations and balances  A. Mortgages  B. Auto Loans  C. Other Loans  D. Credit Cards  E. Child Support 7 Park  Carl Gu PP6 (1)
A. Real Estate	List your necessary living expenses A. House Mortgage/Rent \$ B. Utilities \$
C. Cash/Bank Accounts 5  D. Stock/Bond 5	C. Food \$ D. Medical \$ E. Child Care \$ F. Transportation \$
STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF GAINES "I swear / affirm that the foregoing answers concerning my financial."	al resources ar Signature Print Name
Subscribed and sworn to before me on	Notary Public, State of Texas/Magistrate

Micd aug 5, 2013

#### CAUSE NO.

THE STATE OF TEXAS § IN THE COUNTY COURT VS § OF
GUILLERMO ANDRADE § GAINES COUNTY, TEXAS

#### **APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL**

CAME TO HAND on the 6<sup>TH</sup> day of AUGUST, 2013, Defendant's Application for Court-Appointed Counsel. The Court, upon reviewing said Application, finds, Defendant, GUILLERMO ANDRADE, has no attorney and is wholly destitute of means to hire one. Therefore, the Court now appoints, Donnell W. Yandell, a duly licensed Attorney at the bar of this county to represent Defendant herein.

L'ANCE T. CELANDER, County Judge Gaines County, Texas

THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF GAINES

I, VICKI PHILLIPS, Clerk of County Court for the County of Gaines, Texas, certify that the above is true and correct copy of the Court's Order Appointing Counsel in the above entitled and numbered cause, as it appears of record in the papers of said cause.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE AT Seminole, Gaines County, Texas, day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2013.

8 6 -13 FILED TOOA m Vicki Phillips, County Clerk Galnes County, Texas

Clerk, County Court Gaines County, Texas

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL AND DETERMINATION OF INDIGENCE of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I have been advised by a Magistrate of Gaines County, Texas of my right to representation resecuted against me. I am without means to employ counsel of my own choosing, so I hereby request that the "On this by coun court an Charge Printed QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING FINANCIAL RESOUR Fuone racusing \_\_Supplemental Social Security Are you or your dependents our was List sources of income & average annual amounts : your outsta A. Take home wages and/or salary A. Mortge B. Net Self Employment Income C. Government Program Income
D. Unemployment/Disability/Retirement Income
E. Alimony/Child Support Income
F. Annulties/Dividends/Interest Income
G. Rental/Royalty Income B. Auto L C. Other I

STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF GAINES

"I swear / affirm that the foregoing answers concerning my financial resources (

Subscribed and swom to before me on

H. Trust/Estate Income I. Available Spouse Income
List all assets/property owned and value

Signature Print Nan

GUISELA NATIVAEZ Notuy Pubro STATE OF YEXAS

Notary Public, State of Texas/Magistre

D. Credit

E. Child S your neces A. House B. Utilitie C. Food D. Medic E. Child F. Transp

Rec'd July 15,2013

#### CAUSE NO.

THE STATE OF TEXAS § IN THE COUNTY COURT VS S OF GAINES COUNTY, TEXAS

#### APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL

CAME TO HAND on the 16<sup>TH</sup> day of JULY, 2013, Defendant's Application for Court-Appointed Counsel. The Court, upon reviewing said Application, finds, Defendant, MANAKA ROSEMOND, has no attorney and is wholly destitute of means to hire one. Therefore, the Court now appoints, Donnell W. Yandell, a duly licensed Attorney at the bar of this county to represent Defendant herein.

LANCE T. CELANDER, County Judge Gaines County, Texas

THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF GAINES

I, VICKI PHILLIPS, Clerk of County Court for the County of Gaines, Texas, certify that the above is true and correct copy of the Court's Order Appointing Counsel in the above entitled and numbered cause, as it appears of record in the papers of said cause.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE AT Seminole, Gaines County, Texas,

this 16th day of July, 2013

Vicki Phillips, County Clerk Gaines County, Texas

Clerk, County Court Gaines County, Texas

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL AND	DETERMINATION OF INDIGENCE LTC.
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Rical July 26, 2013

#### CAUSE NO.



THE STATE OF TEXAS

§ IN THE COUNTY COURT

VS ANGELA GARDNER § §

OF GAINES COUNTY, TEXAS

#### APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL

CAME TO HAND on the 29<sup>TH</sup> day of JULY, 2013, Defendant's Application for Court-Appointed Counsel. The Court, upon reviewing said Application, finds, Defendant, ANGELA GARDNER, has no attorney and is wholly destitute of means to hire one. Therefore, the Court now appoints, Donnell W. Yandell, a duly licensed Attorney at the bar of this county to represent Defendant herein.

LANCE T. CELANDER, County Judge Gaines County, Texas

THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF GAINES

I, VICKI PHILLIPS, Clerk of County Court for the County of Gaines, Texas, certify that the above is true and correct copy of the Court's Order Appointing Counsel in the above entitled and numbered cause, as it appears of record in the papers of said cause.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE AT Seminole, Gaines County, Texas,

this 29th day of July, 20

Vicki Phillips, County Clerk
Gaines County, Texas

erri Berry

Gaines County, Texas

CAUSE NO	
	("F")
THE STATE OF TEXAS	IN THE COUNTY COURT
VS	OF
	GAINES COUNTY, TEXAS

#### **Options for Arraignment Proceedings**

OPTION 1: If you want to hire an attorney, come forward and I will consider continuing you in your present appearance bond and set a date for trial.
OPTION 2: If you want to have an attorney appointed for you because you are indigent, then you will need to fill out the appropriate form to prove your need. All requests for appointment of counsel shall be promptly reviewed and determined by the County Judge.
OPTION 3: If you want to waive your right to an attorney and continue the arraignment proceeding, you may then consult with the County Attorney and voluntarily discuss your case with him before entering a plea in your case.
In the event you decide to plea "Not Guilty" after discussing your case with the County Attorney, you may still (1) hire an attorney or (2) apply for an appointed attorney.
I fully understand the options as explained to me and choose the option I initialed. I choose this option voluntarily.
Defendants Signature :
Date:

#### Cases Appointed to Caprock Regional Public Defender Office



		Date		
	Case #	Assigned	Refused?	If yes, why?
	18260	3/5/3		
	18621	3/21/2		
	1(1527	4/2/13		
		4/2/3		
	Unl.	5/2/13		
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	18779	7/29/13		
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### Cases Appointed to Caprock Regional Public Defender Office



	1	Date		
Defendant	Case #	Assigned	Refused?	If yes, why?
^	18100	7/13/12		
		8/13/12		
		9/4/12		
		9/2/12		
	17927 pw/7859	0/10/12		
4		10/1/12		
		1/18/13		
		1/23/13	0.5	C 0-1 -1 7 - 1 0 0 1
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		2/15/13		
	<u> 271</u>	2/12/13		
	<u> 44</u>	2/18/13		
		720/3		
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		300/13		
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	315	3/1/13		
	452	3/6/13		
	8285	3/4/13		MANGE MOST . Land
	m. Kide	3/14/13		Case not filed
	1. Carry	3/4/13		
	+ Privi	3/14/13	<u> </u>	

#### Cases Appointed to Caprock Regional Public Defender Office



Dofendant	Case #	Date Assigned	Refused?	If yes, why?
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		1-10-12		
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	Ø-	3/8/12	yes	- Sup. Coursel
	7934	3/16/12		
		3/1/2		
	len	3/9/12		
		4/18/12		
		5/2/12		_
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	136	5/27/12		
	807	5/22/12		
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Adopted 19/23/02 - Task Force on Indigent Defense

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