

## **Council on Public Defense Volunteer Position Description**

The Council on Public Defense (CPD) unites representatives of the bar; private and public criminal defense attorneys; judicial representatives appointed by the Washington Supreme Court, the Superior Court Judges Association and the District and Municipal Court Judges Association; current and former prosecutors; and the public to address new and recurring challenges that impact the public defense system. The CPD educates and informs policy makers on issues that need reform and provides concrete proposals that are enhanced by the comprehensive nature of the CPD membership. The CPD's recent work has focused on five areas: Pre-Trial Justice, Legal Financial Obligations, Defense Standards, Public Defense and Independence, and Mental Health and Public Defense. The CPD's Charter can be viewed at <https://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Committees-Boards-and-Other-Groups/council-public-defense>.

**Position overview:** The CPD unites diverse members of the legal community and public in a shared project of the WSBA to support high-quality and accessible public defense services. Members of the CPD have a unique opportunity to influence public defense practices in WA State by:

- Attending monthly meeting and bringing their experience and perspective to discussions and votes.
- Participating as active members on at least one committee. Recent committees have included: Pre-Trial Justice, Legal Financial Obligations, Defense Standards, Public Defense and Independence, and Mental Health and Public Defense.
- Providing review and feedback on substantive areas relating to public defense, including but not limited to proposed court rules, potential legislation, comments and other issue advocacy.

Appointment is for a two-year term with eligibility to be reappointed for two additional two-year terms.

**Time commitment:** Council members are requested to actively participate in the CPD's mission.

- The CPD meets monthly for 2.5 hours at the WSBA office in downtown Seattle and through conference calls.
- Council members are expected to participate in at least one committee, which generally meet monthly by phone with additional meetings as needed to accomplish the goals of the committee.
- Monthly time commitments range from 3.5 to 10 hours.

**Requirements:** The positions that will begin in October 2019 are:

- Three at-large members (may be WSBA members or members of the public)
- One at-large member is not an attorney
- One member who is a prosecutor
- One representative from local government or public defense administrator

The position that will begin immediately once appointed is:

- One member who is a prosecutor

**Preferred qualifications and skills:**

- Knowledge/experience with public defense in WA state and nationally

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- Willingness to take initiative on tasks and committees
- Openness to productive discussion/debate
- Ability to fulfill time and involvement commitments
- Current or former prosecutors/city attorneys and those with experience in public health funding are encouraged to apply

**Benefits**

- CPD members have an opportunity to improve the criminal justice system and to evaluate practices which particularly impact the poor.
- Networking.
- Influence, improve and support public defense across the state.
- Leadership opportunities.
- Public service.

**Reimbursement policy:** This is an unpaid volunteer position. Voting Council members are eligible for reimbursement under WSBA's committee volunteer reimbursement policy.

**Selection and appointment process:** Candidates are vetted by a Nomination Team including the CPD chair, vice-chair and BOG liaison. Recommendations are made to the Board of Governor's Nominations Committee, which makes the appointments.

**For further information:** See <http://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Committees-Boards-and-Other-Groups/Council-on-Public-Defense>

**How to apply:** See instructions at [www.wsba.org/joincommittee](http://www.wsba.org/joincommittee). Questions about the application? Email [barleaders@wsba.org](mailto:barleaders@wsba.org).