



Washington State Bar Association

COUNCIL ON PUBLIC DEFENSE
MAY 23, 2025 - 9:30AM – 11:00AM
MINUTES

CPD Voting Members: Maialisa Vanyo (Chair), Molly Gilbert, Paul Holland, Chris Swaby (Vice-Chair), Maya Titova, Victoria Blumhorst, Christie Hedman, David Montes, Judge Dee Sonntag, Abraham Ritter, Jason Schwarz (Immediate Past Chair), Louis Frantz, Jonathan Nomamiukor, Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud

CPD Emeritus members (non-voting members): Ann Christian, Bob Boruchowitz, Kathy Kyle

WSBA Staff: Bonnie Sterken, Cate Schur

Guests: Sophia Byrd McSherry, Matt Pang, Katrin Johnson, Jordan Couch, Renata Garcia

Absent:

Judge Maria Polin, Jonathan Quittner, Karen Denise Wilson, Larry Jefferson, Arian Noma, Eileen Farley

Vacancies: Two current or former prosecutors, one local government/public defense agency representative, One At-Large

April Meeting Minutes: The minutes were approved without edits.

WSBA Entity Regulation Pilot: Renata Garcia with the Washington State Bar Association gave an update on the Entity Regulation Pilot Project. It will be a process where entities can become regulated to provide legal service. Some examples include instances where a law firm wants to include non-attorney members in their ownership and nonprofits that want to explore alternative options for delivering civil legal aid. The Court has suggested that the Council on Public Defense review the pilot project and discuss innovative methods for the delivery of criminal defense. Renata addressed questions Kathy Kyle, who manages a nonprofit public defense office, noted that she plans to learn more about the pilot project and will share learnings with the Council.

Standards Update and WSBA Amicus Brief: Jason Schwarz shared that the Court is still reviewing the proposed Standards and we do not have any new information. He also shared that the Washington State Bar Association Board of Governor's were considering whether to submit an amicus brief relating to case pending before the WA Supreme Court, *re Detention of M.E.* Jason and other members of the Council have submitted comments encouraging the Board of Governors to submit the amicus brief. The Board of Governors is considering the request in the next few weeks. The Council discussed the merits of submitting the amicus brief.

Office of Public Defense Legislative Updates: Sophia Byrd McSherry provided a comprehensive overview of the funding decisions from the recent legislative session. She provided a document that displayed the 2025-27 biennial and 2025 supplemental budgets, including the agency's request compared to the actual budget. Sophia highlighted key budget decisions and addressed questions.

Announcements: Maialisa Vanyo reminded members that CPD could send participants to the Access to Justice Conference and encouraged those interested to contact staff. Bob Boruchowitz shared about the June 27 Defender Initiative conference at Seattle University.

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.