

PLAN FOR THE PROVISION OF INDIGENT DEFENSE SERVICES Fiscal Year 2021-2022

I. PLAN OBJECTIVE

The objective of this plan is to ensure competent, zealous legal representation for indigent persons eligible for the services of court-appointed counsel. To that end, this plan establishes guidelines and procedures for, among other things, the appointment, duties, compensation, and oversight of the attorneys with whom Lyon County contracts to serve as its public defenders.

II. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. <u>Appointing Authority:</u> The Judge, Justice, or Master presiding over a case arising in a court of law within Lyon County.
- B. <u>Case-Related Expenses</u>: Expenses, other than attorneys' fees, reasonably necessary to provide an appropriate defense. Such expenses may include, without limitation, fees for investigators, expert witnesses, forensic services, photocopying, and transcription.
- C. <u>Department:</u> The Nevada Department of Indigent Defense Services.
- D. <u>Eligible Client</u>: An indigent person whom an Appointing Authority has determined to be eligible for the services of a public defender.
- E. Fiscal Year: July 1st through June 30th.
- F. <u>Qualified Attorney:</u> An attorney approved by the Department to provide indigent defense services within certain categories of cases as set forth in the Regulations.
- G. <u>Regulations</u>: The Temporary Regulations of the Board of Indigent Defense Services.

III. APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC DEFENDERS

Lyon County shall appoint only Qualified Attorneys as public defenders. Lyon County may contract with as many Qualified Attorneys as necessary to ensure adequate representation for all Eligible Clients. All contracts with Qualified Attorneys shall be consistent with this plan and the Regulations, and shall be approved by the Lyon County Board of Commissioners.

A. Selection Process

In seeking out Qualified Attorneys to serve as public defenders, Lyon County shall use a selection committee composed of the County Manager, the Comptroller, and the Human Resources Director. The selection committee may, through a formal request for proposals or through other



means, request information from Qualified Attorneys regarding their experience, workload capacity, fee structure, and any other material information. The selection committee shall weigh these and other relevant factors (including those set forth under Sec. 24(1)(c) of the Regulations) in identifying the Qualified Attorneys with whom it would be in Lyon County's best interest to contract, and the terms of such contracts. The selection committee may utilize outside counsel for assistance during any portion of the selection process, and during the drafting and negotiation of contracts with Qualified Attorneys. In addition, the selection committee may seek input from the Department. The selection committee shall present all proposed contracts to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. No contract shall be effective unless and until it is approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

B. Compensation

The terms of compensation shall be set forth in each Qualified Attorney's approved contract. The compensation shall reflect the Qualified Attorneys' experience, competency, credentials, and amount of work performed. Compensation may be in the form of flat fees, piece rates, hourly rates, or any combination thereof, provided that the compensation is ultimately reasonable and consistent with the Regulations.

C. Independent Contractors; Private Practice of Law

All Qualified Attorneys providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County shall be independent contractors, not employees of Lyon County. Qualified Attorneys may engage in the private practice of law outside the scope of their approved contracts provided that: (i) such practice does not conflict with obligations to Lyon County under the Qualified Attorney's approved contract; (ii) such practice does not conflict with the Qualified Attorney's ability to provide zealous, competent representation to Eligible Clients; and (iii) the Qualified Attorney agrees not to represent clients in any lawsuits against Lyon County, its officers, employees, or agents, or entities in which the Board of County Commissioners act as a governing body.

IV. ELIGIBLE CLIENTS

Consistent with the Regulations and applicable law, the Appointing Authority shall be responsible for determining whether a person is indigent and is eligible for the services of a public defender in the following categories of cases:

- 1. Misdemeanor Cases: A case in which the highest charge is a misdemeanor.
- 2. Category B, C, D, or E Felony or Gross Misdemeanor Cases: A case in which the highest charge is a gross misdemeanor or a Category B, C, D, or E felony for which the maximum penalty is less than ten (10) years imprisonment.



- 3. Category B Felony Cases (10+ year maximum): A case in which the highest charge is a Category B felony for which the maximum penalty is greater than ten (10) years imprisonment.
- 4. Non-Capital Category A Cases: A case in which the highest charge is a non-capital Category A felony.
- 5. Capital Cases: A case in which the highest charge is a capital Category A felony.
- 6. Juvenile Proceedings: A case in which a juvenile is alleged to be delinquent or need of supervision.
- 7. Appeals: Any appeal of an interlocutory adjudication or Final Adjudication in a Case to the Third Judicial District or the Nevada Supreme Court.
- 8. Other Cases: Any other case in which the assignment of court-appointed counsel is required or permitted by law.

The Appointing Authority shall make indigence determinations in the above categories of cases in accordance with applicable law. A Pretrial Services Officer may be utilized to assist with screening for indigence. The Pretrial Services Officer shall use the screening form attached as Appendix A. Such screening shall occur within forty eight (48) hours of arrest. Indigence determinations are ultimately the responsibility of the Appointing Authority.

V. ASSIGNMENT OF QUALIFIED ATTORNEYS TO ELIGIBLE CLIENTS

Walther Law Offices, PLLC shall serve as Lyon County's primary public defender and shall be assigned to represent all Eligible Clients except:

- 1. In the event Walther Law Offices, PLLC has a conflict of interest or otherwise cannot represent all parties in a matter in accordance with the Nevada Rules of Professional Conduct; or
- 2. As lead counsel in a capital case.

In the event Walther Law Offices, PLLC has a conflict of interest or otherwise cannot represent all parties in a matter, a separate Qualified Attorney with whom Lyon County has an approved contract shall be assigned. The procedure for assignment is set forth below:

1. Walther Law Offices, PLLC shall provide immediate notice of its inability to represent Eligible Client(s) to the Department by email at didscontact@dids.nv.gov. Walther Law Offices, PLLC shall make this notification as soon as it determines that it intends to file a notice of conflict or a motion to



withdraw, as applicable. Walther Law Offices, PLLC shall include in the notification the following information (if available): charging document, probable cause sheet or declaration, and the date and location of the next scheduled court appearance.

- 2. Upon receipt of the above notification, the Department shall select other Qualified Attorney(s) for assignment from among the panel of Qualified Attorneys with whom Lyon County has an approved contract. The Department shall use a rotation system insofar as practicable, but shall ultimately have discretion to make assignments on any legitimate basis, including, without limitation, qualifications, interest, track record of responsiveness and dependability in accepting assignments, feedback from Eligible Clients, feedback from Lyon County officials, and capacity to take on work.
- 3. A Qualified Attorney contacted by the Department for an assignment may accept or reject the assignment. If the Qualified Attorney (or staff duly authorized to accept assignments on the Qualified Attorney's behalf) is not available during normal business hours when contacted by the Department, the assignment shall be deemed rejected. The Department shall contact other Qualified Attorneys until it obtains acceptance from a sufficient number of Qualified Attorneys to represent all Eligible Clients.¹
- 4. Upon confirmation of acceptance of assignment by Qualified Attorney(s), the Department shall provide prompt notice and a proposed order confirming selection of counsel to the Appointing Authority—i.e., the Judge, Justice, or Master presiding over the court in which the Eligible Client's charges are pending.

In the event of a capital case, Lyon County shall retain a Qualified Attorney authorized to serve as lead counsel under Supreme Court Rule 250 and shall pay reasonable compensation for such services. Walther Law Offices, PLLC and/or other Qualified Attorneys may be assigned as co-counsel consistent with the terms of their approved contracts.

¹ Nothing herein shall preclude Lyon County from entering into additional contracts to add more Qualified Attorneys to the panel after the effective date of this plan. In addition, nothing herein shall preclude the Department from exercising its authority to appoint counsel outside the panel pursuant to NRS 7.115 et seq. in the event there are not a sufficient number of Qualified Attorneys on the panel to accept assignments to represent all Eligible Clients.



VI. DUTIES OF QUALIFIED ATTORNEYS

A. Standards of Performance

Qualified Attorneys providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County shall be responsible for providing such services in a professional, skilled manner. They shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations, Rules of Professional Conduct, and the Nevada Indigent Defense Standards of Performance adopted by the October 16, 2008 Nevada Supreme Court Order in Administrative Docket 411, or the same as may be amended.

B. Continuity in Representation

Qualified Attorneys providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County shall ensure, to the extent practicable, consistency in representation such that the same attorney represents a defendant through every stage of the case; provided, however, that attorneys may delegate appropriate administrative tasks to support staff, or may assign more than one (1) attorney to represent an Eligible Client as necessary provided it would not prejudice the rights or defense of the Eligible Client.

C. Workload Standard

The workload of each Qualified Attorney providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County must allow the attorney to give each client the time and effort necessary to ensure effective representation. Any attorney who provides indigent defense services shall not accept a workload that, by reason of its excessive size, interferes with the attorney's competence, diligence, and/or representation of clients. The maximum workload guidelines as determined by the Department are incorporated herein by reference and shall be followed to the greatest extent practicable. To the extent required by the Department's Board, Qualified Attorneys providing indigent defense services under this plan shall maintain caseload data and track time spent providing indigent defense services in accordance with Sections 46 and 47 of the Regulations.

D. Conflicts of Interest

All Qualified Attorneys providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County shall be required to timely screen all case assignments for conflicts of interest. In the event of a conflict of interest, the Qualified Attorney shall file an appropriate motion or, as applicable, a notice of conflict with the Appointing Authority. Unless leave to withdraw is withheld by the Appointing Authority, the Qualified Attorney shall ensure prompt transfer of the Eligible Client's file to the Eligible Client's new attorney.



E. Training

All Qualified Attorneys providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County shall be required to comply with the training and continuing education requirements of the Department.

F. Other Responsibilities

All Qualified Attorneys providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County shall be responsible for ensuring:

- 1. Clients do not waive any substantive rights or plead guilty at the initial appearance, unless doing so is the client's best interest.
- 2. Clients receive adequate and frequent communication from their attorney. As a guideline, Qualified Attorneys shall, where practicable, communicate with clients seven (7) days following the assignment of the case and every thirty (30) days thereafter unless there are no significant updates in the client's matter.
- 3. Clients are notified of and encouraged to participate in client surveys authorized by the Department.
- 4. Clients are appropriately notified of their right to utilize the Department's Complaint and Recommendation process.
- 5. Attorney-client privilege and client confidentiality are maintained.

G. Initial In-Custody Appearances

Walther Law Offices, PLLC shall provide Representational Services for all Eligible Clients who are in custody and require a bail hearing. Insofar as Walther Law Offices, PLLC has a conflict of interest precluding the firm from continuing to provide Representational Services in connection with a substantive defense of the charges, Walther Law Offices, PLLC shall limit the scope of its representation. It shall only advocate for the Eligible Client's best interests at the bail hearing and shall advise the Eligible Client of the limited scope of such representation.

Notwithstanding any other provision herein, nothing shall preclude Walther Law Offices, PLLC from declining to represent an Eligible Client, even for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph, if it determines it cannot do so in a manner consistent with the Nevada Rules of Professional Conduct. In the event this occurs, Walther Law Offices, PLLC shall immediately notify the Department so the Department can assign alternative counsel from among the panel of Qualified Attorneys with whom Lyon County has an approved contract.



VII. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CONFIDENTIAL ATTORNEY/CLIENT COMMUNICATIONS

The Lyon County Sheriff's Office offers the opportunity for Qualified Attorneys to meet confidentially with Eligible Clients in person or via video conference. Qualified Attorneys seeking a confidential meeting are encouraged to contact Lyon County Sheriff's Office staff at 775-463-6600 at least twenty four (24) hours in advance. The Lyon County Sheriff's Office will make every reasonable effort to ensure a Qualified Attorney is able to meet with an Eligible Client at the desired time. Absent twenty four (24) hours' notice, the Lyon County Sheriff's Office will still make every reasonable effort to arrange a meeting as requested by the Qualified Attorney, but Qualified Attorneys shall, for their part, demonstrate reasonable flexibility and mutual cooperation in such instances. Qualified Attorneys shall be responsible for compliance with all safety protocols and all reasonable instructions of jail personnel.

Questions or concerns with respect to accommodations for confidential meetings with Eligible Clients may, if not satisfactorily addressed by staff, be directed to Sergeant Jacek Sobel (jsobel@lyon-county.org), Sergeant Chris Bixby (cbixby@lyon-county.org), or Lieutenant Josh Barnes (jbarnes@lyon-county.org).

VIII. INVOICING AND PAYMENT

A. Attorneys' Fees

Qualified Attorneys providing services to Eligible Clients within Lyon County in exchange for an hourly rate shall submit monthly invoices to the Department. Such invoices shall be submitted on the Requests for Attorneys' Fees form attached hereto as Appendix B, with appropriate backup, no later than ten (10) days after the end of the month in which the services were rendered. The backup shall contain time entries rounded to the nearest one-tenth (1/10th) of an hour, describing with specificity the work performed and identifying the attorney who performed it.²

The Department shall approve for payment all reasonable attorney's fees reflected on the Requests for Attorneys' Fees and backup. In reviewing for reasonableness, the Department may consider factors such as: (i) average case times as determined by workload analysis; (ii) time and skill required; (iii) complexity of the case; and (iv) experience and ability of the Qualified Attorney(s). The Department may request additional information or explanation where necessary. In the event the Department denies or modifies a Request for Attorneys' Fees, it shall provide an

² For invoicing purposes, Qualified Attorneys are encouraged to use LegalServer for invoice backup. An example of a time slip generated through LegalServer with sufficient detail is included with Appendix B. If a Qualified Attorney does not wish to use LegalServer, the Qualified Attorney may submit an alternative form of backup provided it contains a breakdown of services rendered in comparable detail.



explanation to the Qualified Attorney, with a copy to the Lyon County Manager, as to why the denied portion was not reasonable. Such denials shall be subject judicial review pursuant to NRS 7.135.

Payment for all approved attorneys' fees shall be issued by the Lyon County Comptroller's Office. The Department shall notify the Comptroller's Office of all approved Requests for Attorneys' Fees, attaching a copy of the invoice and backup. The Comptroller's Office shall issue payment within ten (10) days of receipt.

B. Case-Related Expenses

Insofar as Case-Related Expenses are incurred in providing services to Eligible Clients, the following procedures shall apply:

- 1. Pre-Authorization: Case-Related Expenses expected to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) shall be submitted to the Department for pre-authorization before they are incurred. The Qualified Attorney shall submit the request for pre-authorization to the Department by email at didscontact@dids.nv.gov. The request shall include an explanation of why the expense is reasonably necessary to provide Representational Services.
- 2. Reasonableness Review: All Case-Related Expenses, whether or not they are subject to pre-authorization, are subject to the Department's review for reasonableness. Invoices for Case-Related Expenses shall be submitted to the Department, along with a completed Request for Case-Related Expenses Form (see Appendix C), no later than thirty (30) days following the termination of the representation. Any requests not timely submitted shall be waived. The Department shall approve all reasonable and necessary Requests for Case-Related Expenses, and shall notify the Lyon County Comptroller's Office of all approved expenses and provide a copy of the invoice.
- 3. Payment: The Lyon County Comptroller's Office shall issue payment for all approved Case-Related Expenses within ten (10) days of receipt of notice of the Department's approval and a copy of the invoice.

IX. REIMBURSEMENT FOR PAYMENTS EXCEEDING THE MAXIMUM COUNTY CONTRIBUTION

Pursuant to NRS 180.320(3), the Department's Board has promulgated under Section 18 of its Regulations a formula for establishing the maximum amount a county is required to pay for the provision of indigent defense services in a Fiscal Year. Under that formula, the maximum amount Lyon County must pay for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 is eight hundred eighteen thousand, nine hundred thirty three dollars and five cents (\$818,933.05).



Pursuant to Section 19 of the Regulations, Lyon County shall be permitted to obtain reimbursement for costs associated with the provision of indigent defense services under this plan to the extent they exceed the maximum contribution in the preceding paragraph. Lyon County shall file financial status reports with the Department in a manner consistent with Section 19 of the Regulations, using the form prescribed by the Department³. The Lyon County Board of Commissioners hereby designates the Lyon County Comptroller as its designee to submit such reports to the Department. To the extent the financial status reports reflect costs in excess of the maximum contribution for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, Lyon County shall receive reimbursement up to a limit of five hundred eighteen thousand sixty six dollars and ninety five cents (\$518,066.95)⁴. In the event reimbursable costs exceed this amount, nothing herein shall be construed to preclude Lyon County from seeking additional reimbursement pursuant to NRS 353.266, NRS 180.450, or as otherwise permitted by law.

X. EFFECTIVE DATE; MODIFICATION

This plan is effective September 2, 2021 and shall remain in effect through the end of the current fiscal year, i.e., until June 30, 2022. This plan may be modified by formal action of the Board of County Commissioners.

XI. PLAN ADMINISTERATOR AND CONTACTS

The County Manager shall be the administrator of this plan and the contracts for the provision of indigent defense services. The County Manager shall report material breaches or other significant matters to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners may take any lawful, situationally-appropriate action with respect to any contract.

Questions about the administration of this plan may be directed to the Lyon County Manager, Jeff Page (jpage@lyon-county.org), the Lyon County Comptroller, Josh Foli (jfoli@lyon-county.org) or the Lyon County Human Resources Director, Eric Milavsky (emilavsky@lyon-county.org).

³ The form is available here: https://dids.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/didsnvgov/content/CountyResource/Quarterly%20Financial%2 OStatus%20Report%20-%203-16-21.xlsx.

⁴ Lyon County's flat fee agreement with Walther Law Offices, PLLC will alone exceed its maximum contribution amount by \$118,066.95. In addition, Lyon County estimates incurring \$150,000 in Case-Related Expenses, as well as \$250,000 in fees for conflict counsel (i.e., Qualified Attorneys who are assigned when Walther Law Offices, PLLC has a conflict of interest). Thus: \$118,066.95 + \$150,000 + \$250,000 = \$518,066.95.

APPENDIX A

** TODAY'S DATE: ____/___ ** ENTIRE FORM MUST BE COM ** ENTIRE FORM MUST BE COMPLETED NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST): ADDRESS: ______APT #:_____ CITY:_____ STATE:____ ZIPCODE:_____ SOCIAL SECURITY #: ____-__-DOB: ____-_ PHONE #: (_______ TYPE: HOME / CELL / WORK PHONE #: () -_____ TYPE: HOME / CELL / WORK ARE YOU A VETERAN OR ACTIVE DUTY MEMBER OF THE U.S. MILITARY? □YES □ NO HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN LYON COUNTY?YEARSMONTHSHOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?ADULTSCHILDREN DO YOU RECEIVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE? **TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES** □SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE □ASSISTANCE FROM THE PROGRAM FOR CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT □LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE □OTHER (e.g., Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Housing Assistance): DO YOU OWN OR RENT YOUR HOME? DRENT DOWN ARE YOU PRESENTLY EMPLOYED? □YES □NO HOURLY RATE OF PAY \$_____ NAME OF EMPLOYER: TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME PER MONTH (FROM ALL SOURCES/SPOUSE'S INCOME): \$_______ OTHER ASSETS: \$ MONTHLY EXPENSES RENT/MORTGAGE: **UTILITIES**: CAR PAYMENT: CHILD CARE: **INSURANCE:** FOOD: MEDICAL: OTHER EXPENSES: TOTAL ESTIMATED MONTHLY EXPENSES: \$ I declare under penalty of perjury under the law of the State of Nevada that the foregoing is true and correct. Unable to sign due to custody status Refused to complete and/or sign SIGNATURE INFORMATION COLLECTED PURSUANT TO NRS 179A.075 FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

A PERSON IS "INDIGENT" IF THEY ARE UNABLE, WITHOUT SUBSTANTIAL HARDSHIP TO THEMSELVES OR THEIR DEPENDENTS, TO OBTAIN COMPETENT, QUALIFIED COUNSEL. "SUBSTANTIAL HARDSHIP" IS PRESUMPTIVELY DETERMINED TO INCLUDE ALL PERSONS (1) WHO RECEIVE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, AS DEFINED BY NRS 422A.065; (2) RESIDE IN PUBLIC HOUSING, AS DEFINED BY NRS 325.021; (3) EARN LESS THAN 200% OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINE; (4) ACTIVELY SERVING A SENTENCE IN A CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; OR (5) IS HOUSED IN A MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY.

QUALIFIES FOR PUBLIC DEFENDER

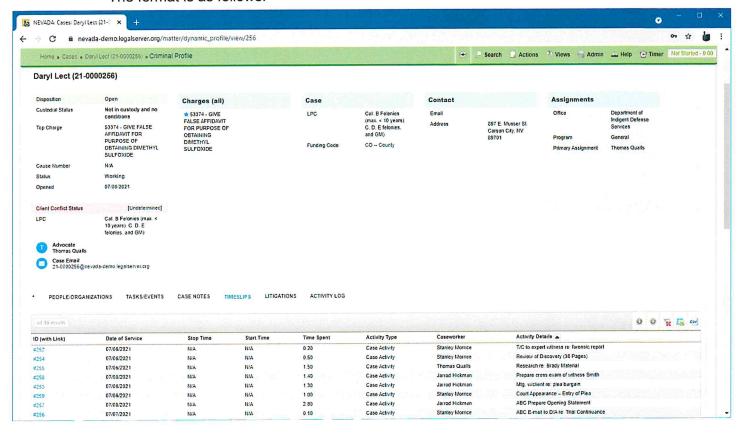
DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR PUBLIC DEFENDER

APPENDIX B

REQUEST FOR ATTORNEY FEES

Attorney:	Date:		
Phone No.:	Address:		
E-mail: Client Name:	Case No.:		
Funding Source: Lyon County	Charge:		
ATTORNEY FEES REQUESTED: Attorney Time Hours @ rate per hour = \$ [Refer to NRS 7.125 or applicable contract for hourly rate].			
CASE STATUS: As of today, this case is:			
□Currently Active/Interim billingOP	R- Representation terminate	ed by [select one]:	
□Judgment of Conviction, Acquittal/Dismissal, or Order of Court			
□Substitution of Counsel □	FTA / Bench Warrant	□Remittitur	
□Other (provide description):			
SUPPORTING MATERIALS:			
□Time slips current and accurate in LegalServerOR- □Back-up documents are attached.			
STATEMENT MADE UNDER OATH:			
I hereby certify that the above and foregoing claim is just and reasonable. That the work performed was necessary in the defense of my client, and that said claim is now due, owing, and unpaid. That if this is not my initial billing in this matter, I have previously received \$ in fees in the representation of this matter.			
Attorney Signature			
APPROVAL			
To be completed by DIDS			
DIDS has reviewed this request and has	s: □approved a total amount □not approved this reques	of \$; t.	
Reviewed by	Date		

The format is as follows:



APPENDIX C

REQUEST FOR CASE-RELATED EXPENSE

Attorney: [PrimaryAdvocate] Address: [Office]	Date: [today's date]		
Phone No.: [phone] Defendant Name: [ClientName] Funding Source: [State or County]	E-Mail: [email] Case No.: [CaseNumber] Charge: [TopCharge]		
☐ INVESTIGATOR ☐ EXPERT ☐	MITIGATION SPECIALISTS		
OTHER. Please describe:			
Name: Tax ID No.:			
License No.:			
Field of Expertise:			
Hourly Rate: \$Hours Requested: \$			
Explain Reason for Request:			
APPROVAL			
To be completed by DIDS			
DIDS has reviewed this request and has: pproved a total amount of \$;			
not approved this request.			
Reviewed by	Date		