

# **Wisconsin State Public Defender's Role in Mental Health & Criminal Justice**

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**Course Corrections:**

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# Background Information on the Wisconsin State Public Defender

- Mission statement:

*To promote justice throughout Wisconsin by providing high-quality legal services, protecting individual rights, and advocating as a criminal justice partner for effective defender services and a fair and rational criminal justice system.*

- Vision statement:

*Working together, the Wisconsin State Public Defender Office will lead the way in protecting justice for all.*

- The SPD has been providing "justice for all" since 1977
- Provides legal representation to the indigent throughout the State's 72 counties:
  - 36 local trial offices, 2 appellate offices

# Wisconsin State Public Defender in Milwaukee County

## 1. Milwaukee Trial Office

– Manager Attorney Thomas Reed

819 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee

## 2. Milwaukee Juvenile and Mental Health Office

– Manager Attorney – Robin Dorman

10930 W. Potter Road, Wauwatosa

# Work of the State Public Defender Milwaukee Mental Health Office

- No financial guidelines/limitations
- Represent individuals on involuntary mental health commitments, extensions, re-detentions, medication order hearings (Chapter 51)
- Represent individuals on guardianships – persons determined to be legally incompetent due to developmental disability, serious and persistent mental illness, degenerative brain disorder or other like incapacities (Chapter 54)
- Represent individuals on protective placements - persons who have been declared incompetent and who are in need of long-term placement in a nursing care facility or similar facility, or who are in need of services in the community. Care is to be provided in the least restrictive environment to meet the person's needs (Chapter 55)

# Work of the State Public Defender Milwaukee Mental Health Office

- Remove police holds on individuals placed at BHD
- SPD is currently working with the County Courts, DA Office, Sheriff Dept., BHD, DHS, Milw Community Justice Council, Milw County housing, Justice Point, and others to identify individuals booked into the county jail for low-level offenses related to their mental health needs, who could be released prior to a charging decision by the prosecutor and stabilized through case management and monitoring, housing and peer support. Milw County is a core site for the MacArthur Safety and Justice Challenge grant.
- Stay up-to-date on new laws and pending legislation that deal with mental health related issues
- Partner with community organizations
- Resource for other SPD offices and agencies across the state – wealth of legal experience

# Questions?

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