



For Immediate Release  
From Idaho State Public Defense Commission

Kimberly Simmons  
[Kimberly.Simmons@pdc.idaho.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Simmons@pdc.idaho.gov)  
816 W. Bannock Street, Suite 201  
Boise, ID 83702  
Tel. (208) 332-1735  
[www.pdc.idaho.gov](http://www.pdc.idaho.gov)

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## Idaho State Public Defense Commission Announces Robust Response to Call for Grant Applications

BOISE - The Idaho State Public Defense Commission was created in 2014 by House Bill 542 and codified at I.C. § 19-849. The Commission's powers and duties, delineated in I.C. § 19-850, were amended in the 2016 legislative session by House Bill 504. I.C. § 19-850 directs the Commission to engage in a number of activities.

Under the 2016 legislation, the Commission is to create rules related to the training and performance standards of public defenders consistent with Idaho's Principles for a Public Defense Delivery System. Additionally, the Commission is empowered to create a model contract for counties that utilize private attorneys for the delivery of indigent defense.

The Commission is also directed to establish procedures to reimburse counties for expenses resulting from extraordinarily time-consuming or resource-intensive cases. In order to allow counties to meet the forthcoming new standards, the Commission issued grant applications to allow counties to apply for additional funding for their indigent defense services. Pursuant to I.C. § 19-862A, counties are eligible to receive up to \$25,000 or 15% of the budget, whichever is greater.

The Commission is pleased to announce that there was a robust response to its call for grant applications. Of Idaho's 44 counties, 43 submitted grant applications. In their applications, the counties supplied extensive information about their current indigent defense expenses and their proposed plans for how they would use the additional funding. The Commission is excited to begin the process of thoroughly reviewing the applications and approving those that meet their standards.

Discussing the substantial number and quality of the grant applications, Executive Director Kimberly Simmons said, "I am pleasantly surprised and excited by the response from the counties in our first round of grant applications. The diligence and effort put into the applications by our counties shows that Idaho is dedicated to improving indigent defense services so as to provide constitutional representation for our indigent residents."

The Commission is proud to continue the work of improving Idaho's indigent defense system in a collaborative manner with Idaho's counties who take on the important responsibility of providing constitutionally-sound representation for indigent defendants.

The Commission invites any interested party to attend its next public meeting on August 30, 2016 at 1 p.m. at the Commission's office.

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**Kimberly J. Simmons**

*Executive Director*

*State Public Defense Commission*

816 W. Bannock Street, Suite 201

Boise, ID 83702

PH: (208) 332-1736

Mobile: (208) 869-3124

Fax: (208) 364-6147

**Facebook:** @idahospdc

**Twitter:** @Idaho\_PDC

[Kimberly.Simmons@pdc.idaho.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Simmons@pdc.idaho.gov)

[www.pdc.idaho.gov](http://www.pdc.idaho.gov)

