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Assigned Counsel Division

April 2025 Newsletter

A Message from ACD Director Pakes

Members of the private bar -- Thank you again for all that you do for SPD clients and the Agency. We could not carry out our mission without you.

2025 brings many new developments to the SPD. Under the leadership of State Public Defender Jennifer Bias, the Agency Leadership Team has developed a strategic plan which includes resource development for our private bar partners. As part of this resource development we have secured Westlaw licenses for use on private bar cases and will be providing training opportunities for private bar throughout the year. Later this spring we will be unrolling an updated and improved website which will include exclusive access to training materials for private bar partners.

As always, we encourage all our assigned counsel attorneys to reach out to me or any members of the ACD team for questions or concerns you may have.

Thanks again for all your efforts!
Kathleen Pakes

Misdemeanor and Chapter 51 Contracts

The Wisconsin State Public Defender will be soliciting requests for proposal (RFP) for fixed-fee contracting in misdemeanor and Chapter 51 commitment cases for state fiscal year 2026. Case assignments will begin on or around July 1, 2025. The

Spotlight on Youth Defense

The [Youth Defense Practice](#) section of the SPD website is an excellent resource; it includes the [Core Principles of Youth Defense Practice](#) along with many other helpful documents. SPD is sponsoring upcoming trainings on topics including Native/Indigenous youth in Wisconsin's juvenile legal system, representing youth in waiver to adult court proceedings, and defending youth in sexual assault cases. Contact [Melissa Lamb](#) for registration information.

2024 Berkos Award Winners

Congratulations to Francis Rivard and Cheryl Ward, the winners of the 2024 Danny Berkos Award! You can watch their spotlight videos on the [ACD website](#). The 2025 Berkos Award nomination information will be available in August.



NEW! Sexual Assault Defense: Mentoring Program

If you have a client charged with sexual assault, or would like to take a sexual assault case, and you could benefit from bouncing ideas off an experienced attorney, please contact [Melissa](#) or [Kathy](#). SPD-ACD offers a mentoring program that pairs private bar attorneys with an experienced sexual assault defense attorney.

Keep an eye out for upcoming sexual assault trainings in October 2025 and January 2026.

Appellate Skills Academy

SPD's Appellate Skills Academy will be held June 4-6, 2025, at the Ingleside in Pewaukee. CLE credits are available. Registration information is forthcoming.

Justice: From Defendant to Defender, My Fight for Equity on Both Sides of a Broken System," as well as David Singleton, Executive Director of the Ohio Justice and Policy Center, presenting on "Theory and Storytelling," as it related to postconviction litigation. Day 1 will consist of Foundational Skills, Day 2 will focus on Postconviction Litigation and Day 3 will focus on Appellate Litigation. Please contact Appellate Division Director [Faun Moses](#) with any questions.

Who do I contact in ACD?

Here is a brief list of topics and who to contact in ACD.

Receipts and invoices for billing – acd@opd.wi.gov

Case not in billable cases list – acd@opd.wi.gov

General questions about billing, etc. – acd@opd.wi.gov

Requests for interim billing, expedited payments – lambm@opd.wi.gov

Case expense authorization questions and expert referrals – lambm@opd.wi.gov

When in doubt, email acd@opd.wi.gov and we'll get you to the right place!

Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Trainings

See your email for registration information for this training, or contact [Melissa Lamb](#):

- Ambassadors for Racial Justice Project and Youth Defender Trainings
 - April 11 | Madison
 - May 16 | Green Bay
 - June 13 | Rhinelander
 - Aug. 15 | Black River Falls

Registration information coming soon:

- Appellate Skills Academy | June 4-6 | Pewaukee
- Forensic University - Toxicology/Overdose | Aug. 6-8 | Weston
- Working as Team | Sept. 15-19 | Lake Geneva
- Youth Defense Training | Nov. 12 | Milwaukee
- SPD Annual Conference | November 13-14 | Milwaukee