AGENCY NAME:	South Carolina Commission on Indigent Defense		
AGENCY CODE:	E230	SECTION:	61

Fiscal Year 2027-28
Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

	For FY 2027-28, my agency is (mark "X"):	
OPERATING REQUESTS (FORM B1)	X	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
		Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
		Not requesting any changes.
NON-RECURRING REQUESTS (FORM B2)	For FY 2027-28, my agency is (mark "X"):	
		Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
		Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	X	Not requesting any changes.
CAPITAL REQUESTS (FORM C)	For FY 2027-28, my agency is (mark "X"):	
		Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
	X	Not requesting any changes.
PROVISOS (FORM D)	For FY 2027-28, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	X	Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
		Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
		Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	Name	*Phone*	*Email*
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Rodney Grizzle	803-734-1168	rgrizzle@sccid.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Melaine Davis	803-734-4454	Mdavis@sccid.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2027-28 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	Agency Director	*Board or Commission Chair*
SIGN/DATE:		9/11/26
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	J. Hugh Ryan, III	John S. Nichols

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense
Agency Code:	E230
Section:	61

BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Attorney Recruitment and Retention - Longevity Salary Increases	4,076,450	0	0	0	4,076,450	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Circuit Public Defender Jail Attorney	1,966,592	0	0	0	1,966,592	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	B1 - Recurring	Salary Equalization for the Circuit Public Defender Administrative Assistants	194,705	0	0	0	194,705	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	B1 - Recurring	Circuit Public Defender Technology and Digital Storage	691,000	0	0	0	691,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	B1 - Recurring	Attorney Recruitment and Retention - SC Prosecutors and Public Defenders Student Loan Program	3,000,000	0	0	0	3,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			9,928,747	0	0	0	9,928,747	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense		
Agency Code:	E230	Section:	61

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**1**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Attorney Recruitment and Retention - Longevity Salary Increases**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $4,076,450** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $4,076,450**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
X	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

Strategy: Support the programmatic and administrative operations of the Commission on Indigent Defense (SCCID)

Accountability – Efficient and Effective Court System: The goal of the requested funding is to support and maintain an efficient and effective court system in which cases come to fruition in a matter of months. The South Carolina Supreme Court's 2023 General Sessions Docket Management Order (Docket Management Order) begins: "In an efficient criminal justice system, cases should be disposed of within months instead of years, regardless of whether defendants go to trial, plead guilty, enter into a diversion program, or have their cases dismissed."

The Supreme Court order specifically recognized that there cannot be an efficient court system unless there are an adequate number of public defenders and prosecutors. In recognition of these needs laid out in the Docket Management Order and the associated resources requested by the Commission on Indigent Defense (SCCID), and the Commission on Prosecution Coordination (SCCPC) and the General Assembly provided recurring funding in its FY 24 Budget to hire additional public

defenders and prosecutors. Since then, there has been a 28.3 percent reduction in cases 3 years and older.

However, to maintain this momentum PD and Solicitor Offices must retain experienced attorneys. Vast hours and resources have been expended on training and mentoring these attorneys. There is only a small pool of attorneys each year that choose public service fields upon graduating from law school.

More experienced attorneys can move cases more efficiently and create trial records that lead to less appeals, granting of post-conviction relief that only adds to system backlogs.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funding will be primarily distributed to the sixteen Offices of the Circuit Defender with a portion being retained by SCCID. Funds will be distributed for longevity salary increases for full-time attorneys working in one or more qualifying office once they have reached 5 or 10+ years of combined experience in one of these offices. Eligible employees will receive a $10,000 salary increase after 5 years of qualifying service, and an additional $5,000 after 10 years of qualifying service. Distributions will require employment and experience verification to prove longevity for each qualified employee.

This budget request is made in collaboration with the Commission on Prosecution Coordination and the Office of Attorney General. Separate budget requests are being submitted by these agencies for the funding each requires to provide the proposed longevity salary increases for eligible attorneys and offices under their purview.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

$4,076,450 in recurring funding is requested to provide $10,000 longevity salary increases to eligible full-time attorneys in the Circuit Public Defender's offices, Commission on Indigent Defense (SCCID), Circuit Solicitors' offices, Commission on Prosecution Coordination (SCCPC), and Office of the Attorney General upon reaching 5 years of combined experience in one of these qualifying offices, and another $5,000 upon reaching 10 years of combined service:

$3,062,000 – Longevity Increases for an Estimated 222 Attorneys

$1,011,450 – Employer Contributions

$4,076,450 – RECURRING TOTAL

The Experience Gap Problem

There are 307 full-time attorneys statewide in the Commission on Indigent Defense system (Public Defenders, Appellate Defenders, Capital Defenders) statewide. 85 of them have less than 5 years' experience (Tier 1). 65 have between 5 and 9 years' experience (Tier 2). That is a 23.5% drop from Tier 1 to Tier 2. There continues to be a drop in experience until 20+ years' experience (Tier 5). There are 45 defenders who have between 10 and 14 years' experience (Tier 3). There are only 37 with between 15 and 19 years' experience (Tier 4). Tier 5 is a larger group with 75 defenders.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

Public defenders who have less than five years' experience are generally still being trained. Beyond five years' experience, a public defender starts to become comfortable with more complex cases and can more efficiently and effectively process their caseload. If we do not address this experience gap, the 20-year plus group will retire and there will not be qualified defenders to take their place. If that happens, all defenders within the Commission on Indigent Defense will have less than five years' experience.

A possible solution to this problem can be broken into two parts. Longevity salary increases for Tier 2 and Tier 3 experience levels, and student loan forgiveness.

Attorney Retention Budget Request

SCCID proposes that once a full-time attorney in a Public Defender office or SCCID's office reaches 5 years' experience, the state provides a $10,000 raise regardless of their salary. Once an eligible attorney reaches 10 years' experience, the state provides an additional $5,000 raise. This incentive-based, longevity salary increase program will apply to attorneys in the Circuit Solicitors' offices, Circuit Public Defenders' offices, Office of Attorney General, Commission on Prosecution Coordination (SCCPC), and Commission on Indigent Defense (SCCID), including the Executive Directors of the SCCPC and SCCID.

Based on attorney staffing as of July 1, 2026, 53 attorneys in the Public Defender offices and the SCCID office would receive a $10,000 salary increase for which the associated fringe is $3,300 (total employer cost per attorney = $13,300). This is a $704,900 recurring budget expense ($13,300 x 53). Initially, attorneys in the Public Defender offices and SCCID offices that have at least 10 years' experience would receive a $15,000 salary increase for which the associated fringe is $4,950 (total employer cost per attorney = $19,950). There are 169 lawyers that fall into this category. Accordingly, this would be a $3,371,550 recurring budget request ($19,950 x 169). Attorneys will have to provide employment and experience verification to prove longevity for each qualified employee to get the associated distribution from the SCCID.

Based on the above calculations, the SCCID's total recurring FY 28 budget request for Attorney Recruitment and Retention – Longevity Salary Increases for the Public Defender and SCCID offices is $4,076,450.

Future years' budget requests, if any, to continue these longevity incentives will be significantly less and will be based on attrition and the number of attorneys expected to reach the milestone of either 5 or 10 years of eligible service during the fiscal year. For example, based on July 1, 2026, attorney staffing in the Public Defender and SCCID offices, during FY 29 an estimated 8 attorneys are projected to reach 5 years' experience and 8 attorneys are projected to reach 10 years' experience. In addition, after FY 28, catch-up longevity salary increase funding for attorneys with 10+ years' experience that missed the 5-year longevity increase will no longer be needed; so, new funding needed for attorneys reaching 10 years' experience in FY 29 and beyond would be $6,650 per attorney ($5,000 salary + $1,650 fringe). Based on these projections and assuming there is no attrition among attorneys with 5+ years' experience, the maximum FY 29 budget request for attorney longevity increases would be $159,600 ($120,000 salary; $39,600 fringe), which breaks down to $53,200 for those reaching 5 years of service ($13,300 x 8) plus $106,400 for those reaching 10 years of service.

The associated FY28 budget requests for Longevity Salary Increases for attorneys in the Circuit Public Defenders' offices, SCCID office, and Office of Attorney General are being submitted by the SCCPC and Attorney General separately.

Success Metric

This budget request does not require a new proviso to ensure success. The plan will show success if the number of attorneys in Tiers 1-4 grows, which will require additional funding from the General Assembly in the future.

Law School Recruitment – Student Loan Forgiveness

As is more fully discussed in the combined SCCPC, SCCID, and Office of Attorney General budget request for Attorney Recruitment and Retention – SC Prosecutors and Public Defenders Student Loan Program, the SCCID recommends creating a SC Prosecutors and Public Defenders Loan Program that graduate students who are enrolled in an American Bar Association (ABA)-approved law school may apply for if they intend to work for five years of combined service in a Circuit Solicitor's office, a Circuit Public Defender's office, the Office of Attorney General, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination (SCCPC), and/or the Commission on Indigent Defense (SCCID) after graduation. The recipient of a loan is entitled to have up to one hundred percent of the loan amount (principal and accrued interest) forgiven if the loan recipient becomes an attorney licensed to practice law in South Carolina and is employed in South Carolina by one or more of these qualifying offices. The loan amount will be canceled at the rate of twenty percent per year of eligible service, and the entire loan amount will be canceled after five years of service.

If the student accepts the loan but, after graduating and passing the bar exam, does not work for five years in one of these qualifying offices, they will have to pay the loan back, including accrued interest.

The loan program, which is modeled after the SC Teachers Loan Program, will be developed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHE), in consultation with the Commission on Prosecution Coordination (SCCPC) and the staff of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation. The South Carolina Student Loan Corporation will administer the loan program. Loan amounts shall not exceed $35,000 a year for not more than three years or an aggregate maximum of $105,000.

Combined Effect of Longevity Increases and Student Loan Forgiveness

The SC Prosecutors and Public Defenders Loan Program will incentivize a higher number of law school students to consider a career of public service as an attorney in one of the qualifying offices. The longevity increases guaranteed upon reaching 5 and 10 years of service will keep loan recipients in these offices after their loans are forgiven. Combined, these two incentive programs will help level the playing field with other employers seeking to hire law school graduates and prosecutors, including municipal, federal and county offices as well as private law firms.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense		
Agency Code:	E230	Section:	61

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY

2

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Circuit Public Defender Jail Attorney

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: $1,966,592

Federal: $0

Other: $0

Total: $1,966,592

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
X	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

This funding request is based upon Strategy 1.1 Enhance the Circuit Public Defender System. The recurring funding request of $1,966,592 is to provide Jail Attorney funding, for each of the 16 Circuit Public Defender Offices in the state. This funding will cover the salary and fringe for this position.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF

16 Circuit Public Defender Offices

FUNDS	

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	The SC Supreme Court outlined a framework to ensure an efficient criminal justice system that would allow cases to be disposed of within months instead of years in a General Sessions Docket Management Order. Part of that framework involved the Circuit Public Defenders having adequate resources to post a public defender at the local detention facility to (1) make sure counsel is informed with the person's case early, (2) interview the clients to gather information to assess the case options, (3) communicate with the solicitor and determine immediate resolutions, and (4) get cases that can be moved quickly into court for disposition and direct those more complex cases to an assigned trial public defender. Counties with jail attorneys have recognized significant cost savings due to the efficient movement of cases. SCCID is requesting $1,966,592 in recurring funding for 16 Jail Attorneys, one for each circuit in the amount of $122,912. ($85,000 Salary and $37,912 in Fringe Benefits)

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense		
Agency Code:	E230	Section:	61

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY

3

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Salary Equalization for the Circuit Public Defender Administrative Assistants

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: $194,705

Federal: $0

Other: $0

Total: $194,705

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
X	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

This funding request is based upon Strategy 1.1 Enhance the Circuit Public Defender System. The recurring funding request of $194,705 is to increase the salaries of the 16 Circuit Public Defender Administrative Assistants to ensure parity in salaries with the Circuit Solicitor Administrative Assistants.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF

The 16 Circuit Public Defender Administrative Assistants.

FUNDS	

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	SCCID is asking for increased funding to increase the salary level of each of the 16 Circuit AA positions to $55,000. The Circuit Administrative Assistant positions have always been some of the lowest paid positions in each of the Circuits, resulting in a high turnover rate. This increase will allow the Circuit AA positions to be in line with the AA positions in the Circuit Solicitors Offices. The $194,705 funding increase breakdown will be $146,626 in personal services line and $48,079 in fringe benefits.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense		
Agency Code:	E230	Section:	61

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY

4

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Circuit Public Defender Technology and Digital Storage

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: $691,000

Federal: $0

Other: $0

Total: $691,000

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
X	IT Technology/Security related
	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

This request for recurring funding supports the programmatic and administrative services of the Office of Public Defender program within the SC Commission on Indigent Defense. These funds will address the expenses associated with the software applications and programs and for the needed increased data storage required for digital evidence associated with all cases handled by the Public Defender Offices.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF

Funds will be distributed to the sixteen Circuit Public Defender Office for expenditures related to IT and data storage.

FUNDS	

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	The $691,000 request in recurring funding is the balance of the original request of $1,382,000 (FY26-27) budget request for the maintenance, support and licensing expenses associated with software applications and systems and for the increased data storage needs of the Office of Circuit Public Defender. The General Assembly appropriated $691,000 in the FY26-27 Budget. Recurring funding is needed to address the ever-increasing costs associated with the additional data storage and enhanced capabilities to securely collect, review and receive digital evidence. Digital evidence is now an integral component of every case handled by the Public Defenders and without this funding the public defenders' offices will be unable to manage this evidence. Annual IT services that the recurring funds cover include: • Software maintenance and support • Application licenses and user fees • Cloud provider services • Additional data storage for digital evidence and case files • Interface/Integration connectivity • Transcription services

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**5** *Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.*
TITLE	**Attorney Recruitment and Retention - SC Prosecutors and Public Defenders Student Loan Program** *Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.*
AMOUNT	**General: $3,000,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $3,000,000** *What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.*
NEW POSITIONS	**0.00** *Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.*

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
X	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

Strategy: Support the programmatic and administrative operations of the Offices of the Public Defender, Solicitor, and Attorney General.

Accountability – Efficient and Effective Court System: The goal of the requested funding is to support and maintain an efficient and effective court system in which cases come to fruition in a matter of months. The South Carolina Supreme Court's 2023 General Sessions Docket Management Order (Docket Management Order) begins: "In an efficient criminal justice system, cases should be disposed of within months instead of years, regardless of whether defendants go to trial, plead guilty, enter into a diversion program, or have their cases dismissed."

The Supreme Court order specifically recognized that there cannot be an efficient court system unless there are an adequate number of prosecutors and public defenders. In recognition of these needs laid out in the Docket Management Order and the associated resources requested by the Commission on Prosecution Coordination (SCCPC) and the Commission on Indigent Defense (SCCID), the General Assembly provided recurring funding in its FY 24 Budget to hire additional prosecutors

and public defenders. Since then, there has been a 28.3% reduction in indictments 3 years old and older statewide. Seven circuits have shown higher percentages.

An efficient and effective criminal justice system requires an adequate number of prosecutors and public defenders throughout the state. Unfortunately, it is difficult to attract graduating law school students to these critically needed positions serving the public in South Carolina's sixteen judicial circuits, all of which include rural counties and communities.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funding will be appropriated to the SC Student Loan Corporation for the establishment of the SC Prosecutors and Public Defenders Loan Program. As administrator of the program, the SC Student Loan Corporation will approve graduate student loans for law school student enrolled in an American Bar Association (ABA)-approved law school that intend to work for five years of combined service in a Circuit Solicitor's office, a Circuit Public Defender's office, the Office of Attorney General, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination (SCCPC), and/or the Commission on Indigent Defense (SCCID) after graduation. Upon certification of enrollment, loan funds will be distributed by the SC Student Loan Corporation to the law school the student is enrolled at and applied to cost of attendance.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

This request is a combined initiative of the SCCID, SCCPC, and Office of Attorney General. The SCCID recommends creating a forgivable graduate student loan program called the SC Prosecutors and Public Defenders Loan Program, which will be modeled after the existing SC Teachers Loan Program and administered by the SC Student Loan Corporation. Loan amounts shall not exceed $35,000 a year for not more than three years or an aggregate maximum of $105,000 and will be awarded to eligible law school students that commit to working in South Carolina for five years at a Circuit Public Defender's Office, Circuit Solicitor's Office, the Office of Attorney General, the Commission on Indigent Defense, or the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, after graduation.

$3,000,000 in recurring funding is requested to provide forgivable student loans to up to 80 eligible law school students and to cover the administrative expenses of the SC Student Loan Corporation to operate the loan program:

$2,800,000 - 80 Law School Student x $35,000 Loan (1 year)

$200,000 - Program Administration Costs to Student Loan Corporation

$3,000,000 - TOTAL INITIAL ANNUAL COST

Based on the initial success of the forgivable student loan program, additional recurring funding may be requested in future years to increase the number of loans that may be awarded to eligible law school students annually.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHE), in consultation with the Commission on Prosecution Coordination and the staff of the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation, shall develop a Prosecutors and Public Defenders Loan Program to provide graduate students enrolled in an American Bar Association (ABA)-approved law school loans not to exceed $35,000 a year for not more than three years or an aggregate maximum loan amount of $105,000 to attend public or private law schools for the purpose of becoming a licensed attorney employed in this State by a Circuit Solicitor's Office, a Circuit Public Defender's Office, the Office of Attorney General, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, or the Commission on Indigent Defense. The recipient of a loan is entitled to have up to one hundred percent of the amount of

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	the loan plus the interest on the loan canceled if the loan recipient becomes an attorney licensed to practice in South Carolina and is employed in South Carolina by a Circuit Solicitor's Office, a Circuit Public Defender's Office, the Office of Attorney General, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, or the Commission on Indigent Defense for at least five years. Any loan payments made before loan cancellation will not be reimbursed. It is the responsibility of the attorney to request loan cancellation through service in one or more of the aforementioned offices to the Student Loan Corporation. The loan will be canceled at the rate of twenty percent of the total principal amount of the loan plus interest on the unpaid balance for each complete year of public service in South Carolina at the Office of Attorney General, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, the Commission on Indigent Defense, a Circuit Solicitor's Office and/or a Circuit Public Defender's Office. In case of failure to make a scheduled repayment of an installment, failure to apply for cancellation or deferment of the loan on time, or noncompliance by a borrower with the intent of the loan, the entire unpaid indebtedness including accrued interest, at the option of CHE, shall become immediately due and payable. The interest rate shall equal the interest rate charged for Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans to graduate students plus 2%, not to exceed 8.25%. The recipient shall execute the necessary legal documents to reflect his obligation and the terms and conditions of the loan. The loan program is to be administered by the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation (Corporation). Funds generated from repayments to the loan program must be retained in a separate account and utilized as a revolving account for the purpose of making additional loans. Funds appropriated for loans and administrative costs shall be provided to the State Treasurer for use by the Corporation. Recommendations for additional appropriations shall be provided by the Commission on Higher Education upon consultation with the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, Commission on Indigent Defense, and the Office of Attorney General. The Corporation shall review the loan program annually and report to the General Assembly, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination, the Commission on Indigent Defense, and the Office of Attorney General. The Commission on Prosecution Coordination, the Commission on Indigent Defense, and the Office of Attorney General shall each compile a report annually that includes the number of loan recipients with outstanding loan balances that are working within their offices. The Commission on Prosecution Coordination's report shall include data from the Circuit Solicitors' Offices, and the Commission on Indigent Defense's report shall include data from the Circuit Public Defenders' Offices. Unexpended program funds from the prior fiscal year may be carried forward into the current fiscal year to be used for the same purpose.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense		
Agency Code:	E230	Section:	61

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	61.14
	Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").
TITLE	Public Defender Technology and Digital Storage
	Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.
BUDGET PROGRAM	III. Office of Circuit Public Defender
	Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.
RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	Priority #4 Public Defender Technology and Digital Storage
	Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2027-2028? If so, cite it here.
REQUESTED ACTION	Amend
	Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.
OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
	Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?
SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	This amended proviso will outline how the new funding request will be allocated to the 16 Circuit Public Defender Offices for expenses related to Technology and Digital Storage.

Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT

The request for funding is $691,000 in recurring State Funds for expenses, would bring the total appropriations associated with Technology and Digital Storage to $1,382,000. The total cost of these services is estimated to be $1,382,000 annually. The allocation of these funds will be on a pro-rata basis with each of the 16 circuits receiving funding in the amount of $45,000 for a total of $720,000. The remaining $662,000 will be allocated on a per-capita basis. The circuits will receive quarterly disbursement of these funds along with the other funding each quarter.

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT

61.14 (INDEF: Public Defender Technology and Digital Storage) The ~~$691,000~~ $1,382,000 appropriated shall be apportioned among the circuits in quarterly disbursements. The first ~~$360,000~~ $720,000 shall be distributed on a pro-rata basis at ~~$22,500~~ $45,000 per circuit, and the remaining ~~$331,000~~ $662,000 shall be distributed on a per capita basis.

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Commission On Indigent Defense		
Agency Code:	E230	Section:	61

FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan
AMOUNT	$1,624,992 *What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.*
ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	0 FTE's *How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?*
PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	SCCID retains 11% of the state funds appropriated to the agency. The remainder is pass-through funding that is distributed as required to the Offices of the Circuit Public Defenders and other contractual services. The agency cannot absorb a 3% cut without the elimination of the majority of the staff and statutorily required support services for the Offices of the Circuit Public Defenders. Thus, a 3% General Fund Budget reduction would be taken from Rule 608 Appointments and the pass-through funding allocated to the Offices of the Circuit Public Defenders for attorney positions. A reduction in the State's public defenders at a time when there is a critical need to increase and maintain these positions would have serious ramifications to the Offices of the Circuit Public Defenders, and their ability to manage the case workloads. *What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?*
SUMMARY	A 3% reduction in General Funds currently appropriated to the agency would have to be taken from pass-through funding for the Offices of the Circuit Public Defenders. Only 11% of the appropriated funds sent to SCCID are retained by the agency with the remaining 89% being distributed to the sixteen Offices of the Circuit Public Defenders. Therefore, taking the reduction from the portion of funding retained by the SCCPC would result in elimination of a majority of agency staff and operations. If the agency's budget is reduced by 3%, the amount distributed to the Offices of Circuit Solicitor and the Rule 608 Appointment line would be reduced by $1,624,992, resulting in the loss of at least one attorney position in each circuit. Such a reduction in staffing would be an extremely difficult burden to bear at a time when additional attorney positions are required to manage existing caseloads and court schedules and would have an adverse impact on the quality of the legal representation received by the citizens of South Carolina.

Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS

SCCID continues to look for ways to be more efficient with less resources. In FY26, SCCID did not fill three FTE positions within the agency and have absorbed those job responsibilities within the existing staff.

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than $50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?