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Subject: FW: Proposed Standards for Indigent Defense
Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024 8:08:31 AM

From: Maya Ramakrishnan <RamakrishnanM@nwattorney.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2024 5:19 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: RE: Proposed Standards for Indigent Defense

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Dear Clerk of the Court,

I am writing in support of the updated standards for indigent defense. I am an early career appellate public defender. These changes will not impact my workload but the effect they could have on my clients (before they become my clients) and my colleagues in the defense community are enormous and positive.

It is no secret that public defenders in Washington are overworked. This leads to lawyers being forced to provide less than effective representation, working unsustainable hours, or often, both. In a time where our state has a shortage of public defenders, public defenders are leaving the profession because they are exhausted, overworked, and feel they are unable to serve their clients adequately. Enacting research-based standards will ensure that the constitutional rights of the accused are protected, that public defenders are able to provide effective representation, and that our public defense crisis does not continue to get worse. Solving the crisis will take significant investment in public defenders—reducing caseloads to a research-based standard is a good first step.

Thank you,

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