

From: [Catherine Houser](#)
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Subject: Standards for Indigent Defense (family defense cases)
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Hello,

I write in strong support of lowering caseload standards for family defense attorneys handling dependency cases. The current caseload expectations place an unsustainable burden on attorneys, limiting their ability to provide the high-quality, individualized representation that families deserve.

Dependency cases involve life-altering consequences for parents and children. Parents facing family separation are often up against complex legal systems, and their attorneys must have adequate time to build trust, investigate cases thoroughly, and advocate effectively for reunification and other just outcomes. Excessive caseloads force attorneys to triage cases instead of providing the meaningful, zealous representation required to protect parental rights and ensure children remain connected to their families whenever possible.

Lowering caseload standards will lead to better outcomes for families by allowing attorneys to devote the necessary time and resources to each case. High caseloads contribute to delays, unnecessary family separation, and even wrongful terminations of parental rights. By setting reasonable caseload limits, we can ensure that family defense attorneys have the capacity to fight for their clients and promote a fairer child welfare system.

I urge the court to prioritize this change for the well-being of children, parents, and families who rely on effective legal advocacy to keep their families intact.

Sincerely,

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