

# City of Atlanta

## Office of the Public Defender

*A client centered indigent defense practice*

*Kenneth Days, III*  
*Chief Public Defender/Director*

**FY23 Proposed  
Budget Hearing**

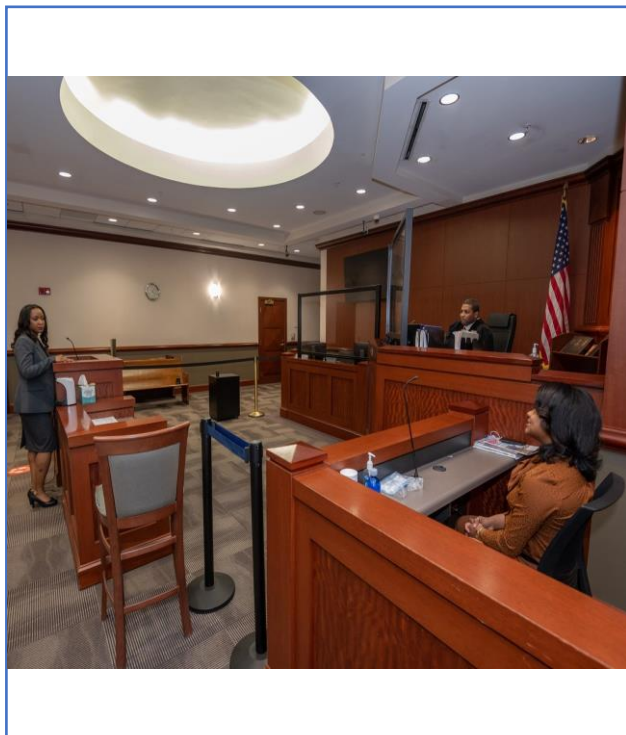
May 19, 2022



# FY22 Office Highlights



Mission: To zealously protect and defend the rights of our clients through compassionate and inspired legal representation of the highest quality, in pursuit of a fair and unbiased system of justice for all.



Courtroom Advocacy



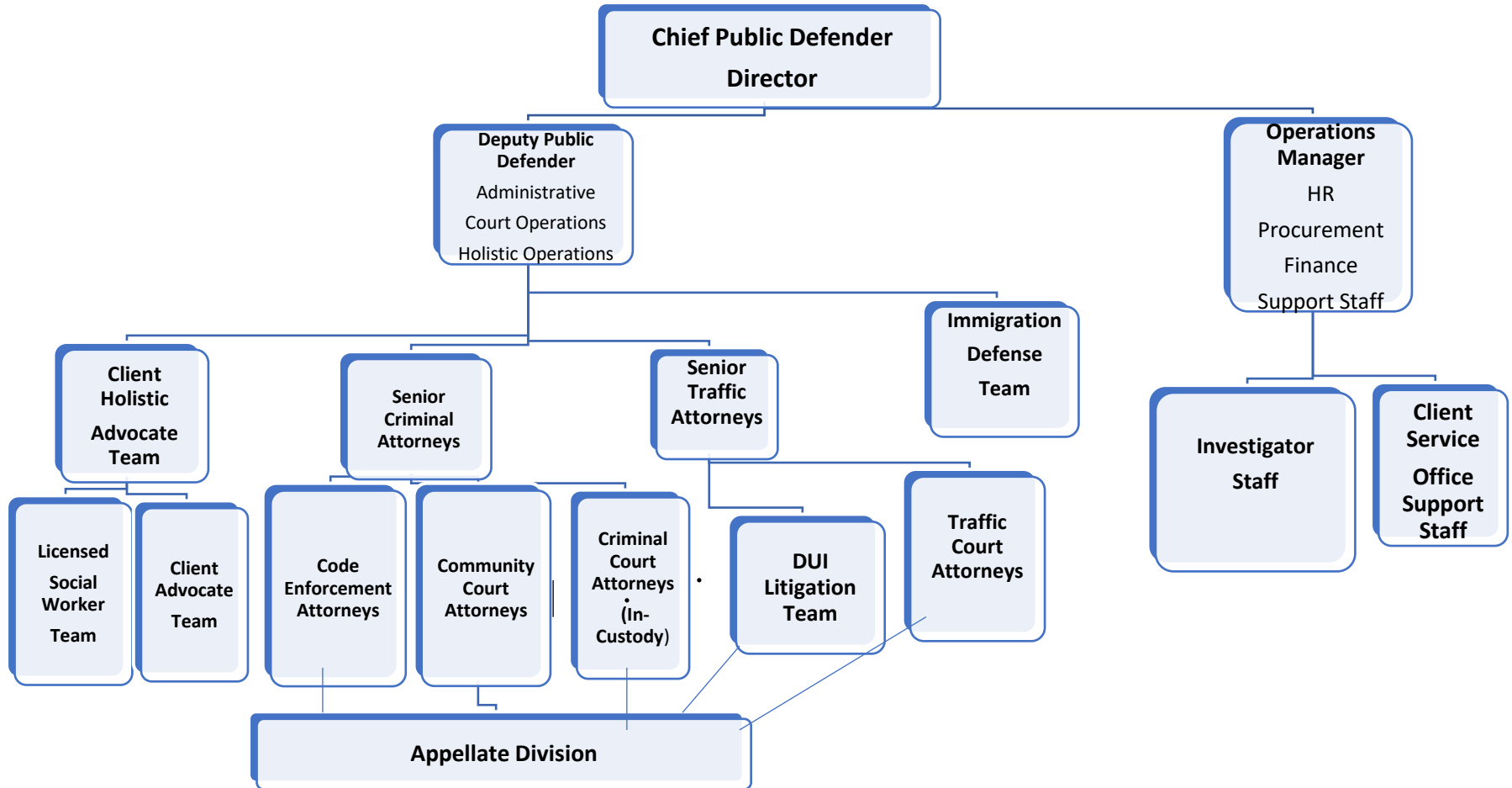
Community Outreach



Access to Programming

# FY23 Organizational Structure

## Office of the Public Defender



# Department Of Public Defender

## 3 Year Budget Comparison:

FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Adopted	FY 2023 Proposed	Variance
\$3,882,756	\$4,646,286	\$4,528,113	(\$118,173) 2.54% Reduction

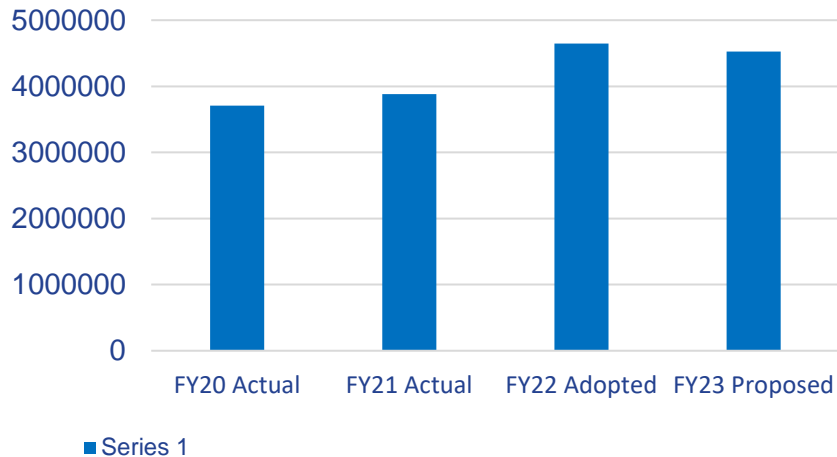
## Authorized Position Count:

PUBLIC DEFENDER		
FTE	FY2022	FY2023
Active Employees	36	37
Vacant Funded	6	3
Vacant Unfunded	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>

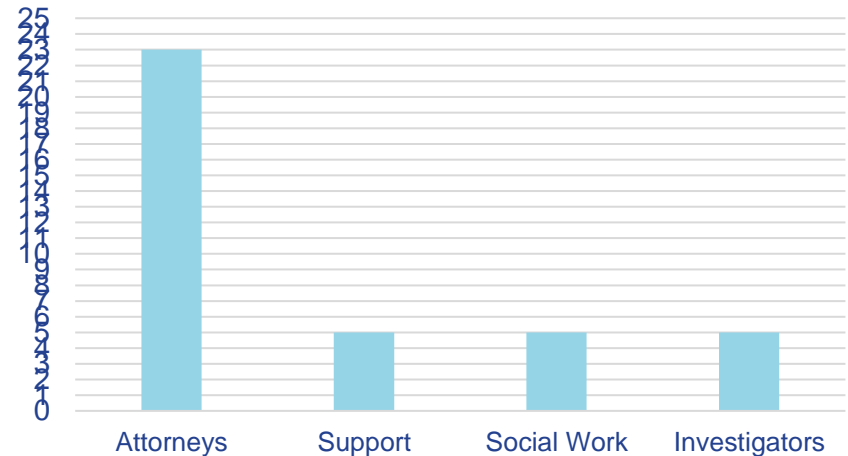
# Summary of Current Operations



## Budget Trend



## FY23 Headcount Breakdown



## Operational Areas

1. Courtroom Client Representation
2. Case Investigations
3. Social Work/Client Advocate Processes
4. Community Outreach
5. Specialized Litigation Units (DUI, Housing/Code Compliance, Mental Health Advocacy, Immigration Removal Defense and Padilla Advisements)

## Key Metrics

1. Appointed on over 1000 DUI Cases
2. Attorneys made over 12,000 Court Appearances.
3. Social Workers and Client Advocates assessed clients for services related to: Housing, Treatment, Employment, and Benefits.

# FY2023 Proposed Budget



Major Category	Proposed Budget
Personnel and Employee Benefits	\$4,033,361
Purchased / Contracted Services	\$293,073
Supplies	\$149,124
Capital Outlays	\$50,004
Interfund/ Interdepartmental Charges	\$2,551
<b>General Fund Budget</b>	<b>\$ 4,528,113</b>

# Key Programming Initiatives for FY23



## DUI Defense Team Expansion and Training

- Increase Demand in DUI Court for Indigent Defense Representation.
- Attorney Training in DUI Defense Specialty Due to Staff Turnover.

## Housing Court/Code Compliance

- Anticipate for Increased Enforcement of Housing Code Compliance and Code Enforcement Matters Due to Citywide Initiatives.
- Increase in Probate Related Cases of Legacy Residents.

## Access to Counsel At First Appearance

- Continuation of Representation of Indigent Defendants at Weekend Jail and Weekday Jail First Appearance Calendar.

# Department's Strategy of Operations for FY23



## Personnel Challenges:

Nationally, Criminal Justice Institutions are facing an employment crisis as a result of the Covid -19 Pandemic influence on employment market conditions.

The department has experienced a higher than normal turnover rate in essential functions:

- Loss of 8 key employees – 6 Attorneys, 1 Senior Investigator, and 1 Client Advocate (20%)
- Onboarded 6 new employees
- 9 current vacancies

Many Criminal Justice Institutions have answered by significantly increasing their salary ranges.

## Personnel Deployment Strategies:

The Office of the Public Defender will continue to advocate for all clients zealously and in a holistic way.

The department will implement strategies to retain staff that have critical expertise and experience. This strategy will include necessary salary adjustments and promotions.

The department will implement recruitment, hiring, and retention strategies that may include adjusting entry pay scales to attract new talent.



# Summary of Key Deliverables and Intended Benefits to the City



## Comprehensive Representation

Maintain long standing tradition of The City of Atlanta providing comprehensive legal representation to defendants who face jail time for violating municipal ordinances or criminal charges in the City court system through quality Public Defense Services.

## Client Centered Advocacy

Continue to be an important conduit for reduction of recidivism through holistic public defense by seeking to resolve cases more efficiently and effectively by also addressing clients' underlying challenges and needs that may lead to criminal activity.

## Proactive Community Access

Support Mayor's Safe Streets Priority by providing proactive mentoring to the community related to legal education and access.

- Community Legal Clinics
- Know Your Rights Presentations
- Mock Trial Teams
- Outreach Events