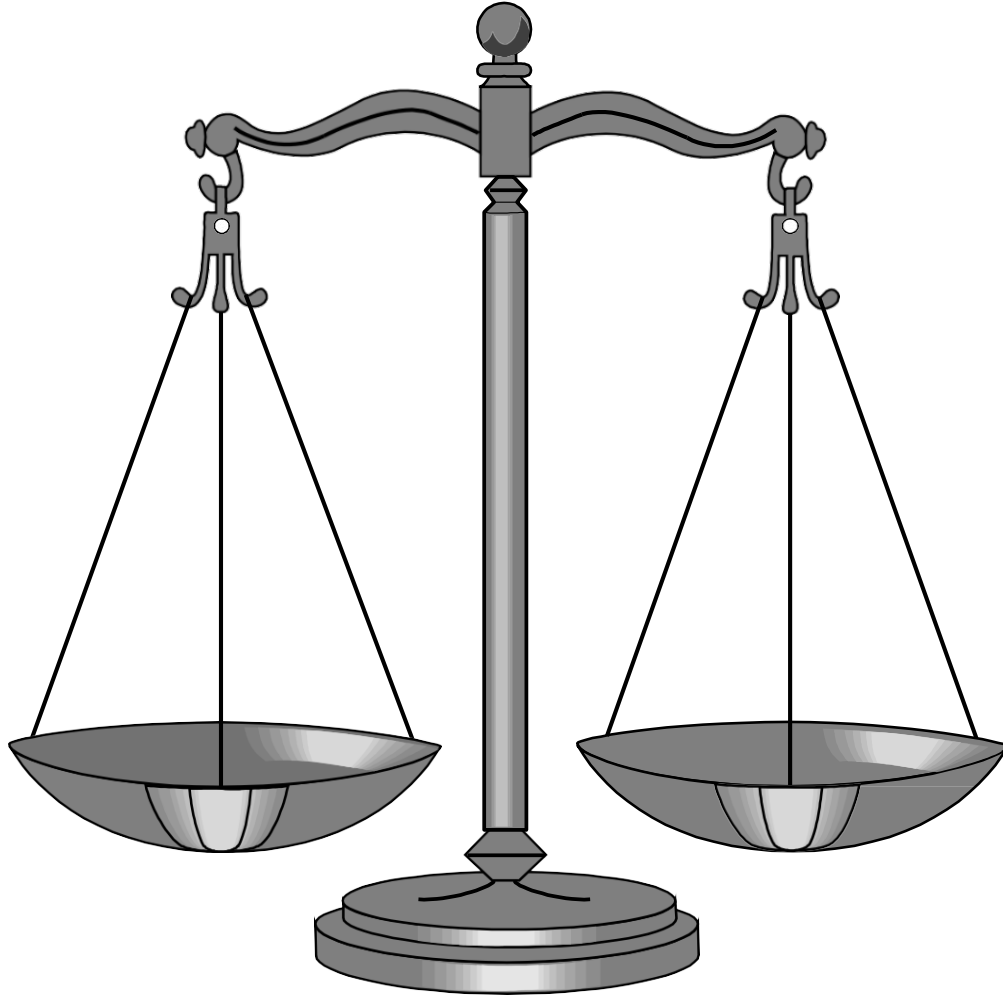


◆ OKLAHOMA

INDIGENT DEFENSE SYSTEM



2026 Annual Report

... to provide people who are indigent with legal representation comparable to that obtainable by those who can afford counsel and to do so in the most cost-effective manner possible.

Oklahoma _____

Indigent Defense System



J. KEVIN STITT
GOVERNOR

TRICIA EVEREST
SECRETARY OF PUBLIC SAFETY

DEBBIE MADDOX
Executive Director

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DEBBIE MADDOX
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



J. KEVIN STITT
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September 18, 2026

TO THE HONORABLE J. KEVIN STITT
HONORABLE LONNIE PAXTON
HONORABLE KYLE HILBERT
HONORABLE DUSTIN P. ROWE
HONORABLE GARY L. LUMPKIN

Enclosed is a report concerning the duties, activities, and accomplishments of the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, in accordance with 22 O.S. § 1355.3(B) and 22 O.S. § 1355.4(C)(14).

The Oklahoma Indigent Defense System is grateful for the support the Agency received during Fiscal Year 2026 from the Governor and his staff, from the Legislature, and from the Judiciary.

The Oklahoma Indigent Defense System thanks the Agency's staff and contract attorneys, investigators, administrators, support staff, and expert service providers for their profound and unwavering service to our clients. Their efforts enable the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System to serve the interests of justice through our skilled client advocacy and our vigorous defense of our shared constitutional rights.

Sincerely,

Debbie Maddox
Executive Director

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Chapter 1

◆ Introduction

The mission of the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System is to provide people who are indigent with legal representation comparable to that obtainable by those who can afford counsel and to do so in the most cost-effective manner possible.

OIDS fulfills the State's obligations under the Oklahoma and United States Constitutions to provide trial, appellate, and capital post-conviction defense to those who qualify for public defense. The Oklahoma Indigent Defense Act, 22 O.S. §§ 1355, *et seq.*, which created the Agency, sets forth the duties and responsibilities of the Agency, the Indigent Defense System Board, and the OIDS Executive Director.

The Agency is governed by a five-person Board. Each member is appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Oklahoma Senate, for a five-year term. The Agency consists of three program areas: the General Operations Program, the Trial Program, and the Appellate Program.

OIDS provides services in 75 of Oklahoma's 77 counties, and in all 77 counties at the appellate level, as both Oklahoma County and Tulsa County have their own county-level public defender systems. During Fiscal Year 2026, OIDS contracted with private attorneys to handle the non-capital trial caseload in 38 counties and in 37 counties, full-time staff attorneys handled the caseload. Private

attorneys or OIDS Roving Attorneys handle the Agency's conflict cases. In most cases, staff attorneys cover death penalty cases and non-capital appeals.

OIDS represented a total of 45,958 court appointments in Fiscal Year 2026. The numerical breakdown by division is as follows:

NON-CAPITAL TRIAL	
<i>Staff</i>	23,049
<i>County Contracts</i>	21,754
<i>Conflicts</i>	399
CAPITAL TRIAL – NORMAN	19
CAPITAL TRIAL – TULSA	15
APPELLATE PROGRAM	722
EXECUTIVE DIVISION CONFLICTS	0
<i>TOTAL</i>	<u>45,958</u>

Given the nature of criminal cases, most span more than one fiscal year. In complex cases, such as death penalty cases, OIDS may represent a client for three or more years. Accordingly, the total number of cases handled during a fiscal year includes appointments pending from prior fiscal years in addition to the current year's court appointments.

**The Oklahoma Indigent Defense
System Delivers Public Defender
Services to All Poor Citizens of
Oklahoma as Required by the
Oklahoma and the United State's
Constitutions & *Gideon v.*
*Wainwright***

In 1963, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously decided the case of *Gideon v. Wainwright* and ruled that the Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to legal counsel for persons charged with a crime who cannot afford an attorney. The landmark Supreme Court decision established a foundational pillar of the American criminal justice system: the constitutional right to counsel for poor defendants.

The case began when Clarence Earl Gideon was charged with a felony for allegedly breaking and entering into a poolroom in Florida. Unable to afford a lawyer, Gideon requested that the state appoint one for him. The trial court denied his request, citing Florida law which only provided appointed counsel in death penalty cases. Gideon was forced to represent himself, conducted a poor defense, and was subsequently convicted and sentenced to five years in prison. From his prison cell, Gideon appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, arguing that the trial court's refusal to appoint counsel violated his constitutional rights. In a unanimous 9-0 decision, the Supreme Court ruled in Gideon's favor, overturning its previous precedent.

The Court held that the Sixth Amendment's guarantee of the right to counsel is a fundamental right essential to a fair trial as mandated by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Writing for the majority, Justice Hugo Black famously noted that "lawyers in criminal courts are necessities, not luxuries," and that a defendant who is too poor to hire a lawyer cannot be assured a fair trial unless counsel is provided at state's expense. This historic ruling powerfully

demonstrates the absolute necessity of institutional public defender agencies. By recognizing that legal representation is vital to preventing wrongful convictions, *Gideon v. Wainwright* exposed the inherent unfairness of a system where justice depends on a defendant's bank account.

In fifteen states, public defense is entirely funded at the state level. This creates a centralized budget meant to ensure uniform resources across different regions of our diverse state. Relying on underfunded, or volunteer private attorneys to satisfy this mandate has led to inconsistent representation and systemic delays. Dedicated public defender agencies like OIDS provide the specialized legal expertise, investigative resources, expert services and structural support required to match the power of Oklahoma district attorneys. Ultimately, the creation and robust funding of public defender offices is the most effective and reliable way for society to fulfill the promise of *Gideon*—ensuring that equal justice under the law is a practical reality for every citizen, regardless of wealth.

◆ General Operations Program

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

The Executive Division is charged with the responsibility of managing and operating the Agency and implementing the Indigent Defense Act. By statute, the Executive Director is selected by and serves at the pleasure of the Agency's governing Board.

In May of 2025, Debbie Maddox assumed the Executive Director role. Prior to this role, Ms. Maddox served as Deputy Division Chief of the Non-Capital Trail Division's Lawton office. She brings 36 years of legal experience to her role, with experience in appellate, capital, and non-capital defense. In August 2025, Ms. Maddox hired Annie Nagle as Deputy Executive Director to replace Angela Cole-Cockings, who retired after 28 years with OIDS. To the Deputy role, Ms. Nagle brings a unique combination of legislative advocacy, logistics and operational leadership in addition to her legal experience. In Fiscal Year 2026, Ms. Maddox leveraged her experience to thoughtfully build programs around mentoring for growth in OIDS attorneys and to develop leaders that go beyond mere managerial tasks. Additionally, she has established a legislative outreach initiative and established a Juvenile Defense Division.

To aid the Executive Director in the implementation of the Indigent Defense Act and Agency operations, the Executive Division is staffed with administrative and finance

personnel. Although OIDS is approved for 186 full-time equivalent employees, at the end of the fiscal year, OIDS employed 169 full-time equivalent staff members across all offices. The OIDS legislative appropriation does not cover full employment of all approved FTEs in addition to county contracts.

In Fiscal Year 2026, the Agency entered 98 new professional services contracts with private attorneys and expert service providers to furnish defense services in court-appointed cases, in addition to administering 192 contracts carried over from the previous fiscal year. The Executive Division services these contracts in addition to providing support services to the Agency's attorneys and investigators.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Our Human Resources Division experienced significant growth in Fiscal Year 2026. Previously underutilized to the detriment of the Agency, HR has embraced new ownership over employee wellbeing and the overall success of the Agency. In Fiscal Year 2026, the HR team strengthened the Agency's performance review process by developing standardized resources, guidance, and position criteria to improve Agency compliance. Additionally, HR has enhanced HR processes and procedures, or

established new procedures where necessary, to ensure consistency and access, strengthen compliance, and align with HR best practices. Notably, HR has embarked on a long-term initiative to review and update the Agency's Policies and Procedures Manual, with the goal of modernizing longstanding policies and ensuring alignment with current requirements, best practices, and Agency operations.

TRAINING DIVISION

To ensure OIDS attorneys are up to date on recent developments in the law, satisfy our statutory requirement to provide continuing legal education, and provide the highest-quality legal representation on an ongoing basis, the Executive Division administers professional training opportunities for OIDS staff. In Fiscal Year 24, the OIDS Training Division was reestablished after being dormant for years. Under the expert guidance of Katie Taber, Training Coordinator, the OIDS Training Division has grown to include an increasing catalogue of training opportunities. In Fiscal Year 2026, OIDS staff participated in 39 training opportunities, 14 of which were initiated, planned, and hosted by OIDS. Several of these training opportunities have been planned and executed in conjunction with other State agencies, fostering collaborative relationships and strengthening inter-agency goodwill. Participating agencies include the Department of Corrections, Pardon and Parole, and the Court of Criminal Appeals.

The strength of the Training Division is its ability to narrowly tailor continuing education to the needs of OIDS employees. In July of 2025, Ms. Taber completed the requirements for presumptive CLE approval, allowing OIDS more freedom to plan and execute events that address the needs of OIDS staff. In Fiscal Year 2026, Ms. Taber launched the first annual NCT Back to Basics CLE, a multi-day seminar designed specifically for newer, non-capital trial attorneys. The program was planned and coordinated internally, and brought together

experienced attorneys, both internal OIDS staff and experienced outside members of the legal community. Programming combined substantive and practical instruction alongside hands-on activities to strengthen communication, adaptability, and courtroom skills.

FINANCE DIVISION

The OIDS Finance Division oversees Operations and Special Projects and Information Technology in addition to the administration of all financial responsibilities for the Agency.

For the Information Technology Team, Fiscal Year 2026 has been focused on efficiency and cutting costs, where possible, in light of OIDS extremely tight budget. IT conducted a detailed audit of software licensure, phone lines, inventory, and FY App-C audits, and were consequently able to identify substantial funds that could be rerouted to support general operations. Significantly, these audits revealed serious errors through which OIDS was being charged for other agencies' IT operation fees, primarily OI and OBNDD.

Additional projects include a major *eDefender* update, *SharePoint* update, *Axon* management, new software launches, the introduction of a new office and a complete office asset inventory. While lengthy and complex, these updates addressed security and bug fixes in *eDefender* and gave the software a much-needed speed boost, and initiated data transfers and consolidation in *Axon*, away from network shared drives, which is more cost effective and a better option for data management. IT's decision to switch to *TLO* for background and investigation provided substantial savings in funds and man hours and increased efficiency of investigation. Finally, Steven Feldman, Chief Information Officer, is developing a user-friendly database of published and unpublished court opinions for more efficient and effective legal research.

Our Operations and Special Projects team focused on efficiency and cost savings, as well. The team completed a major storage project in April of 2026, clearing a warehouse containing decades' worth of obsolete files and case materials, resulting in substantial and ongoing savings. In conjunction with IT, Operations relocated and combined a new satellite office in order to reduce overhead costs. Further, Operations and IT collaborated on an Agency-wide audit of assets to ensure compliance with State policy. Finally, the OIDS Operations Team has spent countless hours of their own time on events aimed at camaraderie and Agency culture. By recognizing the importance of a positive work environment and actively engaging employees in friendly competitions and joyful events, the Operations team strengthens the Agency, makes work life better for employees, and in turn, strengthens outcomes for clients.

WEBSITE

The agency's website provides information about OIDS, resources for public defenders and others interested in criminal law issues, answers to most frequently asked questions and notices of training opportunities. The website can be accessed at <https://oklahoma.gov/oids.html>.

SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DUTIES

Statutory Duties

- ◆ Budget
- ◆ Claims
- ◆ Contracts with private attorneys
- ◆ Improve State's criminal justice system
- ◆ Training for attorneys
- ◆ Defense representation
- ◆ Employ necessary personnel
- ◆ Set rates for attorneys who accept court appointments
- ◆ Set maximum caseloads
- ◆ Advise OIDS Board
- ◆ Conferences and training seminars
- ◆ Provide personnel to serve in advisory capacity to criminal defense attorneys
- ◆ Recommend legislation
- ◆ Track costs
- ◆ Adopt policies & procedures
- ◆ Provide for expert and investigator services

Chapter

3

◆ Trial Program

The Trial Program consists of three Divisions which provide legal representation to Agency clients who have been judicially determined to be unable to afford counsel to defend against criminal charges brought by the State in district court.

NON-CAPITAL TRIAL DIVISION

The Non-Capital Trial Division (NCTD) defends indigent clients charged with offenses punishable by incarceration, ranging from traffic offenses to non-capital first degree murder. NCTD represents the Agency's largest group of clients; in Fiscal Year 2026, NCTD received 31,237 new appointments. NCTD's total Fiscal Year 2026 caseload, which includes cases carried forward from previous fiscal years, equaled 45,202 active cases.

DELIVERY OF NON-CAPITAL TRIAL LEGAL SERVICES

In accordance with the Indigent Defense Act, NCTD provides legal representation in four ways:

- 1) flat-rate fiscal year contracts with private attorneys.
- 2) satellite offices with salaried staff attorneys.

- 3) assignment of conflict cases to private attorneys who have agreed to accept such cases at established Agency hourly rates, subject to statutory maximums set by the Indigent Defense Act; and assignment of cases to roving attorneys.

In Fiscal Year 2026, the Division's caseload was handled as follows:

- 1) Flat-rate Fiscal Year Contracts: In 38 counties, all NCTD representation was provided via such contracts. Since Fiscal Year 1998, OIDS has made a concerted effort to ensure that NCTD fiscal-year contracts are adequately staffed by giving weight during the contracting process to the number of law firms participating in an offer.
- 2) Staffed Satellite Offices: NCTD operated twelve satellite offices: Altus, Claremore, Clinton, El Reno, Enid, Guymon, Lawton, Norman, Okmulgee, Poteau, Sapulpa and Woodward. These offices handled the entire caseload in 37 counties.

The Non-Capital Trial Division ended Fiscal Year 2026 with 60 attorneys. During Fiscal Year 2026, a satellite office staff attorney handled an average of 189 felony and youthful offender cases, 25 juvenile cases, and 168 misdemeanor, traffic and wildlife cases, or an average of 382 total cases.

The National Legal Aid and Defender Association (NLADA) has long established standards, endorsed by the Criminal Justice Section of the American Bar Association, that no one attorney shall handle in any given 12-month period more than 150 felony cases, OR more than 200 juvenile cases, OR more than 400 misdemeanor and traffic cases. Further, the NLADA standards assume each respective attorney operates in only one courthouse.

Applying the NLADA standards, in Fiscal Year 2026, each NCTD satellite office staff attorney did the work of two attorneys. Moreover, most attorneys worked in several district courts in multiple counties.

Currently, three satellite offices cover five counties each (Altus, Clinton, and Enid), three offices cover four-county areas (Guymon, Lawton, and Woodward), one office covers three counties (Norman), two offices covers two counties (Okmulgee and Claremore), and three offices cover a single county (El Reno, Poteau, and Sapulpa). Although Sapulpa covers one county, the office covers two separate courthouses within Creek County.

- 3) Conflict Counsel: Each year, conflicts of interest arise in a certain number of county contract and satellite office cases and must be assigned to conflict-free counsel. During Fiscal Year 2026, NCTD assigned 276 conflict cases to contracted conflict counsel. Conflicts arising out of county contracts account for 43 of those cases. Conflicts arising out of satellite offices account for 233 of those cases.
- 4) In Fiscal Year 2010, NCTD received federal funding for one roving attorney. On December 1, 2009, NCTD hired an attorney to cover conflict cases and provide overload relief to NCTD attorneys

in Western Oklahoma. Although the federal funding expired late in Fiscal Year 2011, the Agency has maintained this position. In Fiscal Year 2026, the Agency employed 4 roving attorneys who are assigned complicated cases. These attorneys participate with assigned counsel in trial strategy formulation, pre-trial litigation, and trial advocacy. The roving attorneys were assigned 47 new cases during Fiscal Year 2026, most of which were serious and complicated felony cases. As Fiscal Year 2025 ended, the roving attorneys carried 67 open cases in counties throughout Oklahoma.

The OIDS Board awards fiscal-year contracts to private attorneys to provide non-capital trial defense services on a county-by-county basis. In response to the Agency's solicitations each year, private attorneys offer to provide criminal defense services in felony, misdemeanor, traffic and delinquent juvenile cases in one or more counties for a flat annual rate. The contracting process is volatile, not only in terms of the number of offers, if any, received for any county, but also in terms of the cost of any contract awarded. As a result, the Agency's ability to provide contract coverage in many counties, especially the smaller, more rural ones, is unpredictable.

When the Agency is unable to obtain a fiscal-year contract for a county, the Board has two options: (1) establish a satellite office with salaried staff attorneys to accept the Agency's appointments in the affected county under Section 1355.9 of the Indigent Defense Act or (2) assign the Agency's appointments in that county to private attorneys who have agreed to accept cases on a case-by-case basis at established Agency rates (\$120/hour for in-court legal services; \$100/hour for out-of-court legal services) under Section 1355.8(D)(6) of the Indigent Defense Act.

In Fiscal Year 2026, the Non-Capital Trial Division's satellite offices served the following counties:

ALTUS OFFICE

Greer, Harmon, Kiowa, Jackson, & Tillman

CLAREMORE OFFICE

Mayes, Rogers

CLINTON OFFICE

Beckham, Custer, Ellis, Roger Mills, & Washita

EL RENO OFFICE

Canadian

ENID OFFICE

Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, & Kingfisher

GUYMON OFFICE

Beaver, Cimarron, Harper, & Texas

LAWTON OFFICE

Comanche, Cotton, Jefferson, & Stephens

NORMAN OFFICE

Cleveland, Garvin, & McClain

OKMULGEE OFFICE

Okfuskee & Okmulgee

POTEAU OFFICE

LaFlore

SAPULPA OFFICE

Creek (2 Courthouses)

WOODWARD OFFICE

Dewey, Major, Woods, & Woodward

OVERALL CASELOAD

In Fiscal Year 2026, the Non-Capital Trial Division received a total of 15,089 new county contract cases. County contractors discovered

conflicts of interest in 47 of these cases. As a result, 43 of the conflict cases were assigned to contracted conflict counsel. Four of the conflict cases would have otherwise been assigned to a satellite office for coverage but were instead assigned to the roving attorneys. Once the conflict and roving attorney's cases were subtracted from all newly assigned cases, the county contractors retained a total of 15,042 new cases in Fiscal Year 2026. The county contractors carried another 6,712 cases into Fiscal Year 2025 from previous fiscal years. Ultimately, the total Fiscal Year 2026 county contract workload equaled 21,754 cases.

The Non-Capital Trial Division satellite offices reported a total of 275 conflict of interest cases. 233 of these cases were assigned to contracted conflict counsel. 43 cases were assigned to roving attorneys. With conflict and roving attorney cases subtracted from all newly assigned cases, the satellite offices handled 15,872 new cases in Fiscal Year 2026. The satellite offices carried another 7,063 cases into Fiscal Year 2026 from previous fiscal years. Ultimately, the total Fiscal Year 2026 satellite office workload totaled 22,935 cases.

The number of new Fiscal Year 2026 NCTD cases, whether assigned to county contractors, satellite attorneys, conflict counsel or the roving attorneys, totaled 31,237. The 45,202 cases handled by the Non-Capital Trial Division during Fiscal Year 2026 represent a caseload decrease of 2.5% compared to the number of cases handled in Fiscal Year 2025. The Fiscal Year 2026 NCTD caseload represents a 21% decrease since Fiscal Year 2016 (57,318 cases). However, the Fiscal Year 2026 NCTD caseload also represents a 9.1% increase since Fiscal Year 2011 in which the total NCTD caseloads were 41,083. The number of new Non-Capital Trial Division appointments is virtually unchanged from Fiscal Year 2025 to Fiscal Year 2026. The division was appointed to 31,237 new cases in Fiscal Year 2026. In Fiscal Year 2025 the division was appointed to 31,111 new cases - difference of 126 cases. NCTD carried 1,276

fewer open cases into Fiscal Year 2026 than the division carried into Fiscal Year 2025. As a result of NCTD's efforts, the number of carryover cases declined 8.4% from Fiscal Year 2025 to Fiscal Year 2026. In Fiscal Year 2025, NCTD carried 15,241 cases into the new fiscal year from prior fiscal years. In Fiscal Year 2026, NCTD carried 13,965 cases into the new fiscal year from prior fiscal years.

Although the new case appointment rate remained steady in Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026, the Non-Capital Trial Division decreased the overall number of open cases through the more efficient and timely closing of prior fiscal year cases.

NON-CAPITAL TRIAL DIVISION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Staff attorneys and contracted attorneys vigorously defended their clients' constitutional rights throughout Fiscal Year 2026. NCTD's successes are too numerous to list; in Fiscal Year 2026, eleven of the twelve Satellite Offices tried cases to juries, mostly resulting in positive outcomes for our clients and many resulting in acquittals. The roving attorneys tried several cases to juries. These trials were factually and legally complicated cases involving homicide or other violent felony allegations. All trials resulted in favorable results for the clients.

CAPITAL TRIAL REPRESENTATION

The OIDS Capital Trial Divisions are assigned the task of representing the majority of defendants in cases in which the State seeks the death penalty and some non-capital first degree murder cases. The Division represents clients throughout the State except for Oklahoma and Tulsa Counties. The Divisions were reorganized from Capital Trial Norman Division and Capital Trial Tulsa Division into the new Divisions in May 2026.

When a conflict case arises with at least two co-defendants, the Capital Defenders Conflict subdivision handles conflicts. Throughout the reorganization process, systems were put in place to ensure these conflict lines are preserved while also allowing the Division to collaborate and work together on non-conflict cases. If the Division cannot accept a court appointment because of a conflict, OIDS contracts with private counsel to represent the client under Sections 1355.7 and 1355.13 of the Indigent Defense Act.

The reorganization of the capital teams into the CDD occurred in May of 2026, so case accounting largely reflects the prior organizational structure.

In Fiscal Year 2026, the Capital Trial Norman Division carried over thirteen cases from previous fiscal years, including two non-capital trailing cases. CTND opened an additional six cases during Fiscal Year 2026, including three capital and one non-capital trailing case that were reassigned through the reorganization process, bringing the total number of cases represented by CTND at the end of the fiscal year to nineteen.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 RESULTS

CTND did not have any jury trials in Fiscal Year 2026. Rather, CTND resolved six clients' cases with sentences less than death. Five clients' cases were resolved through guilty pleas and one client's case was resolved through nolo contendere plea following months of intensive trial preparation and negotiation. CTND's attorneys, investigators, and support staff continue to provide outstanding advocacy.

Case Resolutions

The Capital Trial Norman Division represented six clients during Fiscal Year 2026 whose cases were resolved by guilty or nolo contendere pleas. In each of these cases, the client entered a plea to First Degree Murder and/or other

charges. One client received three life without parole sentences after prolonged negotiation. One client received two life without parole sentences after an extensive mitigation investigation. Three clients received life without parole sentences after significant advocacy and litigation in their cases. One client received a sentence of twenty years on a reduced charge of Manslaughter in the First Degree after extensive negotiation.

All of these resolutions either prevented a Bill of Particulars from being filed or resulted in the Bill of Particulars being dismissed.

CTND maintained close contact with the Capital Trial Tulsa Division and the Non-Capital Trial Division to ensure Agency clients charged with First Degree Murder receive responsive and conflict-free representation. The results of CTND are a reflection of the outstanding teamwork, advocacy, and commitment of the attorneys, investigators, and support staff.

The following is a summary of CTND's case results:

Result	No. Of Cases
Death	0
Life Without Parole (Following Plea)	5
Life Without Parole (Jury Trial)	0
Pled to Lower Sentence	1
Determined to be NGRMI	0

CAPITAL TRIAL TULSA DIVISION

In Fiscal Year 2026, the Capital Trial Tulsa Division carried over nine cases from previous fiscal years, including one capital and one non-capital trailing case which have subsequently been reassigned through the reorganization process. CTTD opened an additional six cases during Fiscal Year 2026, including two which have been subsequently reassigned through the reorganization process, one non-capital trailing

case, and case that has since been taken over by private counsel. This brings the total number of cases represented at the end of the fiscal year to fifteen.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 RESULTS

The Capital Trial Tulsa Division (CTTD) did not have any jury trials in Fiscal Year 2026. Rather, CTTD resolved five clients' cases with sentences less than death. All five clients' cases were resolved through guilty pleas following months of intensive trial preparation and negotiation. CTTD's attorneys, investigators, and support staff continue to provide outstanding advocacy.

Case Resolutions

The Capital Trial Tulsa Division represented five clients during Fiscal Year 2026 whose cases were resolved by guilty pleas. In each of these cases, the client entered a plea of guilty to First Degree Murder and/or other charges. One client received three life without parole sentences after prolonged negotiation. One client received two life without parole sentences and the dismissal of his non-capital charge after diligent representation. Two clients received life sentences after extensive mitigation investigations. One client received a life sentence on a reduced charge of Manslaughter in the First Degree after extensive negotiation.

All of these resolutions either prevented a Bill of Particulars from being filed or resulted in the Bill of Particulars being dismissed.

CTTD maintained close contact with the Capital Trial Norman Division and the Non-Capital Trial Division to ensure Agency clients charged with First Degree Murder receive responsive and conflict-free representation. The results of CTTD are a reflection of the outstanding teamwork, advocacy, and commitment of the attorneys, investigators, and support staff.

Result	No. Of Cases
Death	0
Life Without Parole (Following Plea)	2
Life Without Parole (Jury Trial)	0
Pled to Lower Sentence	3
Determined to be NGRMI	0

Capital Trial Divisions: Conclusion

The Oklahoma Indigent Defense System's capital trial division embraces challenging and consequential responsibilities. They defend and advocate for individuals charged with the most serious crimes and for whom the State seeks sentences of death.

Chapter 4

◆ Appellate Program

The right to an appeal in a criminal case is guaranteed by Article II, Section 6 of the Oklahoma Constitution, 22 O.S. § 1051 of the Oklahoma Statutes, and, in death penalty cases, 21 O.S. § 701.13 and 22 O.S. § 1089 of the Oklahoma Statutes. The right to counsel at State expense on direct appeal was established under the Federal Constitution by the United States Supreme Court in *Douglas v. California*, 372 U.S. 353 (1963). The right to counsel at State expense in capital post-conviction proceedings is found in 22 O.S. § 1089.

The Appellate Program consists of two separate divisions – Appellate East and Appellate West. The two divisions cover rough geographic areas of the state. As cases may need to be moved to the other division due to conflicts or case overload, certain cases may be assigned outside its geographic area. Each division is set up to have a Division Chief, Deputy Division Chief, ten additional appellate attorneys, three investigators, and three full-time support personnel.

APPELLATE DIVISION EAST

Cases Handled

Appellate Division East began July 1, 2025, with 161 open cases at various stages of appeal. An additional 142 new cases were added in fiscal 2026, for a total of 303 cases handled by the division during the fiscal year.

Appeal Type	No.
Felony and Misdemeanor	
Direct Appeals:	173
Certiorari:	31
Revocation/Acceleration/	
Specialty Court Appeals:	88
Death Penalty Direct Appeals:	1
Capital Post Conviction Appeals:	2
Juvenile/Youthful Offender Appeals:	3
State Appeals:	5
TOTAL	303

Cases Briefed

Appellate Division East filed 121 briefs in chief during Fiscal Year 2026. In non-capital appeals, 69 opening briefs were filed in direct appeal cases, 13 in certiorari cases, 36 in revocation,

acceleration or specialty court termination cases, two in a juvenile appeals, and one response brief in chief was filed in an appeal lodged by the State. Additionally, the division filed 39 reply briefs.

Types of Crimes in Non-Capital Direct Appeals

Analysis of the types of crimes involved in the 69 direct appeals briefed by Division attorneys in Fiscal Year 2026 showed that 27 involved homicides. Opening direct appeal briefs were also filed following convictions for sexual crimes in 17 cases, crimes involving violence in 16 cases, drug crimes in two cases, and a variety of other crimes (DUI, firearm possession, property crimes, etc.) in seven cases.

Cases Closed

Appellate Division East began with 161 open cases on July 1, 2025, added 142 new cases, and closed 131 cases during the fiscal year, leaving 172 cases open at the end of Fiscal Year 2026. Of the 131 cases closed, 98 were closed by decision of the appellate court, three were transferred to Appellate West due to conflicts, two were closed when the client died, 14 were dismissed by client request, two revocation appeals were dismissed as moot, and 12 cases were dismissed for lack of appellate jurisdiction or invalid appointment.

Capital Direct Appeals and Capital Post-Conviction Cases

There was no activity in capital direct appeals in Fiscal Year 2026. No new cases were assigned. The one case outstanding, David Ware v. State, D-2022-465, was fully briefed in previous years. Taylor Ledford presented the Ware oral argument in early Fiscal Year 2027, and the case remains pending.

Similarly, there was no activity in capital post-conviction cases in Fiscal Year 2026. No new cases were assigned. The applications for post-conviction relief for the two cases outstanding - Joseph Alliniece v. State, PCD-2021-1316, and

Derrick Laday v. State, PCD-2021-1318 – were filed in previous years.

Appellate Division East Cases Received by County: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Atoka	1	McCurtain	6
Bryan	3	McIntosh	4
Bryan	3	Muskogee	12
Cherokee	4	Okfuskee	7
Choctaw	1	Okmulgee	2
Cleveland	1	Osage	6
Comanche	4	Ottawa	1
Creek	4	Pawnee	3
Delaware	1	Pontotoc	11
Garfield	1	Rogers	6
Haskell	1	Seminole	1
Hughes	3	Sequoyah	5
Kay	1	Stephens	2
Latimer	4	Tulsa	37
LeFlore	1	Wagoner	1
Mayes	2	Washington	2
McClain	1	TOTAL	142

APPELLATE DIVISION WEST

Cases Closed

Cases Handled

Appellate Division West began Fiscal Year 2026 with 186 open cases at various stages of appeal. An additional 233 cases were added in the fiscal year (226 by direct assignment, 5 through conflicts and/or transfers from Appellate Division East, and 2 by referral pursuant to Okla. Stat. tit. 22, § 1373.3), for a total of 419 cases handled by the division during the fiscal year.

Appeal Type	No.
Felony and Misdemeanor	
Direct Appeals:	236
Certiorari:	47
Revocation/Acceleration/ Specialty Court Appeals:	120
Death Penalty Direct Appeals:	2
Capital Post Conviction Appeals:	2
Juvenile/Youthful Offender Appeals:	8
State Appeals:	2
DNA Post-Conviction Referrals:	2
TOTAL	419

Cases Briefed

Appellate Division West filed 150 briefs in chief during Fiscal Year 2026. In non-capital appeals, 87 opening briefs were filed in direct appeal cases, 19 in certiorari cases, 40 in revocation, acceleration, or specialty court termination cases, and 4 in juvenile appeals. The Division filed 15 reply briefs and 1 Petition for Rehearing.

Types of Crimes in Non-Capital Direct Appeals

Analysis of the types of crimes involved in the 87 direct appeal cases briefed by the Division attorneys in Fiscal Year 2026 showed that 16 involved homicides, 31 sexual crimes, 14 violent crimes, 9 drug crimes, 6 property crimes, and 11 involved a variety of other crimes (DUI, firearm possession, etc.).

Appellate Division West began Fiscal Year 2026 with 186 open cases, added 233 new cases, and closed 200 cases during the fiscal year, leaving 219 cases open at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2027. Of the cases closed, 150 were closed by decision of the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals, 7 were transferred to Appellate Division East for conflict or overload purposes, 19 were dismissed by client requests, 5 revocation appeals were dismissed as moot, 10 cases were dismissed for lack of appellate jurisdiction or invalid appointment, 3 were closed when private counsel entered an appearance in the case, and 5 were consolidated. One capital post-conviction case was closed when the Court of Criminal Appeals denied relief.

Capital Direct Appeals and Capital Post-Conviction Cases

No new capital direct appeals were assigned to Appellate Division West in Fiscal Year 2026. However, two capital direct appeals remain open in different stages. This year, oral argument was heard in *Alliniece v. State*, D-2021-755, while *Laday v. State*, D-2021-737, remains open awaiting oral argument.

In Fiscal Year 2026, Appellate Division West handled two capital post-conviction applications. While the application for *Reece v. State*, PCD-2021-1317 was filed in Fiscal Year 2025, the case remained open and active until the Court of Criminal Appeals issued an Opinion on March 30, 2026. Similarly, the application for post-conviction relief in *Ware v. State*, PCD-2022-668 was filed in Fiscal Year 2025, but the case remains open and active while awaiting a decision from the Court.

Appellate Division West Cases Received by
County: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Beckham	2	Kay	27
Blaine	2	Kingfisher	1
Caddo	2	Kiowa	3
Canadian	8	Lincoln	4
Carter	2	Logan	1
Cleveland	19	Major	1
Comanche	32	McClain	8
Cotton	6	Okfuskee	2
Custer	2	Oklahoma	22
Dewey	2	Payne	14
Garfield	5	Pottawatomie	10
Garvin	4	Roger Mills	2
Grady	3	Stephens	14
Grant	6	Texas	5
Greer	2	Tulsa	3
Harmon	2	Washita	3
Jackson	8	Woodward	2
Jefferson	4	Total	233

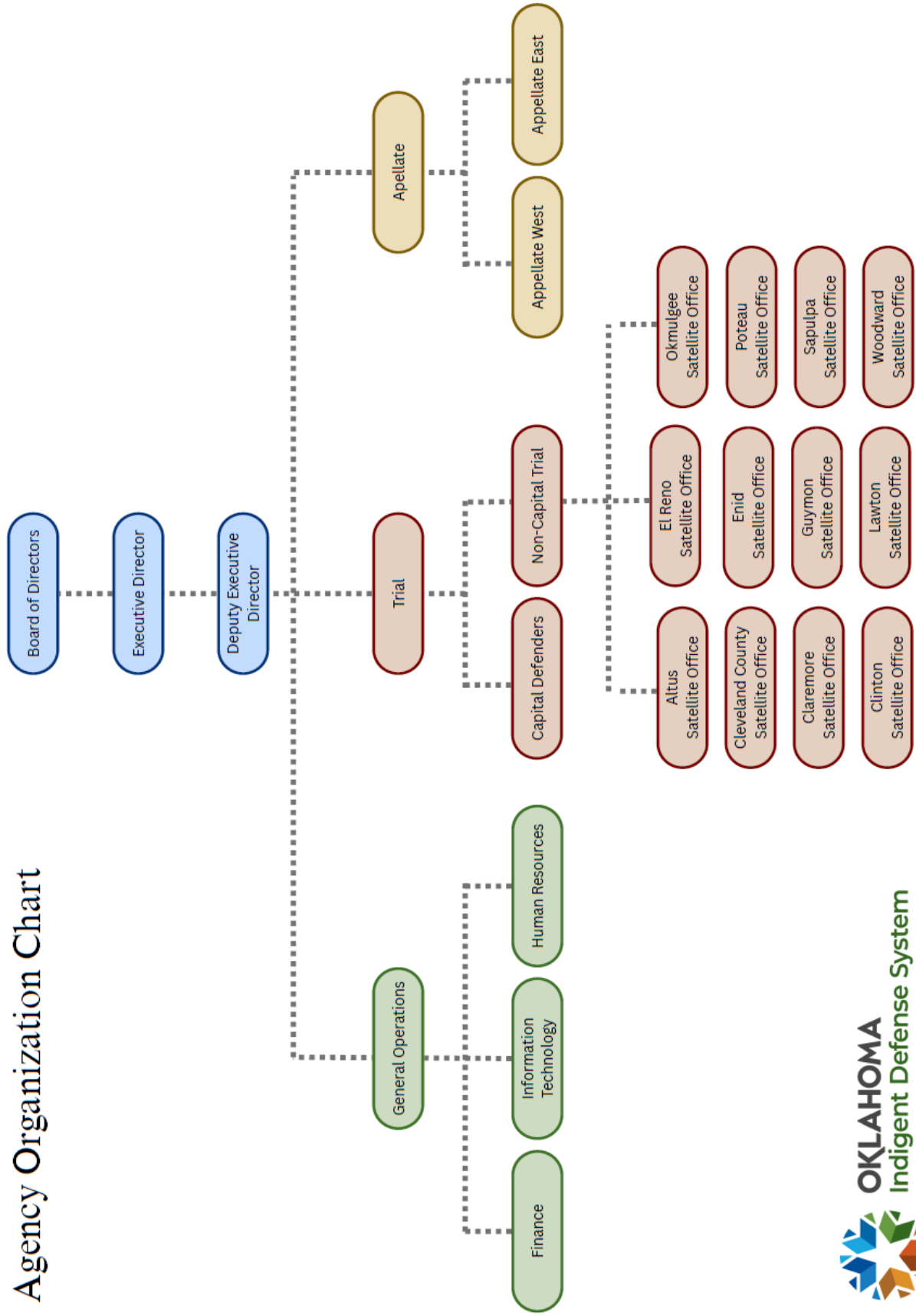
Conclusion

The Importance of State Legislative Funding for the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System

More than six decades after the Supreme Court’s landmark ruling, the core promise of *Gideon v. Wainwright*—that justice should never depend on the depth of a defendant’s pockets—remains an unfinished revolution. In 2026, as our legal landscape undergoes rapid transformations driven by complex digital evidence, algorithmic policing, and shifting social dynamics, the necessity of a robustly funded public defense system is more urgent than ever.

Ensuring public defender agencies have the resources, staffing, and technology they need is not a matter of legal charity; it is a prerequisite for a fair society. When we underfund public defense, we do not just compromise individual cases—we compromise the integrity of the entire constitutional framework that underpins the entire criminal justice system. In an era where the mechanics of justice move faster than ever, the public defender stands as the essential, frontline safeguard against systemic overreach and wrongful conviction. To properly fund public defense in 2026 is to affirm a fundamental truth: that a nation’s commitment to liberty is measured by how it treats those with the least power, ensuring that equal justice under law remains a living reality for every person, without exception.

Agency Organization Chart



OKLAHOMA INDIGENT DEFENSE SYSTEM

Non-Capital Trial Division

Actual FY-2026 Workload

July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026

SUMMARY OF ALL CATEGORIES OF APPOINTMENTS

TYPE OF APPOINTMENT		FEL	JUV	MISD	TRAF	WL	YO	ALL
FY-2026 Contract <i>LESS</i> Conflicts and Rover Cases		7,849	666	6,357	112	1	57	15,042
Plus Contract Carry-Over from Prior Fiscal Years		4,073	254	2,332	42	1	10	6,712
Total Contract Workload		11,922	920	8,689	154	2	67	21,754
2026 Satellite Office <i>LESS</i> Conflicts and Rover Cases		7,492	651	7,365	310	5	49	15,872
Plus Satellite Office Carry-Over from Prior Fiscal Years		3,787	858	2,338	49	1	30	7,063
Total Satellite Office Workload		11,279	1,509	9,703	359	6	79	22,935
FY-2026 Conflicts	Contracts	32	3	8	0	0	0	43
	Satellite Offices	166	28	37	0	0	2	233
Conflicts Carryover from Prior Fiscal Years	Contract Counties	27	0	2	0	0	0	29
	Satellite Office Counties	70	12	9	0	0	3	94
FY-2026 Rover Cases	Contract Counties	3	0	0	0	0	1	4
	Satellite Office Counties	27	3	10	2	0	1	43
Rover Cases Carryover from Prior Fiscal Years		59	3	4	0	0	1	67
Total Conflicts and Rover Cases Workload		384	49	70	2	0	8	513
TOTAL FY-2026 NCT Workload		23,585	2,478	18,462	515	8	154	45,202