Carson City Audit Committee
Agenda Report

Date Submitted: October 2, 2012 **Agenda Date Requested:** October 10, 2012

To: Chair and Members

From: Michael Bertrand, Chairman

Subject Title: Information Only: Presentation and discussion of the Public Defender Cost and Utilization Study Draft Report prepared by Moss Adams.

Summary: Moss Adams has been contracted by the Carson City Audit Committee and the Board of Supervisors to provide Internal Audit Services to Carson City. Representatives from Moss Adams will be presenting the Public Defender Cost and Utilization Study Draft Report for discussion only.

Type of Action Requested: (check one)

( ) Resolution ( ) Ordinance
( ) Formal Action/Motion (X) Other (Discussion Only)

Does This Action Require A Business Impact Statement: ( ) Yes (X) No

Recommended Committee Action: No Action Needed - Discussion Item Only.

Explanation for Recommended Committee Action: N/A

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation: N/A

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Explanation of Impact: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

Alternatives: None

Supporting Material: Public Defender Cost and Utilization Study Draft Report prepared by Moss Adams.

Prepared By: Nick Providenti, Finance Director

Reviewed By: _____ Date: 10/3/12
(Finance Director)

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____

	Member	Aye/Nay
1)	_____	_____
2)	_____	_____
3)	_____	_____
4)	_____	_____
5)	_____	_____

_____
(Vote Recorded By)

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DISCUSSION DRAFT

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Carson City

Cost and Utilization Study: Public Defender

September 27, 2012

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Carson City contracts with the Nevada State Public Defender (NSPD) to provide indigent defense services. The City also contracts with three conflict attorneys, who provide representation in the case of a conflict of interest on the part of the NSPD. Over the past three years, as the City has cut costs and staffing in response to the global economic recession, the cost of indigent defense has risen.

A. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The objective of this study is to determine the most cost-effective way for Carson City to provide public defense services. The study was conducted with the assumption that any potential change in the service delivery model must preserve the current level and quality of service being provided to indigent defendants.

This study is not an audit of public defender or conflict attorney operations. The study did not base analysis on the comparison of Carson City's costs or level of service to that of other counties.

B. CURRENT SITUATION

Carson City is the primary customer of the NSPD, with 68% of NSPD's total service hours provided to Carson City. As such, Carson City is also NSPD's largest source of revenue, with approximately $997,000 paid by the City to NSPD in FY 11-12. Attorney and investigator hours charged by NSPD to Carson City cases increased 14%: from 11,293 hours in FY 09-10 to 12,902 hours in FY 11-12. However, Carson City's indigent defense expenditures only increased 8.6% over the same period.

Over that time, the cost of the three conflict attorneys has not changed. Three conflict attorneys are retained by the City on a flat-fee, three-year contract for $341,985 per year, or $113,995 each. Expenses for experts, investigations, and other items are approved on a case-by-case basis, bringing total compensation for each conflict attorney to approximately $135,000 per year. The NSPD estimates that conflict attorneys handle approximately 15% of Carson City's cases. There is no data on hours or caseload handled by the attorneys, but for the purposes of this study each attorney estimated working about 32 hours per week on indigent defense.

C. OPTIONS

There are three options for the provision of indigent defense services in Carson City. They include 1) a combination of NSPD and conflict attorneys; 2) a combination of County Public Defender office and conflict attorneys, and 3) contract attorneys only. The pros and cons of each option are summarized below.

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NSPD and Conflict Attorneys (Status Quo)	
Pros	**Cons**
Administrative simplicity of an outsourced model Consistent level of service	Lack of City control
County Public Defender and Conflict Attorneys	
Pros	**Cons**
Increased City control	No cost savings Increased administrative burden on City Uncertain availability of qualified attorneys
Contract Attorneys Only	
Pros	**Cons**
Cost savings, although minimal Increased City control	Uncertain availability of qualified attorneys Increased administrative burden on City Increased administrative burden on Courts

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Carson City's best option appears to be seeking ways to optimize the current delivery model. As such, we recommend:

- Continuing to outsource indigent defense to the NSPD
- Work with the NSPD to refine the basis for determining the cost of services charged to Carson City
- Collecting comprehensive case data from conflict attorneys
- Incorporating performance standards in attorney and NSPD contracts
- Exploring modifications to the current structure to achieve potential cost savings

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II. BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

A. BACKGROUND

The right to defense counsel in criminal proceedings is articulated in the Bill of Rights, and the U.S. Supreme Court has consistently reaffirmed that states should bear the burden of the cost of representation for indigent defendants. This right extends to juvenile and mental health cases, as well as cases involving child protection. In Nevada, counties bear the vast majority of the cost of indigent defense, with the state incurring the cost of State Supreme Court appeals.

Since the 1970s, Carson City has contracted with the Nevada State Public Defender (NSPD) to provide indigent defense services. Through its District and Justice/Municipal Courts, the City also contracts with three conflict attorneys, who provide representation in the case of a conflict of interest on the part of the NSPD. Over the past three years, the City has cut costs and staffing in response to the economic pressures, while the cost of providing indigent defense has risen.

B. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The objective of this study is to determine the most cost-effective model for Carson City to continue providing public defense services. The study was conducted with the assumption that any potential change in the service delivery model must preserve the current level and quality of service provided to indigent defendants.

This study is not an audit of public defender or conflict attorney operations. The study did not base analysis on the comparison of Carson City's costs or level of service to that of other counties.

C. METHODOLOGY

Interviews

Moss Adams conducted a series of interviews and work sessions with City Administration, District and Justice/Municipal Court Judges, Court Clerk, conflict attorneys, and the State Public Defender during June, July, and August 2012.

Analysis

During the course of the study, Moss Adams reviewed a number of documents in order to understand historical and current budgets, as well as related policies and procedures. In addition, external research was conducted to determine relevant standards and practices for indigent defense in Nevada and nationwide.

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Deliverables

Moss Adams provided preliminary findings to Carson City and the NSPD to validate facts and verify the practicality of recommendations.

We based our work upon, and used the practice guidance promulgated by, The Institute of Internal Auditors, Inc. Accordingly, in so doing, we provide no opinion, attestation, or other form of assurance with respect to our work or the information upon which our work is based.

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III. HISTORY OF INDIGENT DEFENSE SERVICES IN CARSON CITY

In Nevada, counties pay the vast majority of the cost of public defense. All counties with a population of less than 100,000 are expected to either appoint a County Public Defender or contract with the Nevada State Public Defender. The NSPD is a state agency located within the Department of Health and Human Services. The State Public Defender is appointed by the Governor for a four-year term. Counties enter into two-year contracts with the NSPD during each legislative session. In the past, the NSPD represented all 15 eligible counties. However, a number of the counties in Nevada now contract with private attorneys to serve as the public defender. The current state of indigent defense service models utilized by counties in Nevada is shown in the table below.

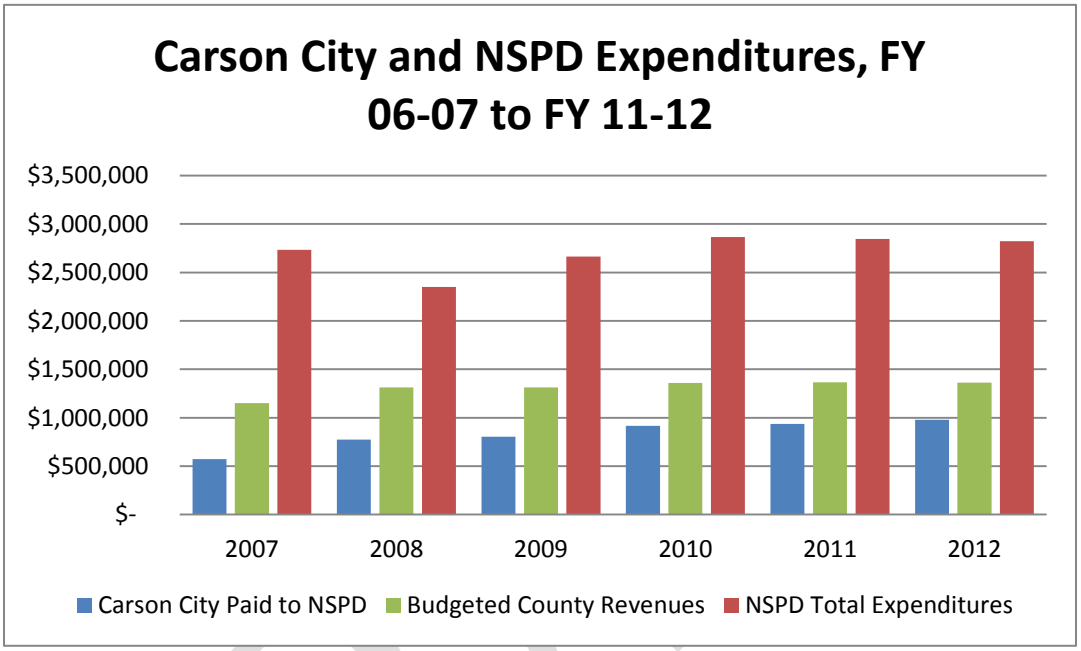
Counties using Contract Attorneys	Counties using County Public Defender	Counties using State Public Defender
Churchill	Clark	Carson City
Douglas	Elko	Eureka
Esmeralda	Humboldt	Storey
Lander	Washoe	White Pine
Lincoln		
Lyon		
Mineral		
Nye		
Pershing		

The NSPD currently represents four counties, and is staffed from two offices, with eight deputy attorneys, three investigators, and five administrative staff. As a state agency, the NSPD's budget is determined by the Legislature. Until 2005, the State paid for a set amount of the annual budget of the NSPD, with the user counties making up the difference. In 2005, the Legislature changed the funding calculation for the NSPD, requiring counties to pay by caseload. This increased the counties' share of funding from 54% in 2004 to 81% in 2012.

The NSPD's budgeted share for each county is estimated based on the average hours charged over the last five years. At the end of each year, the NSPD evaluates the caseload share for each county compared to the budget and distributes refunds if the share is less than budgeted. However, if a county's caseload is more than budgeted, then the NSPD does not issue a bill.

Since 2000, three counties have left the NSPD. Pershing County and Lincoln County moved to a contracted attorney model, and Humboldt County established a county public defender office. Understandably, as counties have left the NSPD, Carson City's percentage of costs has risen. For example, in FY 12-13, the NSPD budgeted 68% of total hours to Carson City, an increase from 50%

in 2010, when the NSPD represented an additional county. However, it appears that over the past six years, the NSPD's expenditures have held relatively steady, even as counties have left the NSPD (Lincoln and Humboldt left since 2007). As a result, Carson City has been incurring increasing costs even though the amount of resources and associated costs have remained relatively constant. The table below shows Carson City's expenditures compared to the NSPD's total county budget and NSPD's total expenditures since 2007.



Over the six-year period 2007 through 2012, total NSPD resources started at 19 FTEs in 2007 and returned to that level in 2012 after being reduced to 16 FTEs for four years and total NSPD expenditures increased 3% from approximately $2.7 million to $2.8 million, while Carson City payments to NSPD increased 71% from $573,180 to $978,924. Over the same six-year period, NSPD service hours charged to counties increased 7% from 20,226 to 21,733 to counties, while NSPD service hours charged to Carson City increased 32% from 9,756 to 12,902 for Carson City.

Carson City has considered changing the structure of indigent defense services twice in recent years. In 2007, the City analyzed the cost of establishing a county public defender office. In 2011, the City discussed the potential to move to an all-contract model, but the timing was too late to introduce during the upcoming legislative session. The 2007 analysis showed that bringing indigent defense into City operations would have negligible cost savings and is detailed in Section V below.

IV. CURRENT SERVICE AND COST

Indigent defense services in Carson City are currently supplied by the NSPD and three conflict attorneys. Every case is assigned to the NSPD. If the NSPD determines that a conflict exists with its office, then the case is assigned to one of three conflict attorneys on a rotating basis. The conflict pool was recently reduced from four to three attorneys. The Carson City District and Justice/Municipal Courts have determined over time that three is the appropriate number conflict attorneys to handle all potential conflicts of interest.

Three conflict attorneys are retained by the City on a flat-fee, three-year contract for $341,985 per year, or $113,995 per year each. Expenses for experts, investigations, and other items are approved on a case-by-case basis, bringing total compensation for each conflict attorney to approximately $135,000 per year. The contract is negotiated on behalf of the City by the District Court judges, and has not increased since 2009. Theoretically, each conflict attorney should handle the same number of cases. However, since the workload can vary significantly from one case to another, the hours spent on indigent defense can vary widely from attorney-to-attorney and from month-to-month. The State Public Defender estimates that the conflict attorneys handle 15% of the total caseload for Carson City.

The contract requires conflict attorneys to perform indigent defense services when required, with no minimum or maximum workload requirements. The conflict attorneys receive the same pay regardless of how many hours per month they work. However, the contracts are negotiated with the assumption that the contract does not provide enough compensation to maintain a practice, and conflict attorneys need some time to work with private clients.

Carson City's total indigent defense budget has increased 10% over the past three years, from $1.194 million in FY 09-10 to $1.325 million in FY 11-12. Over that time, the cost of the three conflict attorneys has not changed.

Since the state funding structure changed in 2005, Carson City has paid NSPD for indigent defense services, including attorneys, investigations, and administration. As noted above, the NSPD's total budget has not changed significantly over the past six years, while Carson City's costs have increased. As a result, it appears Carson City is absorbing an increasing portion of NSPD's fixed costs due to declining economies of scale and no reductions in the NSPD's budget.

The hours NSPD charged to Carson City cases increased 14%, from 11,293 in FY 09-10 to 12,902 in FY 11-12. The NSPD issues refunds at the end of each year to counties that did not reach their budgeted proportion of total hours. In FY 11-12, Carson City was refunded $43,458. The hours charged by attorneys and investigators and associated case types handled by NSPD in FY 11-12 are detailed below.

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	Adult		Juvenile	
FY 11-12 Case Type	**Attorney**	**Investigator**	**Attorney**	**Investigator**
Felony	3,141	1,430	283	15
Gross Misdemeanor	374	254	-	-
Misdemeanor	3,104	1,065	51	-
Parole Violation	309	17	102	-
Juvenile Court Appointment	280	-	-	-
432B	-	-	619	9
Administration	1,367	202	-	-
Travel		286	-	-
Other	3	1	-	-
Total Hours	**8,578**	**3,255**	**1,055**	**24**

There is currently no verifiable data on the hours charged by conflict attorneys. For the purposes of this study, each attorney provided an estimate in the range of 32 hours per week spent on indigent defense cases. In addition, the attorneys reported employing administrative staff and legal research to assist on cases.

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V. OPTIONS FOR INDIGENT DEFENSE SERVICES

There are three options for indigent defense services provided by the City. They include 1) status quo, 2) converting to a County Public Defender's office with conflict attorneys, or 3) hiring contract attorneys only. The estimated cost and pros and cons of each model are presented below.

A. STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER AND CONFLICT ATTORNEYS (STATUS QUO)

There is no way to lower the cost to the City associated with the current model without a structural change. Carson City has no control over the NSPD's budget. As a state agency, the NSPD's budget is determined by the Legislature. Carson City also has no control over the hourly rate it is charged by the NSPD. Other counties that have left the NSPD in recent years have reported travel cost savings. The NSPD is located in Carson City, so almost no travel is charged to Carson City.

Estimated Cost

The FY 12-13 cost of the current model is shown below. This estimate does not include the refund, which is unpredictable and not budgeted.

	FY 12-13
State Public Defender Budget	$997,024
Conflict Attorneys	$341,949
Expenses*	$65,000
Total Budgeted	$1,403,973

**Note: Expense estimate based on FY 11-12 expenditures*

Pros

Outsourced model: By outsourcing management of indigent defense, the City is relieved of day-to-day operations, risks, and personnel costs, and the administrative burden of another department.

Consistent level of service: The NSPD provides a consistent level and quality of service to indigent defendants. NSPD attorneys are qualified to provide representation in all types of cases and across traditional and specialty courts.

Cons

Lack of City control: Under the current model, the City doesn't have control over the budget or operations of indigent defense. The NSPD's budget is determined without input from Carson City,

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both its largest user and source of funds. In an economic situation of declining revenues and service cuts across city operations, it can be frustrating to have no control over $1.4 million in expenditures. As expenditures have increased and other counties have left the NSPD, the cost-benefit ratio may have changed.

B. COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICE AND CONFLICT ATTORNEYS

As other counties have left the NSPD, economies of scale have lessened and the City is now paying a larger portion of the costs of indigent defense services provided by NSPD. If the City wishes to have more control over the budget, it could appoint a County Public Defender and establish a City office to provide indigent defense services.

Estimated Cost

To replicate the current NSPD level of representation, the City would require the staff identified below. The cost of retaining three conflict attorneys will remain the same. This cost estimate is based on current District Attorney salary data.

Legal Staff	**Annual Salary**
Chief County Public Defender*	$120,000
Deputy Attorneys (4)	$70,000
Investigators (1.5)	$80,000
Subtotal	*$520,000*
Administrative Staff*	
Legal Secretaries (2)	$50,000
Administrative Assistant	$40,000
Subtotal	*$140,000*
Total Salaries	**$660,000**

**Notes: The Chief Public Defender is assumed to dedicate 0.5 FTE to administration and management and 0.5 FTE to casework; administrative staffing estimates are based on a 2007 cost estimate compiled by the District Court.*

Based on this staffing structure, the estimated total cost is provided below.

County Public Defender option	Estimated Cost
Salaries	$660,000
Benefits (35% of salaries)	$231,000
Overhead	$113,000
Conflict Attorneys	$341,949
Expenses*	$65,000
Total Budgeted	$1,410,949

**Notes: Expenses are based on FY 11-12 expenditures. The 2007 cost estimate assembled by the District Court assumed $113,000 in ongoing overhead costs. Startup costs, estimated in 2007 at $33,000, were not included in the above estimate.*

Pros

Increased City control: Under this model, the City would provide the same services as NSPD, but those services would be completely under City control. While costs are primarily driven by an uncontrollable and unpredictable workload, the City would have tighter control over staffing and overhead costs, as well as the level of service.

Cons

No cost savings: Because the City currently pays the actual cost of indigent defense to NSPD, there is essentially no difference between the costs of a City office versus outsourcing to NSPD.

Increased administrative burden on City: Opening and running a City public defender office would increase the administrative burden on the City. One-time costs, such as securing office space, recruiting employees, and purchasing computers and equipment could be significant.

Added risks: The City would be exposed to risks associated with additional personnel, as well as the high-profile nature of defense counsel.

Uncertain availability of qualified attorneys: It is unclear whether NSPD attorneys would transfer to Carson City, and the community may not otherwise have an adequate supply of qualified attorneys.

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C. CONTRACT ATTORNEYS ONLY

Based on the current NSPD and conflict attorney workload, a minimum of seven contract attorneys would need to be retained by the City. However, given that the workload is variable and increasing, an additional attorney should be retained for flexibility. Conflict attorneys would not be necessary under this model.

Estimated Cost

The cost of retaining eight contract attorneys a year is approximately $1.38 million, representing approximately $28,000 a year in savings. The cost estimate is based on 9,600 attorney hours for Carson City cases reported by the NSPD in FY 11-12, while conflict attorneys reported working an average of 32 hours per week, or 4,800 hours. This estimate is based on the following assumptions:

- The value of attorney contracts would increase to $150,000 to accommodate a full-time workload.
- The approximately $22,000 per year in case-by-case expenses currently incurred by conflict attorneys would be incurred by every contract attorney.
- Investigative services under this model would be handled by individual attorneys, and expenses would be approved on a case-by-case basis by judges.

The cost estimate calculation is shown below.

Step 1: Number of Attorneys Needed = Current Workload (Hours) / Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

= 14,400 / 2080 = 7 + 1 for flexibility = 8

Step 2: Contract Attorney Cost = Number of Attorneys Needed x (Contract Cost + Expenses)

= 8 x ($150,000 + $22,000) = $1,376,000

Pros

Minimal cost savings: Based on the calculation above, the cost of retaining eight contracted attorneys would save the City $28,000 a year. However, the cost of investigations, administrative services, and other expenses are unknown and unpredictable. In addition, it is unclear whether a $150,000 contract would be sufficient to sustain a full-time practice in indigent defense. Contracted attorneys in other Nevada counties earn up to $195,000 annually.

Increased City control: Under this model, the City would have some increased control over the indigent defense budget. While the courts negotiate contracts on behalf of the City, the City could set a budget for the contracts and enforce contract terms.

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Cons

Uncertain availability of qualified attorneys: In several discussions, District and Justice/Municipal Court judges raised concerns about sufficient availability of qualified representation under this model. Carson City has a small population, and there may not be enough local criminal defense and specialty attorneys to adequately address the current workload.

Increased administrative burden on City: Moving from an outsourced model to individual contracts will increase the City's administrative burden. The City's purchasing and finance departments will be required to provide a higher level of contract management than the current approach requires.

Under an all-contract model, several attorneys could form an office to provide contract public defense services and achieve overhead savings. These offices are often non-profits. However, if multiple contract attorneys elected to pursue this structure, then the City might need to engage conflict attorneys.

Increased administrative burden on Courts: There are two major areas where an all-contract model could impact District Court administration. First, District Court judges currently negotiate the conflict attorney contracts as a group on behalf of the City. The judges would have to negotiate the new contracts with a group of eight attorneys, which will almost certainly take more time and effort than the current three-attorney contract. Second, judges currently approve expenses for the conflict attorneys on a case-by-case basis. The NSPD estimates that these cases are about 15% of the total. Judicial time devoted to expense approval would likely significantly increase under the all-contract model. In essence, some of the administrative costs that may be saved by the City with this model might be shifted to the courts.

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VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to outsource indigent defense to the NSPD: Because indigent defense is mandated by the U.S. Constitution, and the State of Nevada requires counties to bear the cost of indigent defense, the City's cost-cutting opportunities are limited. Based on the pros and cons of each model, it appears that the current model of NSPD and conflict attorneys is the most effective model for Carson City to provide indigent defense services. The City should consider forming a coalition with other counties to lobby the State for additional funding for indigent defense.

Work with the NSPD to refine the basis for determining the cost of services charged to Carson City. Carson City's portion of the NSPD's total costs, as determined by Carson City payments to NSPD over total county revenues budgeted by NSPD, has increased from 50% in 2007 to 72% in 2012. This percentage has continually increased over the past several years, while the overall county share of the NSPD's budget has remained relatively the same at 46% in 2007 and 48% in 2012. As a result, NSPD could be charging Carson City an increasing portion of NSPD's resource costs that may not have been sufficiently adjusted to reflect the diminishing county client base. The City should work with NSPD to develop a new cost allocation formula that better reflects the actual work expended on Carson City cases.

Collect comprehensive case data from conflict attorneys: The lack of comprehensive information about caseloads and hours is one reason this issue continues to arise. In addition, state law (NRS 260.070) requires county public defenders to make an annual report to the Board of Supervisors covering all cases handled during the preceding year; Carson City should require both the NSPD and conflict attorneys to make these annual reports. At a minimum, the City should collect the same data from contract attorneys that the State requires the NSPD to provide on an annual basis. This data includes:

- The number of cases that are pending
- The number of cases closed the previous year
- The total number of criminal defendants represented by case type
- The total number of criminal defendants by age group (adult or juvenile)
- The total number of working hours spent

Collecting this data will enable to City to develop a baseline understanding of the amount of service provided by conflict attorneys. It will also enable the City to compare attorney utilization between conflict and NSPD attorneys, enabling further analysis of alternatives. The City may find that cost savings can be realized by structuring the contracts on a per-hour basis.

Include performance standards in attorney and NSPD contracts: The current contracting process does not necessarily guarantee a certain standard of performance on the part of conflict attorneys. The contract states, "The professional services described … must be performed in a professional, competent and effective manner given the law applicable to the particular matter for

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which legal services are being rendered and the applicable rules and standards of professional responsibility." Including performance standards in contracts, such as minimum qualifications, training requirements, and procedures, would give the City an additional level of control, and give the City the ability to terminate contracts if performance does not meet expectations.

The Nevada Supreme Court adopted performance standards in 2008 for the purpose of improving indigent defense services in Nevada. The standards have been adopted by the NSPD, but not necessarily across counties. The standards encompass the qualifications and training that public defenders should have, as well as the standards of performance of duties on all types of cases a public defender may perform. The standards provide a guide for attorney performance and for resource allocation, and could be used by the City as a tool to ensure a sufficient level of service is provided by contract attorneys. At a minimum, the contract should reference these standards as a guideline for attorney qualifications and performance of duties. The standards should be incorporated in any Requests for Qualification (RFQ) for contract attorneys.

Carson City's biennial contract with the NSPD should also reference performance standards to ensure consistency across types of representation. This contract should also articulate how the City's annual budget is calculated, as well as the terms under which the City should be issued a refund. This will facilitate a more precise budget process.

Explore additional modifications to current structure for potential cost savings: Under the current model, conflict attorneys are only assigned cases for which the NSPD has declared a conflict of interest. If the current model for assigning and administering indigent defense cases in Carson City was modified to enable conflict attorneys to work on non-conflict cases, some cost savings could be realized. For example, the City could:

- *Utilize additional capacity with conflict attorneys*: Currently, each conflict attorney reports working approximately 32 hours per week on Carson City cases. At this utilization rate, the three conflict attorneys represent 2.4 FTE based on a 40-hour week, with 0.6 FTE unutilized. If these attorneys could accept non-conflict cases, then they could potentially contribute another 0.6 FTE of service at no additional cost. At a cost of approximately $167,000 for an NSPD attorney, including expenses, the City could save approximately $100,000 per year (0.6 x $167,000).

  However, this scenario has several limitations. The relatively low-cost conflict attorney contract was negotiated assuming that the attorneys would be developing their private practice as well. The attorneys may not be willing to accept additional (non-conflict) work under the contract value. If fees of $150,000, plus expenses, are assumed for each of the three conflict attorneys under an expanded work scenario, then the potential cost savings would be eliminated. This model is also dependent on the capacity existing; if conflict cases increased, then the capacity would decrease. As noted above, the number and nature of cases are unpredictable and uncontrollable. In addition, a change in the way cases are assigned would increase the administrative burden to the Carson City Courts, and may shift

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some of the costs from the City to the Courts. Also, a reduction of 0.6 FTE may not be feasible for the NSPD to absorb. If the NSPD cannot reduce salary costs, then the City may not realize a reduction in costs.

- *Shift one FTE from the NSPD to contract*: If the structure of assigning indigent defense cases is changed to allow contract attorneys to perform non-conflict work, then the City could retain an additional contract attorney for a shift of one FTE from the NSPD to contract. This shift would save approximately $32,000 per year ($167,000 - $135,000) under the current contract value.

  This scenario also has several limitations. As noted above, it is unclear whether attorneys would be willing to perform additional work at the same, relatively low, cost per contract. Also noted in the above scenario, the administrative burden on the District Court would increase under this model. As such, the cost savings may not be worth pursuing.

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