

# **State of Alaska FY2014 Governor's Operating Budget**

## **Department of Administration Legal and Advocacy Services Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary**

## Legal and Advocacy Services Results Delivery Unit

### Contribution to Department's Mission

- Provide legal advocacy and guardian services to vulnerable Alaskans.
- To provide constitutionally mandated legal representation to indigent clients appointed by the court.

### Major RDU Accomplishments in 2012

- The Office of Public Advocacy (OPA) successfully expanded its Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program to the Kenai Peninsula through its Memorandum of Agreement with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe in Kenai.
- OPA continued to take major steps to enhance child advocacy in the Y-K Delta through its CASA program.
- Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, CASA trained and activated an additional five (5) new CASA volunteers.
- The Office of Elder Fraud and Assistance (EFA) cooperated with the Department of Law and the Division of Senior Services to craft legislation improving legal remedies for vulnerable adult victims of financial exploitation and the legislation was passed as Senate Bill 86 during the FY 12 Legislative Session.
- Cash and real property recoveries for FY20 12 were in excess of \$1.2 million were for elder victims.
- The Office of Elder Fraud accepted 82 new cases during FY2012 and participated in 25 public service, inter-agency and mixed events focusing on elder abuse awareness.
- Attorneys and Administration in OPA participated in creating and presenting training to the Court system on proper case appointments to OPA pursuant to the enabling statute.
- OPA created an entire new conflict unit without the addition of any PCN's resulting in a significant savings in contract services
- The Public Defender Agency (PDA) implemented a new case management system that will allow the agency to generate and publish performance measure results and to provide more reliable and detailed information for supporting efficiency and cost-saving strategies.
- Data generated by PDA's case management system and performance improvements in the implementation of support staff reorganization efforts have identified potential efficiencies that can be realized through changes in the conflict procedures employed by the agency.

### Key RDU Challenges

**Increased caseloads** - Due to the inherently unpredictable nature and increase in caseloads, it is a significant challenge for the Office of Public Advocacy (OPA) and the Public Defender Agency (PDA) to maintain and provide the core services to clients as efficiently as possible while operating within budgetary parameters. The unpredictability of caseload assignments make it difficult to accurately forecast caseload increases and costs for upcoming budget years. If the current trend of increasing caseloads continues, some agency sections will struggle to meet the increased demands without additional resources, resulting in inefficiencies for participants trying to provide services for some of Alaska's most vulnerable citizens.

**Supplemental funding** - Due to the difficulty in accurately predicting workload and caseload increases and costs, OPA and PDA operations have often been funded through supplemental appropriations. In FY2013, the need for supplemental funding for OPA is not anticipated.

### Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2014

**Public Guardian Section** - For FY2014 OPA will be seeking regulation changes to increase the public guardian fees that can assess, and subsequently will be seeking authorization to increase collection authority of public guardian fees. Additionally, we will be seeking to formally create and manage a volunteer Family Guardianship Program with a program director to provide training to friends and family available to act as guardians to incapacitated adults.

**Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Caseload Assistance** - Given the increased GAL caseload especially in domestic violence cases, OPA will be seeking to expand its Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program especially into northern rural areas of Alaska.

**Elder Fraud Costs** - OPA will be seeking a regulation change for its Elder Fraud Assistance (EFA) Unit; to be authorized to keep monies obtained from sanctions and recovered costs expended by the division during the course of litigation. Often costs expended by the office to pursue elder fraud litigation is recovered in the cases, but cannot be kept by the agency to recoup the costs expended.

Contact Information
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**Legal and Advocacy Services  
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	FY2012 Actuals				FY2013 Management Plan				FY2014 Governor			
	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
<b>Formula Expenditures</b> None.												
<b>Non-Formula Expenditures</b> Office of Public Advocacy	23,095.2	1,120.4	289.4	24,505.0	23,433.7	1,179.8	249.4	24,862.9	23,476.6	1,181.0	249.4	24,907.0
Public Defender Agency	24,294.3	633.8	0.0	24,928.1	24,939.4	564.9	0.0	25,504.3	25,010.1	564.9	0.0	25,575.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>47,389.5</b>	<b>1,754.2</b>	<b>289.4</b>	<b>49,433.1</b>	<b>48,373.1</b>	<b>1,744.7</b>	<b>249.4</b>	<b>50,367.2</b>	<b>48,486.7</b>	<b>1,745.9</b>	<b>249.4</b>	<b>50,482.0</b>

**Legal and Advocacy Services**  
**Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component**  
**From FY2013 Management Plan to FY2014 Governor**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	<u>Unrestricted Gen (UGF)</u>	<u>Designated Gen (DGF)</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
<b>FY2013 Management Plan</b>	<b>47,935.8</b>	<b>437.3</b>	<b>1,744.7</b>	<b>249.4</b>	<b>50,367.2</b>
<b>Adjustments which will continue current level of service:</b>					
-Office of Public Advocacy	42.9	0.0	-13.8	0.0	29.1
-Public Defender Agency	70.0	0.7	-138.8	0.0	-68.1
<b>Proposed budget increases:</b>					
-Office of Public Advocacy	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	15.0
-Public Defender Agency	0.0	0.0	138.8	0.0	138.8
<b>FY2014 Governor</b>	<b>48,048.7</b>	<b>438.0</b>	<b>1,745.9</b>	<b>249.4</b>	<b>50,482.0</b>