**Invitation for Emergency Howell County Contract Bids**

The Missouri State Public Defender (MSPD) is seeking bids from attorneys interested in providing all criminal defense representation to qualifying clients as a Special Public Defender in Howell County.

This contract requires the contracted Special Public Defender (SPD) to appear at all criminal dockets and to represent assigned MSPD-eligible criminal defendants from case opening through final disposition.

Qualifications may include but are not limited to: 1) demonstrated successful experience and proficiency in all aspects of criminal law, including complex, serious, high-level felony cases; 2) familiarity with MSPD’s policies and procedures regarding criminal law representation and case contracting; 3) attorney’s past record of criminal law work at, with, or for MSPD, if any; and 4) attorney’s proximity to the county.

The contract period will be from June 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, with an option for MSPD to renew the contract for three (3) additional one-year periods and to renegotiate contract pricing based on the prior year’s case assignments. Contract fees are paid monthly. Contracted counsel may submit contract-related mileage for reimbursement at the state mileage rate (currently $0.655/mile). MSPD will provide reasonably necessary litigation expenses, such as funding for depositions, process service, and approved experts. Counsel will have the opportunity to attend MSPD CLE training events held during the contract period. Additional trial fees are paid for cases tried by bench or jury trial.

The contract will cover all non-homicide and non-sex-offense adult cases; failure to register as a sex offender is not considered a sex offense. Except for an SIS disposition, cases are not finally disposed of until the defendant is acquitted or sentenced, or the charge is dismissed and not refiled by the state. The contract requires communication with the associated MSPD trial division office and the Case Contracting Division. Client eligibility for MSPD services is determined by MSPD.

Available at this link are MSPD’s regular Panel Attorney contract counsel rates and trial fees that are paid to regular MSPD Panel Attorneys on a case-by-case basis, which may provide a reference for bidding: <https://publicdefender.mo.gov/private-counsel-opportunities/mspd-contracting/>

**A current Panel Attorney awarded this contract may continue to receive contract assignments from MSPD in other counties while fulfilling this contract if approved by MSPD. The average caseload for Howell County based on fiscal years (2022 – 2024) is as follows\*:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FY** | **County** | **Annual Total** | **Ave. Cases/mo** | **AB Fel\*** | **% total** | **CDE Fel** | **% total** | **M/PV** | **% total** |
| 22 | Howell | 839 | 70 | 59 | 7% | 451 | 54% | 329 | 39% |
| 23 | Howell | 758 | 63 | 39 | 5% | 443 | 58% | 276 | 36% |
| 24 | Howell | 720 | 60 | 57 | 8% | 424 | 59% | 239 | 33% |

\* “AB Fel” means class A and B non-sex felony offenses and unclassified offenses; this average includes class A and B drug offenses, which are paid less than other class A and B offenses. “CDE Fel” means class C, D, and E non-sex felony offenses, including drug offenses. “M/PV” means misdemeanors and both misdemeanor and felony probation violations.

Bids should be submitted by **5:00 PM on** **Friday, May 23, 2025, to Heather Tilman at** [**heather.tilman@mspd.mo.gov**](mailto:heather.tilman@mspd.mo.gov)Questions should be directed to Sara Watson 573-777-9977 ext 326; [sara.watson@mspd.mo.gov](mailto:sara.watson@mspd.mo.gov) The Missouri State Public Defender reserves the right to reject any and all bids.