



## WSBA COUNCIL ON PUBLIC DEFENSE MEETING AGENDA

March 28, 2025  
9:30am – 12:00pm

Join by Video Conference:

For video and audio: <https://wsba.zoom.us/j/86831734727?pwd=JdPRPtrj3zUwG7Vm54liXXDo85uKa5.1>

For audio only: LOCAL OPTION: (253) 215-8782 || TOLL-FREE OPTION: (888) 788-0099  
Meeting ID: 868 3173 4727 || Passcode: 892144

The purpose of the meeting is for the Council to discuss, deliberate, and take potential final action regarding the following agenda items:

5 min	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	Maialisa Vanyo	Discussion	
3 min	<b>January and February Meeting Minutes</b>	Maialisa Vanyo	Action	pp 2-5
30 min	<b>Draft Blake Advisory Opinion</b>	Jason Schwarz	Action	Pending
20 min	<b>Standards Updates</b>	Jason Schwarz	Discussion	
30 min	<b>Mitigation Specialist Presentation</b>	Alix Willard, Aimee Martin	Discussion	
20 min	<b>Proposed Amendments to RPC 6.1</b>	Kevin Flannery	Discussion	<a href="#">View Here</a>
10 min	<b>OPD/Legislative Updates</b>	Sophia Byrd-McSherry	Discussion	
10 min	<b>CPD Vice-Chair Opening Fall 2025 and Recruitment</b>	Maialisa Vanyo	Discussion	
5 min	<b>Announcements</b>	Everyone	Announcement	pp 6
	<b>Access to Justice Conference September 18-19 in Yakima</b>			

The next regular CPD meeting will be April 18, 2025, via Zoom

**Please note there may be important voting at the April meeting regarding the Standards recommendations to the BOG so attendance is critical.**

Find Council on Public Defense guiding documents and initiatives online at <https://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Committees-Boards-and-Other-Groups/council-public-defense>.

Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities will be provided upon request. Please email [bonnies@wsba.org](mailto:bonnies@wsba.org).



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Washington State Bar Association

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COUNCIL ON PUBLIC DEFENSE  
JANUARY 24, 2025 - 9:30AM – 12:00PM  
MINUTES

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**CPD Voting Members:** Jason Schwarz (Immediate Past Chair), Jonathan Quittner, Karen Denise Wilson, Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud, Maya Titova, Molly Gilbert, Judge Dee Sontag, David Montes, Victoria Blumhorst, Abraham Ritter, Louis Frantz, Arian Noma

**CPD Emeritus members (non-voting members):** Ann Christian, Bob Boruchowitz

**WSBA Staff:** Bonnie Sterken

**Guests:** Geoff Hulse, Joe Dozal, Rachel Cortez, Lindsey Townsend, George Yeannakis, Katrin Johnson, Sarah Hudson, Aaron Seda, Sophia Byrd McSherry, Angela Colaiuta, Liz Mustin, Jana Richards, Emily Arneson, Lei Young, Janna Richards, Nat Jacob

**Absent:** Larry Jefferson, Abigail Pence, Judge Marla Polin, Maialisa Vanyo (Chair), Christopher Swaby (Vice-Chair), Christie Hedman, Paul Holland, Kathleen Kyle, Eileen Farley

**Vacancies:** Two current or former prosecutors, one local government/public defense agency representative

**Minutes:** The minutes were approved without edits.

**Office of Public Defense Updates:** Sophia Byrd McSherry provided updates to the legislative session. She shared about the County bill related to increasing state funding for trial-level criminal public defense. There are companion bills in the House and Senate. It is not yet scheduled and may be added to agendas in the coming weeks. The fiscal note will be large and may be the largest issue concern. Sophia encouraged people to sign up for email notifications on the legislators' website about the process of bills. The other bill with a lot of interest relates to the state loan repayment assistance program. However, this bill has a large fiscal note, which may be a barrier. Regarding the OPD's budget request, the legislator is carefully looking at all the agency budgets, and they are being asked to review everything, including current spending. OPD is taking extra steps to show how their budget is critically important and managed well. Sophia addressed questions.

Katrin Johnson shared about bills from last year regarding recruitment and training. The criminal defense training academy is coming up again this Spring for new attorneys. Rachel Cortez also shared about ramping up the rural public defense fellowship program for rural programs, attending career fairs, and exploring ways to get people connected. Rachel and Nat addressed questions. They support spreading the word on this program and making connections with local public defense offices. Rachel and Nat addressed questions.

**Public Defense Investigators:** Molly Gilbert and Joe Dozal gave a presentation on the recruitment of WA public defense investigators. Molly started with the status of the profession, which has changed a lot in recent years to keep pace with the overall burden on public defense. She provided important elements of investigation, including the need for independence, in-house experts, seen as subject matter experts, and the creation of investigation-specific training materials. She also shared the qualities of an investigator team, including the importance of diversity, closer to blue-collar the better, analytical and focused, charismatic and people-centered, comfortable with computers and social networking, able to write contemporaneous notes, isn't easily intimidated, can handle vigorous discourse, and is curious and tenacious. She also outlined challenges: no professional training program for investigators, pipeline often comes from former law enforcement, and the need for entry-level opportunities. She suggests removing college degree requirements and providing entry-level internships, entry-level curriculum, and minimum standards. She recommended the CPD launch a Defense Investigator Subcommittee to attempt to launch some of these ideas. Joe Dozal shared about how Whatcom County is using investigator internships, as an example. The Council had a conversation and Milly and Joe addressed questions.

**Subcommittee Updates:** Postponed until next meeting.

**Standards Process Update:** Jason Schwarz that the Court's next en banc where Standards will be discussed is at the end of February. We are waiting to hear from the Court to prepare for next steps. Since the last CPD meeting the proposed Family Defense and Appellate Standards have been posted to the Court's website for comment by April 30, 2025.

**Announcements:** The February meeting will be short and include legislative and subcommittee updates.

The meeting adjourned at 10:54 am



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Washington State Bar Association

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COUNCIL ON PUBLIC DEFENSE  
FEBRUARY 21, 2025 - 9:30AM – 10:30AM  
MINUTES

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**CPD Voting Members:** Jason Schwarz (Immediate Past Chair), Maialisa Vanyo (Chair), Christopher Swaby (Vice-Chair), Karen Denise Wilson, Molly Gilbert, Paul Holland, Abraham Ritter, Victoria Blumhorst, David Montes

**CPD Emeritus members (non-voting members):** Ann Christian, Bob Boruchowitz, Kathy Kyle

**WSBA Staff:** Bonnie Sterken

**Guests:** Geoff Hulse, Joe Dozal, Rachel Cortez, Lindsey Townsend, George Yeannakis, Katrin Johnson, Sarah Hudson, Aaron Seda, Sophia Byrd McSherry, Angela Colaiuta, Liz Mustin, Jana Richards, Emily Arneson, Lei Young, Janna Richards, Nat Jacob

**Absent:** Larry Jefferson, Abigail Pence, Judge Marla Polin, Christie Hedman, Jonathan Quittner, Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud, Maya Titova, Judge Dee Sontag, Louis Frantz, Arian Noma, Eileen Farley

**Vacancies:** Two current or former prosecutors, one local government/public defense agency representative

**Office of Public Defense Updates:** Sophia Byrd McSherry provided an update on legislative issues. She shared about two bills that are on her radar. The first was a SB 5027, relating to a loan repayment program for public defense attorneys and prosecutors. The other was HB 1592, relating to funding for county and city public defense, which is still live but has received amendments.

Sophia addressed questions and gave her insights on how funding decisions might be made. The Council discussed the county and city budget requests and political developments. Sophia encouraged people to share their support of bills as appropriate.

Liz Mustin shared about a bill HB 1815 relating to prison riot sentencing. She asked people on the call to spread the word about the bill and show support as appropriate.

**Council Recruitment:** Maialisa Vanyo shared that the recruitment committee has been meeting and is looking for 2 at-large members, 3 current or former prosecutors, and a local gov/public defense representative. Maialisa asked everyone to think of individuals who may be interested and able to join the CPD. The recruitment committee is asking for names and will handle the outreach. Individuals at the meeting offered suggested names.

Maialisa also noted that we will need another co-chair starting in the fall when Chris Swaby takes the Chair role.

**Minutes:** The CPD did not reach a quorum and was not able to vote on the January minutes.

**Standards Update:** The CPD should hear next steps from the Court regarding the Standard in time to discuss in March.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56am

# SAVE THE DATE



## 2025 Access to Justice Conference

**Yakima Convention Center & Online**  
**September 18-19, 2025**

Join us as we gather community members, legal system advocates, judges, attorneys, and policymakers across Washington State. This year's theme, "**Finding Joy in Justice Work: Centering Hope and Community Care,**" will focus on uplifting approaches to justice that emphasize resilience, community care, and shared hope.

### Key Planning Dates:

January 2025

Call for Session Proposals Opens

March 2025

Session Proposals Due

May 2025

Conference Registration Opens

Together, let's create a future where justice work is sustainable, supportive, and rooted in joy.  
**Stay tuned for more details!**

Updates will be shared on the event website here:  
<https://allianceforequaljustice.org/accesstojusticeconference/>

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