

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA**

FILED

NOV 05 2021

Mark C. McCart, Clerk
U.S. DISTRICT COURT

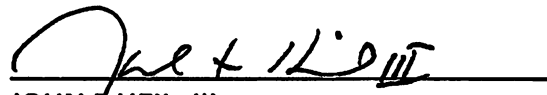
IN THE MATTER OF THE CJA PLAN AND THE
FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

GENERAL ORDER 21-35

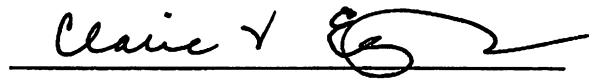
On June 11, 2021, the Judicial Council of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals approved the maintenance of a separate Federal Public Defender's Office in the Eastern District of Oklahoma and authorized the Eastern District of Oklahoma to choose an effective date for its new CJA Plan.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that pursuant to the Judicial Council's authorization, the attached CJA Plan for the Northern District of Oklahoma shall become effective on November 8, 2021, and it shall supersede all previous CJA Plans of this district.

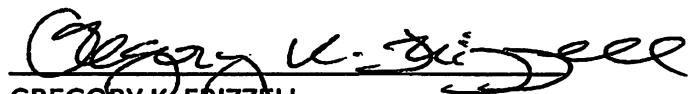
SO ORDERED this 5th day of November, 2021.



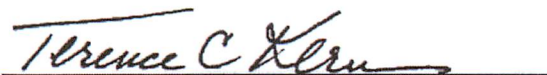
JOHN F. HEIL, III
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE



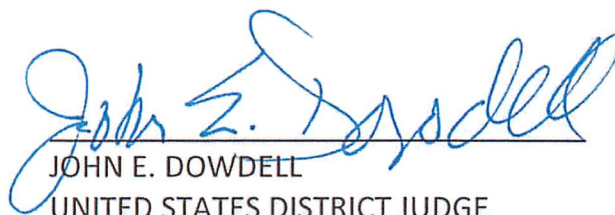
CLAIRE V. EAGAN
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE



GREGORY K. FRIZZELL
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Handwritten signature of Terence C. Kern in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

TERENCE C. KERN
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Handwritten signature of John E. Dowdell in blue ink, written over a horizontal line.

JOHN E. DOWDELL
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

United States District Court For The
Northern District of Oklahoma

Criminal Justice Act Plan

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I. Authority

Under the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) of 1964, as amended, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, and *Guide to Judiciary Policy (Guide)*, Volume 7A, the judges of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma adopt this Plan, as approved by the Tenth Circuit, for furnishing representation in federal court for any person financially unable to obtain adequate representation in accordance with the CJA.

II. Statement of Policy

A. Objectives

The objectives of this Plan are:

1. to attain the goal of equal justice under the law for all persons;
2. to provide all eligible persons with timely appointed counsel services that are consistent with the best practices of the legal profession, are cost-effective, and protect the independence of the defense function so that the rights of individual defendants are safeguarded and enforced; and
3. to particularize the requirements of the CJA, the USA Patriot Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 (re-codified at 18 U.S.C. § 3599), and *Guide*, Vol. 7A, in a way that meets the needs of this district.

This Plan must therefore be administered so that those accused of a crime, or otherwise eligible for services under the CJA, will not be deprived of the right to counsel, or any element of representation necessary to an effective defense, due to lack of financial resources.

B. Compliance

1. The court, its clerk, the federal public defender organization, and private attorneys appointed under the CJA must comply with *Guide*, Vol. 7A, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States or its Committee on Defender Services, and with this Plan.
2. The court will ensure that a current copy of the CJA Plan is made available on the court's website and provided to CJA counsel upon the attorney's designation as a member of the CJA panel of private attorneys (CJA Panel).

III. Definitions

A. Representation

"Representation" includes counsel, investigators, experts, and other services.

B. Appointed Attorney

"Appointed attorney" is an attorney designated to represent a financially eligible person under the CJA and this Plan. Such attorneys include private

attorneys, the federal public defender, and staff attorneys of the federal public defender organization.

C. CJA Administrator

“CJA Administrator” is a person designated by the federal public defender to administer the CJA Panel.

IV. Determination of Eligibility for CJA Representation

A. Subject Matter Eligibility

1. Mandatory

Representation **must** be provided for any financially eligible person who:

- a. is charged with a felony or with a Class A misdemeanor;
- b. is a juvenile alleged to have committed an act of juvenile delinquency as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 5031;
- c. is charged with a violation of probation, or faces a change of a term or condition of probation (unless the modification sought is favorable to the probationer and the government has not objected to the proposed change);
- d. is under arrest, when such representation is required by law;
- e. is entitled to appointment of counsel in parole proceedings;
- f. is charged with a violation of supervised release or faces modification, reduction, or enlargement of a condition, or extension or revocation of a term of supervised release;
- g. is subject to a mental condition hearing under 18 U.S.C. chapter 313;
- h. is in custody as a material witness;
- i. is seeking to set aside or vacate a death sentence under 28 U.S.C. § 2254 or § 2255;
- j. is entitled to appointment of counsel in verification of consent proceedings in connection with a transfer of an offender to or from the United States for the execution of a penal sentence under 18 U.S.C. § 4109;
- k. is entitled to appointment of counsel under the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution; or
- l. faces loss of liberty in a case and federal law requires the appointment of counsel.

2. Discretionary

Whenever a district judge or magistrate judge determines that the interests of justice so require, representation **may** be provided for any financially eligible person who:

- a. is charged with a petty offense (Class B or C misdemeanor, or an infraction) for which a sentence to confinement is authorized;
- b. is seeking relief under 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2254, or 2255 other than to set aside or vacate a death sentence;
- c. is charged with civil or criminal contempt and faces loss of liberty;
- d. has been called as a witness before a grand jury, a court, the Congress, or a federal agency or commission which has the power to compel testimony, and there is reason to believe, either prior to or during testimony, that the witness could be subject to a criminal prosecution, a civil or criminal contempt proceeding, or face loss of liberty;
- e. has been advised by the United States attorney or a law enforcement officer that they are the target of a grand jury investigation;
- f. is proposed by the United States attorney for processing under a pretrial diversion program; or
- g. is held for international extradition under 18 U.S.C. chapter 209.

3. Ancillary Matters

Representation may also be provided for financially eligible persons in ancillary matters appropriate to the criminal proceedings under 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(c). In determining whether representation in an ancillary matter is appropriate to the criminal proceedings, the court should consider whether such representation is reasonably necessary:

- a. to protect a constitutional right;
- b. to contribute in some significant way to the defense of the principal criminal charge;
- c. to aid in preparation for the trial or disposition of the principal criminal charge;
- d. to enforce the terms of a plea agreement in the principal criminal charge;
- e. to preserve the claim of the CJA client to an interest in real or personal property subject to civil forfeiture proceeding under 18 U.S.C. § 983, 19 U.S.C. § 1602, 21 U.S.C. § 881, or similar statutes, which property, if recovered by the client, may be considered for reimbursement under 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(f); or
- f. effectuate the return of real or personal property belonging to the CJA client, which may be subject to a motion for return of property under Fed. R. Crim. P. 41(g), which property, if recovered by the client, may be considered for reimbursement under 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(f).

B. Financial Eligibility

1. Presentation of Accused for Financial Eligibility Determination

a. Duties of Law Enforcement

- (i) Upon arrest, and where the defendant has not retained or waived counsel, federal law enforcement officials must promptly notify, telephonically or electronically, the appropriate court personnel, who in turn will notify the federal public defender of the arrest of an individual in connection with a federal criminal charge.
- (ii) Employees of law enforcement agencies should not participate in the completion of the financial affidavit or seek to obtain information concerning financial eligibility from a person requesting the appointment of counsel.

b. Duties of United States Attorney's Office

- (i) Upon the return or unsealing of an indictment or the filing of a criminal information, and where the defendant has not retained or waived counsel, the United States attorney or their delegate will promptly notify, telephonically or electronically, appropriate court personnel, who in turn will notify the federal public defender.
- (ii) Upon issuance of a target letter, and where the individual has not retained or waived counsel, the United States attorney or their delegate must promptly notify, telephonically or electronically, the appropriate court personnel, who in turn will notify the federal public defender, unless the United States Attorney's Office is aware of an actual or potential conflict with the target and the federal public defender, in which case they must promptly notify the court.
- (iii) Employees of the United States Attorney's Office should not participate in the completion of the financial affidavit or seek to obtain information concerning financial eligibility from a person requesting the appointment of counsel.

c. Duties of Federal Public Defender

- (i) In cases in which the federal public defender may be appointed, the office will:
 - immediately investigate and determine whether an actual or potential conflict exists; and
 - in the event of an actual or potential conflict, promptly notify the CJA administrator to facilitate the timely appointment of other counsel.
- (ii) When practicable, the federal public defender will discuss with the person who indicates that he or she is not financially able to secure representation the right to

appointed counsel and, if appointment of counsel seems likely, assist in the completion of a financial affidavit (Form CJA 23) and arrange to have the person promptly presented before a magistrate judge or district judge of this court for determination of financial eligibility and appointment of counsel.

- d. Duties of Pretrial Services Office
 - (i) When practicable, the pretrial services officer will not conduct the pretrial service interview of a financially eligible defendant until counsel has been appointed, unless the right to counsel is waived or the defendant otherwise consents to a pretrial service interview without counsel.
 - (ii) When counsel has been appointed, the pretrial services officer will provide counsel notice and a reasonable opportunity to attend any interview of the defendant by the pretrial services officer prior to the initial pretrial release or detention hearing.

2. Factual Determination of Financial Eligibility

- a. In every case where appointment of counsel is authorized under 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(a) and related statutes, the court must advise the person that he or she has a right to be represented by counsel throughout the case and that, if so desired, counsel will be appointed to represent the person if he or she is financially unable to obtain counsel.
- b. The determination of eligibility for representation under the CJA is a judicial function to be performed by the court after making appropriate inquiries concerning the person's financial eligibility. Other employees of the court may be designated to obtain or verify the facts relevant to the financial eligibility determination.
- c. In determining whether a person is "financially unable to obtain counsel," consideration should be given to the cost of providing the person and his or her dependents with the necessities of life, the cost of securing pretrial release, asset encumbrance, and the likely cost of retained counsel.
- d. The initial determination of eligibility must be made without regard to the financial ability of the person's family to retain counsel unless their family indicates willingness and ability to do so promptly.
- e. Any doubts about a person's eligibility should be resolved in the person's favor; erroneous determinations of eligibility may be corrected at a later time.

- f. Relevant information bearing on the person's financial eligibility should be reflected on a financial eligibility affidavit (Form CJA 23).
- g. If at any time after the appointment of counsel a judge finds that a person provided representation is financially able to obtain counsel or make partial payment for the representation, the judge may terminate the appointment of counsel or direct that any funds available to the defendant be paid as provided in 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(f).
- h. If at any stage of the proceedings a judge finds that a person is no longer financially able to pay retained counsel, counsel may be appointed in accordance with the general provisions set forth in this Plan.

V. Timely Appointment of Counsel

A. Timing of Appointment

Counsel must be provided to eligible persons as soon as feasible in the following circumstances, whichever occurs earliest:

1. after they are taken into custody;
2. when they appear before a magistrate or district court judge;
3. when they are formally charged or notified of charges if formal charges are sealed; or
4. when a magistrate or district court judge otherwise considers appointment of counsel appropriate under the CJA and related statutes.

B. Court's Responsibility

The court, in cooperation with the federal public defender and the United States attorney, will make such arrangements with federal, state, and local investigative and police agencies to ensure timely appointment of counsel.

C. Pretrial Service Interview

When practicable, unless the right to counsel is waived or the defendant otherwise consents to a pretrial service interview without counsel, financially eligible defendants will be provided appointed counsel prior to being interviewed by a pretrial services officer.

D. Retroactive Appointment of Counsel

Appointment of counsel may be made retroactive to include representation provided prior to appointment.

VI. Provision of Representational Services

A. Federal Public Defender and Private Counsel

This Plan provides for representational services by the federal public defender organization and for the appointment and compensation of private counsel from a CJA Panel list maintained by the federal public defender in cases authorized under the CJA and related statutes.

B. Administration

Administration of the CJA Panel, as set forth in this Plan, is hereby delegated and assigned to the federal public defender.

C. Apportionment of Cases

Where practical and cost effective, private attorneys from the CJA Panel will be appointed in a substantial proportion of the cases in which the accused is determined to be financially eligible for representation under the CJA. “Substantial” will usually be defined as a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of the annual CJA appointments.

D. Number of Counsel

More than one attorney may be appointed in any case determined by the court to be extremely difficult.

E. Capital Cases

Procedures for appointment of counsel in cases where the defendant is charged with a crime that may be punishable by death, or is seeking to vacate or set aside a death sentence in proceedings under 28 U.S.C. §§ 2254 or 2255, are set forth in section XV of this Plan.

VII. Federal Public Defender Organization

A. Establishment

The Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Oklahoma is established under the CJA and is responsible for rendering defense services on appointment throughout this district.

B. Standards

The federal public defender organization must provide high quality representation consistent with the best practices of the legal profession and commensurate with those services rendered when counsel is privately retained. See *Polk County v. Dodson*, 454 U.S. 312, 318 (1981) (“Once a lawyer has undertaken the representation of an accused, the duties and obligations are the same whether the lawyer is privately retained, appointed, or serving in a legal aid or defender program.” (quoting ABA Standards for Criminal Justice section 4-3.9 (2d ed. 1980))).

C. Workload

The federal public defender organization will continually monitor the workloads of its staff to ensure high quality representation for all clients.

D. Professional Conduct

The federal public defender organization must conform to the highest standards of professional conduct, including but not limited to the Oklahoma Rules of Professional Conduct, the Code of Conduct for Federal Public Defender Employees, and this Court's Local Criminal Rule 44 governing conduct of attorneys.

E. Private Practice of Law

Neither the federal public defender nor any defender employee may engage in the private practice of law except as authorized by the federal public defender Code of Conduct.

F. Supervision of Defender Organization

The federal public defender will be responsible for the supervision and management of the federal public defender organization. Accordingly, the federal public defender will be appointed in all cases assigned to that organization for subsequent assignment to staff attorneys at the discretion of the federal public defender.

G. Training

The federal public defender will assess the training needs of federal public defender staff and in coordination with the CJA Panel Attorney District Representative, the training needs of the local panel attorneys, and provide training opportunities and other educational resources.

H. Out-of-District Appointments

The federal public defender is authorized to accept appointments in cases initiated in the Eastern or Western Districts of Oklahoma, if a need arises, subject to the approval of the Chief Judges of the respective districts.

VIII. CJA Panel of Private Attorneys

A. Establishment of the CJA Panel Committee

1. A CJA Panel Committee ("CJA Committee") will be established by the court in consultation with the federal public defender. The CJA Committee will consist of two judges of the court (district court judges or magistrate judges), the federal public defender, the CJA Resource Attorney, and the CJA Panel Attorney District Representative (PADR) (the voting members), and an ex officio staff member employed by the

federal public defender who will act as administrative coordinator (a non-voting member).

2. The federal public defender or their representative, the CJA Resource Attorney, and the district's PADR are permanent members of the CJA Committee.
3. The CJA Committee will meet at least twice a year and at any time the court asks the Committee to consider an issue.
4. The Federal Public Defender will serve as the Chair of the CJA Committee.

B. Duties of the CJA Committee

1. Membership

Examine the qualifications of applicants for membership on the CJA Panel and approve those attorneys who are deemed qualified, reject the applications of attorneys deemed unqualified, or keep attorneys not yet qualified on the training panel. The report shall be sent to the Chief Judge.

2. Recruitment

Engage in recruitment efforts to establish a diverse panel and ensure that all qualified attorneys are encouraged to participate in the furnishing of representation in CJA cases.

3. Annual Report

Review the operation and administration of the CJA Panel over the preceding year, and recommend any necessary or appropriate changes to the chief judge concerning:

- a. the size of the CJA Panel;
- b. the recruitment of qualified and diverse attorneys as required and set forth in this plan; and
- c. recurring issues or difficulties encountered by panel members or their CJA clients.

4. Removal

The CJA Committee can remove any CJA panel member who:

- a. fails to satisfactorily fulfill the requirements of CJA panel membership during their term of service, including the failure to provide high quality representation to CJA clients, or
- b. has engaged in other conduct such that his or her continued service on the CJA Panel is inappropriate. *See also*, Section IX.C.7.

5. Voucher Review

If the presiding District Judge or Magistrate Judge is considering a voucher reduction, the CJA Resource Counsel will conduct a review of the voucher for reasonableness and address any issues raised by the referring judge. The Judge and the CJA Resource Counsel will work together, in conjunction with the panel attorney whose voucher is at issue, to resolve issues.

IX. Establishment of a CJA Panel

A. Approval of CJA Panel

1. The existing, previously established panel of attorneys who are eligible and willing to be appointed to provide representation under the CJA is hereby recognized.
2. The CJA Committee will approve attorneys for membership on the CJA Panel.

B. Size of CJA Panel

1. The CJA Panel will not be limited in size.
2. The Panel shall be large enough to provide an adequate number of experienced attorneys who possess the necessary skills to effectively litigate federal criminal cases. To that end, membership shall be reserved for attorneys who meet the CJA Committee's criteria. The Panel will also be small enough that each attorney receives a sufficient number of appointments to provide high quality representation consistent with the best practices of the legal profession and commensurate with those services rendered when counsel is privately retained.

C. Qualifications and Membership on the CJA Panel

1. Application
Application forms for membership on the CJA Panel are available from the federal public defender.
2. Equal Opportunity
All qualified attorneys are encouraged to participate in the furnishing of representation in CJA cases.
3. Eligibility
 - a. Applicants for the CJA Panel must be members in good standing of the Oklahoma bar, the federal bar of this district, and the Tenth Circuit court of appeals.
 - b. Applicants must possess strong litigation skills and demonstrate proficiency with the federal sentencing guidelines, federal

sentencing procedures, the Bail Reform Act, the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, and the Federal Rules of Evidence.

- c. Applicants must have significant experience representing persons charged with serious criminal offenses and demonstrate a commitment to the defense of people who lack the financial means to hire an attorney.
- d. Attorneys who do not possess the experience set forth above but believe they have equivalent other experience are encouraged to apply and set forth in writing the details of that experience for the CJA Committee's consideration.
- e. Applicants chosen to the CJA Panel must be appointed to one case per calendar year to continue membership on the CJA Panel.

4. Appointment to CJA Panel

The CJA Committee shall meet in person at least twice per year to consider appointments to the CJA Panel. The CJA Committee shall review the qualifications of applicants for membership on the Panel, conduct further inquiries as necessary, and determine which applicants shall be placed on the panel. The CJA Committee's reasons shall remain confidential but will be forwarded to the Chief Judge, for distribution to the other judges, along with the decision.

5. Terms of CJA Panel Members

To establish staggered CJA membership terms, the current CJA Panel will be divided into three groups, equal in number. Initially, members will be assigned to one of the three groups on a random basis. Members of the first group will continue to serve on the CJA Panel for a term of one year, members of the second group will continue to serve on the CJA Panel for a term of two years, and members of the third group will continue to serve on the CJA Panel for a term of three years. Thereafter, attorneys admitted to membership on the CJA Panel will each serve for a term of three years, subject to the reappointment procedures set forth in this plan.

6. Reappointment of CJA Panel Members

- a. The federal public defender will notify CJA panel members, prior to the expiration of their current term, of the need to apply for reappointment to the CJA Panel.
- b. A member of the CJA Panel who wishes to be considered for reappointment must apply for appointment to an additional term at least three months prior to the expiration of his or her current term.
- c. The CJA Committee will solicit input concerning the quality of representation provided by lawyers seeking reappointment.
- d. The CJA Committee also will consider how many cases the CJA panel member has accepted and declined during the review period,

whether the member has participated in training opportunities, whether the member has been the subject of any complaints, and whether the member continues to meet the prerequisites and obligations of CJA panel members as set forth in this Plan.

7. Removal from the CJA Panel

a. Mandatory removal

Any member of the CJA Panel who is suspended or disbarred from the practice of law by the state court before whom such member is admitted, or who is suspended or disbarred from this court or any federal court, will be removed from the CJA Panel immediately. CJA Panel members are required to self-report any suspension or disbarment to the CJA Committee.

b. CJA Panel members must accept at least one appointment per calendar year or be subject to removal from the CJA Panel.

c. Disciplinary review

The CJA Committee will, in its discretion, conduct a disciplinary review of any CJA Panel member against whom any licensing authority, grievance committee, or administrative body has taken action, or when a finding of probable cause, contempt, , or reprimand has been issued against the panel member by any state or federal court. CJA Panel members are required to self-report any action taken against the member by a licensing authority, grievance committee, administrative body, or any state or federal court. The CJA Committee may issue a complaint following the review.

d. Complaints

(i) Initiation

A complaint against a panel member may be initiated by the CJA Committee, a judge, another panel member, a defendant, or a member of the federal public defender office. A complaint need not follow any particular form, but it must be in writing and state the alleged deficiency with specificity. Any complaint should be directed to the CJA Committee, which will determine whether further investigation is necessary.

(ii) Notice

When conducting an investigation, the CJA Committee will notify the panel member of the specific allegations.

(iii) Response

A panel member subject to investigation may respond in writing and appear, if so directed, before the CJA Committee or its subcommittee.

(iv) Protective action

Prior to disposition of any complaint, the CJA Committee may temporarily suspend or remove the panel member from the panel and may take other protective actions that are in the interest of the client or the administration of this Plan. The Chief Judge will be notified of any action taken.

- (v) **Review and recommendation**
The Court delegates to the CJA Committee the duty to investigate complaints. After investigation, the CJA Committee may dismiss the complaint or require appropriate remedial action, including removing the attorney from the panel, limiting the attorney's participation to particular types or categories of cases, directing the attorney to complete specific CLE requirements before receiving further panel appointments, limiting the attorney's participation to handling cases that are directly supervised or overseen by another panel member or other experienced practitioner, or any other appropriate remedial action.
- (vi) **The CJA Committee's decision is final**
The CJA Committee will enter a final decision on any complaint.
- (vii) **Confidentiality**
Unless otherwise directed by the court, any information acquired concerning any possible disciplinary action, including any complaint and any related proceeding, will be confidential.
- (viii) **None of these procedures create a property interest in being on or remaining on the CJA Panel.**

e. **Notification**

The federal public defender will be immediately notified when any member of the CJA Panel is removed or suspended.

D. **CJA Training Panel**

The CJA Committee will establish a training panel consisting of attorneys who do not have the experience required for membership on the CJA Panel. The CJA Resource attorney will administer the training panel. Training panel members may be assigned by the federal public defender to assist CJA Panel attorneys or staff attorneys in a "second chair" capacity. Training panel members, depending on prior experience, may be required to complete classroom training prior to being assigned to an attorney in the "second chair" capacity; the federal public defender will determine the number and content of the required classes. Training panel members are not eligible to receive appointments independently and shall not be eligible to receive compensation for their services in assisting CJA Panel members. Prior service on the training panel is not a requirement for membership on the CJA Panel nor will service on the training panel guarantee selection of an attorney to the CJA Panel.

X. CJA Panel Attorney Appointment in Non-Capital Cases

A. Appointment List

The federal public defender will maintain a current list of all attorneys included on the CJA Panel with current office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers, as well as a statement of qualifications and experience.

B. Appointment Procedures

1. The federal public defender is responsible for overseeing the appointment of cases to panel attorneys. The federal public defender will maintain a record of panel attorney appointments and, when appropriate, data reflecting the apportionment of appointments between attorneys from the federal public defender office and panel attorneys.
2. Appointment of cases to CJA Panel members should be made on a rotational basis. In a complex or otherwise difficult case, the federal public defender may appoint counsel outside of the normal rotation to ensure the defendant has sufficiently experienced counsel. The federal public defender and the CJA Resource attorney are permitted to exercise discretion and not appoint an attorney to a case if the appointment would create a hardship on the panel attorney or if the appointment requires special skills not held by the panel attorney who would receive the appointment in the rotation.
3. In appropriate circumstances in the judgment of the court, the court can appoint an attorney for an eligible client outside the standard appointment procedures and outside the standard rotation of assignment of cases to panel attorneys.
4. Under special circumstances the court, in consultation with the CJA Resource attorney, may appoint a member of the bar of the court who is not a member of the CJA Panel. Such special circumstances may include cases in which the court determines that the appointment of a particular attorney is in the interests of justice, judicial economy, or continuity of representation, or for any other compelling reason. It is not anticipated that special circumstances will arise often, and the procedures set forth in the Plan are presumed to be sufficient in the vast majority of cases in which counsel are to be appointed. Appointments made under this section will be reported to the CJA Committee.
5. Unless otherwise impracticable, CJA panel attorneys must be available to represent defendants at the same stage of the proceedings as is the federal public defender.

XI. Duties of CJA Panel Members

A. Standards and Professional Conduct

1. CJA panel members must provide high quality representation consistent with the best practices of the legal profession and commensurate with those services rendered when counsel is privately retained. See *Polk County v. Dodson*, 454 U.S. 312, 318 (1981) (“Once a lawyer has undertaken the representation of an accused, the duties and obligations are the same whether the lawyer is privately retained, appointed, or serving in a legal aid or defender program.” (quoting ABA Standards for Criminal Justice section 4-3.9 (2d ed. 1980))).
2. Attorneys appointed under the CJA must conform to the highest standards of professional conduct, including but not limited to the Oklahoma Bar Association’s Rules of Professional Conduct and this Court’s Local Criminal Rule 44 governing conduct of attorneys.
3. CJA panel members must notify within 30 days the chair of the CJA Committee when any licensing authority, grievance committee, or administrative body has taken action against them, or when a finding of contempt, or reprimand has been issued against the panel member by any state or federal court.

B. Training and Continuing Legal Education

1. Attorneys on the CJA Panel are expected to remain current with developments in federal criminal defense law, practice, and procedure, including the Recommendation for Electronically Stored Information (ESI) Discovery Production in Federal Criminal Cases.
2. Attorneys on the CJA Panel are expected to attend trainings sponsored by the federal public defender. CJA panel members must attend six continuing legal education hours relevant to federal criminal practice annually, at least four of which must be earned through attendance at CLE sponsored by the Federal Public Defender’s office.
3. Attorneys on the CJA Panel will be guided in their practice by the Federal Adaptation of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association Performance Guidelines for Criminal Defense Representations.
4. Failure to comply with these training and legal education requirements may be grounds for removal from the CJA Panel.

C. Facilities and Technology Requirements

1. CJA panel attorneys must have facilities, resources, and technological capability to effectively and efficiently manage assigned cases.
2. CJA panel attorneys must comply with the requirements of electronic filing and eVoucher.

3. CJA panel attorneys must know and abide by procedures related to requests for investigative, expert, and other services.

D. Continuing Representation

Once counsel is appointed under the CJA, counsel will continue the representation until the matter, including appeals (unless provided otherwise by the Tenth Circuit's CJA plan) or review by certiorari, is closed; or until substitute counsel has filed a notice of appearance; or until an order is entered allowing or requiring the person represented to proceed pro se; or until the appointment is terminated by court order.

E. Miscellaneous

1. Case budgeting

In non-capital representations of unusual complexity that are likely to become extraordinary in terms of cost, the court may require development of a case budget consistent with *Guide*, Vol. 7A, Ch. 2, §§ 230.26.10–20.

2. No receipt of other payment

Appointed counsel may not require, request, or accept any payment or promise of payment or any other valuable consideration for representation under the CJA, unless such payment is approved by order of the court.

3. Redetermination of need

If at any time after appointment, counsel has reason to believe that a party is financially able to obtain counsel, or make partial payment for counsel, and the source of counsel's information is not protected as a privileged communication, counsel will advise the court.

XII. Compensation of CJA Panel Attorneys

A. Policy of the Court Regarding Compensation

Providing fair compensation to appointed counsel is a critical component of the administration of justice. CJA panel attorneys must be compensated for time expended in court and time reasonably expended out of court, and reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred.

B. Payment Procedures

1. Claims for compensation must be submitted on the appropriate CJA form through the court's eVoucher system.
2. Claims for compensation should be submitted no later than 45 days after final disposition of the case, unless good cause is shown.
3. The federal public defender or their designee will review the claim for mathematical and technical accuracy and for conformity with *Guide*,

Vol. 7A and, if correct, will forward the claim for consideration and action by the presiding judge.

4. Payment in excess of the maximum amount provided by 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(d) may be made for extended or complex representation whenever the presiding judge for the case certifies that the amount of the excess payment is necessary to provide fair compensation and the payment is approved by the presiding judge and the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals.
5. Absent extraordinary circumstances, the court should act on CJA compensation claims within 30 days of submission, and vouchers should not be delayed or reduced for the purpose of diminishing Defender Services program costs in response to adverse financial circumstances.
6. Except in cases involving mathematical corrections, no claim for compensation submitted for services provided under the CJA will be reduced without first following the procedure set forth in paragraph VIII.B.5.

XIII. Investigative, Expert, and Other Services

A. Financial Eligibility

Counsel for a person who is financially unable to obtain investigative, expert, or other services necessary for an adequate defense may request such services in an *ex parte* application to the court as provided in 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(e)(1), regardless of whether counsel is appointed under the CJA. Upon finding that the services are necessary, and that the person is financially unable to obtain them, the court must authorize counsel to obtain the services.

B. Authorization without a Prior Request

CJA counsel may obtain, subject to later review, investigative, expert, or other services without prior authorization, if necessary for adequate representation. The total cost for services obtained without prior authorization may not exceed the amounts prescribed by 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(e). The statutory limit may be waived, however, if the presiding judge or magistrate judge (if the services were rendered in a case disposed of entirely before the magistrate judge) in the interest of justice finds that timely procurement of necessary services could not await prior authorization. Counsel may request ratification for investigative, expert, or other services within the statutory limit by submitting an application in accordance with Section XIII.C., below.

C. Applications

Requests for authorization of funds for investigative, expert, and other services must be submitted in an *ex parte* application to the court (using the court's eVoucher system) and must not be disclosed except with the consent of the person represented or as required by law or Judicial Conference policy.

D. Compliance

Counsel must comply with Judicial Conference policies set forth in *Guide*, Vol. 7A, Ch. 3.

XIV. Application of Guidelines

Appointment of counsel under the Criminal Justice Act will be governed generally by the Guidelines for Administering the CJA and related statutes. *See* Volume 7, Guide to Judiciary Policy, Appointment and Payment of Counsel, Part A. Online at: <http://www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts/AppointmentOfCounsel/CJAGuidelinesForms.aspx>.

XV. Appointment of Counsel and Case Management in CJA Capital Cases

A. Applicable Legal Authority

The appointment and compensation of counsel in capital cases and the authorization and payment of persons providing investigative, expert, and other services are governed by 18 U.S.C. §§ 3005, 3006A, and 3599, and *Guide*, Vol. 7A, Ch. 6.

B. General Applicability and Appointment of Counsel Requirements

1. Unless otherwise specified, the provisions set forth in this section apply to all capital proceedings in the federal courts, whether those matters originated in a district court (federal capital trials) or in a state court (habeas proceedings under 28 U.S.C. § 2254). Such matters include those in which the death penalty may be or is being sought by the prosecution, motions for a new trial, direct appeal, applications for a writ of certiorari to the Supreme Court of the United States, all post-conviction proceedings under 28 U.S.C. §§ 2254 or 2255 seeking to vacate or set aside a death sentence, applications for stays of execution, competency proceedings, proceedings for executive or other clemency, and other appropriate motions and proceedings.
2. Any person charged with a crime that may be punishable by death who is or becomes financially unable to obtain representation is entitled to the assistance of appointed counsel throughout every stage of available judicial proceedings, including pretrial proceedings, trial, sentencing, motions for new trial, appeals, applications for writ of certiorari to the Supreme Court of the United States, and all available post-conviction processes, together with applications for stays of execution and other appropriate motions and procedures, competency proceedings, and proceedings for executive or other clemency as may be available to the defendant. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3599(e).
3. Qualified counsel must be appointed in capital cases at the earliest possible opportunity.

4. Given the complex and demanding nature of capital cases, where appropriate, the court will utilize the expert services available through the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO), Defender Services Death Penalty Resource Counsel projects (“Resource Counsel projects”) which include: (1) Federal Death Penalty Resource Counsel and Capital Resource Counsel Projects (for federal capital trials), (2) Federal Capital Appellate Resource Counsel Project, (3) Federal Capital Habeas § 2255 Project, and (4) National and Regional Habeas Assistance and Training Counsel Projects (§ 2254). These counsel are death penalty experts who may be relied upon by the court for assistance with selection and appointment of counsel, case budgeting, and legal, practical, and other matters arising in federal capital cases.
5. The federal public defender should promptly notify and consult with the appropriate Resource Counsel projects about potential and actual federal capital trial, appellate, and habeas corpus cases, and consider their recommendations for appointment of counsel.
6. The presiding judge may appoint an attorney furnished by a state or local public defender organization or legal aid agency or other private, non-profit organization to represent a person charged with a capital crime or seeking federal death penalty habeas corpus relief provided that the attorney is fully qualified. Such appointments may be in place of, or in addition to, the appointment of a federal defender organization or a CJA panel attorney or an attorney appointed *pro hac vice*. See 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(a)(3).
7. All attorneys appointed in federal capital cases must be well qualified, by virtue of their training, commitment, and distinguished prior capital defense experience at the relevant stage of the proceeding, to serve as counsel in this highly specialized and demanding litigation.
8. All attorneys appointed in federal capital cases must have sufficient time and resources to devote to the representation, taking into account their current caseloads and the extraordinary demands of federal capital cases.
9. All attorneys appointed in federal capital cases should comply with the American Bar Association’s 2003 Guidelines for the Appointment and Performance of Defense Counsel in Death Penalty Cases (Guidelines 1.1 and 10.2 et seq.), and the 2008 Supplementary Guidelines for the Mitigation Function of Defense Teams in Death Penalty Cases.
10. All attorneys appointed in federal capital cases should consult regularly with the appropriate Resource Counsel projects.
11. Questions about the appointment and compensation of counsel and the authorization and payment of investigative, expert, and other service providers in federal capital cases should be directed to the AO Defender

Services Office, Legal and Policy Division Duty Attorney at 202-502-3030 or via email at ods_lpb@ao.uscourts.gov.

C. Appointment of Trial Counsel in Federal Death-Eligible Cases

1. General Requirements

- a. Appointment of qualified capital trial counsel must occur no later than when a defendant is charged with a federal criminal offense where the penalty of death is possible. See 18 U.S.C. § 3005.
- b. To protect the rights of an individual who, although uncharged, is the subject of an investigation in a federal death-eligible case, the court may appoint capitally-qualified counsel upon request, consistent with Sections C.1, 2, and 3 of these provisions.
- c. At the outset of every capital case, the court must appoint two attorneys, at least one of whom meets the qualifications for “learned counsel” as described below. If necessary for adequate representation, more than two attorneys may be appointed to represent a defendant in a capital case. See 18 U.S.C. § 3005.
- d. When appointing counsel, the judge must consider the recommendation of the federal public defender, who will consult with Federal Death Penalty Resource Counsel to recommend qualified counsel. See 18 U.S.C. § 3005.
- e. To effectuate the intent of 18 U.S.C. § 3005 that the federal public defender’s recommendation be provided to the court, the judge should ensure the federal public defender has been notified of the need to appoint capitally-qualified counsel.
- f. Reliance on a list for appointment of capital counsel is not recommended because selection of trial counsel should account for the particular needs of the case and the defendant and be based on individualized recommendations from the federal public defender in conjunction with the Federal Death Penalty Resource Counsel and Capital Resource Counsel projects.
- g. Out-of-district counsel, including federal defender organization staff, who possess the requisite expertise may be considered for appointment in capital trials to achieve high quality representation together with cost and other efficiencies.
- h. In evaluating the qualifications of proposed trial counsel, consideration should be given to their commitment to the defense of capital cases, their current caseload including other capital cases, and their willingness to effectively represent the interests of the client.

2. Qualifications of Learned Counsel

- a. Learned counsel must either be a member of this district's bar or be eligible for admission *pro hac vice* based on his or her qualifications. Appointment of counsel from outside the jurisdiction is common in federal capital cases to achieve cost and other efficiencies together with high quality representation.
- b. Learned counsel must meet the minimum experience standards set forth in 18 U.S.C. §§ 3005 and 3599.
- c. Learned counsel should have distinguished prior experience in the trial, appeal, or post-conviction review of federal death penalty cases, or distinguished prior experience in state death penalty trials, appeals, or post-conviction review that, in combination with co-counsel, will assure high quality representation.
- d. "Distinguished prior experience" contemplates excellence, not simply prior experience. Counsel with distinguished prior experience should be appointed even if meeting this standard requires appointing counsel from outside the district where the matter arises.
- e. The suitability of learned counsel should be assessed with respect to the particular demands of the case, the stage of the litigation, and the defendant.
- f. Learned counsel must be willing and able to adjust other caseload demands to accommodate the extraordinary time required by the capital representation.
- g. Learned counsel should satisfy the qualification standards endorsed by bar associations and other legal organizations regarding the quality of representation in capital cases.

3. Qualifications of Second and Additional Counsel

- a. Second and additional counsel may, but are not required to, satisfy the qualifications for learned counsel, as set forth above.
- b. Second and additional counsel must be well qualified, by virtue of their distinguished prior criminal defense experience, training and commitment, to serve as counsel in this highly specialized and demanding litigation.
- c. Second and additional counsel must be willing and able to adjust other caseload demands to accommodate the extraordinary time required by the capital representation.
- d. The suitability of second and additional counsel should be assessed with respect to the demands of the individual case, the stage of the litigation, and the defendant.

D. Appointment and Qualifications of Direct Appeal Counsel in Federal Death Penalty Cases

1. When appointing appellate counsel, the judge must consider the recommendation of the federal public defender, who will consult with Federal Capital Appellate Resource Counsel to recommend qualified counsel.
2. Counsel appointed to represent a death-sentenced federal appellant should include at least one attorney who did not represent the appellant at trial.
3. Each trial counsel who withdraws should be replaced with similarly qualified counsel to represent the defendant on appeal.
4. Out-of-district counsel, including federal defender organization staff, who possess the requisite expertise may be considered for appointment in capital appeals to achieve high quality representation together with cost and other efficiencies.
5. Appellate counsel, between them, should have distinguished prior experience in federal criminal appeals and capital appeals.
6. At least one of the attorneys appointed as appellate counsel must have the requisite background, knowledge, and experience required by 18 U.S.C. § 3599(c) or (d).
7. In evaluating the qualifications of proposed appellate counsel, consideration should be given to the qualification standards endorsed by bar associations and other legal organizations regarding the quality of legal representation in capital cases.
8. In evaluating the qualifications of proposed appellate counsel, consideration should be given to their commitment to the defense of capital cases, their current caseload including other capital cases, and their willingness to effectively represent the interests of the client.

E. Appointment and Qualifications of Post-Conviction Counsel in Federal Death Penalty Cases (28 U.S.C. § 2255)

1. A financially eligible person seeking to vacate or set aside a death sentence in proceedings under 28 U.S.C. § 2255 is entitled to appointment of fully qualified counsel. See 18 U.S.C. § 3599(a)(2).
2. Due to the complex, demanding, and protracted nature of death penalty proceedings, the court should consider appointing at least two attorneys.
3. In light of the accelerated timeline applicable to capital § 2255 proceedings, prompt appointment of counsel is essential. Wherever possible, appointment should take place prior to the denial of certiorari on direct appeal by the United States Supreme Court.

4. When appointing counsel in a capital § 2255 matter, the court should consider the recommendation of the federal public defender, who will consult with the Federal Capital Habeas § 2255 Project.
5. Out-of-district counsel, including federal defender organization staff, who possess the requisite expertise may be considered for appointment in capital § 2255 cases to achieve high quality representation together with cost and other efficiencies.
6. Counsel in § 2255 cases should have distinguished prior experience in the area of federal post-conviction proceedings and in capital post-conviction proceedings.
7. When possible, post-conviction counsel should have distinguished prior experience in capital § 2255 representations.
8. In evaluating the qualifications of proposed post-conviction counsel, consideration should be given to the qualification standards endorsed by bar associations and other legal organizations regarding the quality of legal representation in capital cases.
9. In evaluating the qualifications of proposed post-conviction § 2255 counsel, consideration should be given to their commitment to the defense of capital cases, their current caseload including other capital cases, and their willingness to effectively represent the interests of the client.

F. Appointment and Qualifications of Counsel in Federal Capital Habeas Corpus Proceedings (28 U.S.C. § 2254)

1. A financially eligible person seeking to vacate or set aside a death sentence in proceedings under 28 U.S.C. § 2254 is entitled to the appointment of qualified counsel. See 18 U.S.C. § 3599(a)(2).
2. Due to the complex, demanding, and protracted nature of death penalty proceedings, the court should consider appointing at least two attorneys.
3. When appointing counsel in a capital § 2254 matter, the appointing authority should consider the recommendation of the federal public defender who will consult with the National or Regional Habeas Assistance and Training Counsel projects.
4. Out-of-district counsel, including federal defender organization staff, who possess the requisite expertise may be considered for appointment in capital § 2254 cases to achieve cost and other efficiencies together with high quality representation.
5. In order for federal counsel to avail themselves of the full statute of limitations period to prepare a petition, the court should appoint counsel and provide appropriate litigation resources at the earliest possible time permissible by law.

6. Unless precluded by a conflict of interest, or replaced by similarly qualified counsel upon motion by the attorney or motion by the defendant, capital § 2254 counsel must represent the defendant throughout every subsequent stage of available judicial proceedings and all available post-conviction processes, together with applications for stays of execution and other appropriate motions and procedures, and must also represent the defendant in such competency proceedings and proceedings for executive or other clemency as may be available to the defendant. See 18 U.S.C. § 3599(e).
7. Counsel in capital § 2254 cases should have distinguished prior experience in the area of federal post-conviction proceedings and in capital post-conviction proceedings.
8. When possible, capital § 2254 counsel should have distinguished prior experience in capital § 2254 representations.
9. In evaluating the qualifications of proposed capital § 2254 counsel, consideration should be given to the qualification standards endorsed by bar associations and other legal organizations regarding the quality of legal representation in capital cases.
10. In evaluating the qualifications of proposed capital § 2254 counsel, consideration should be given to proposed counsel's commitment to the defense of capital cases, their current caseload including other capital cases, and their willingness to represent effectively the interests of the client.

XVI. Effective Date

This Plan will become effective when approved by the Judicial Council of the Tenth Circuit.

**MINUTES OF THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF THE TENTH CIRCUIT**

June 11, 2021

The Judicial Council approved the Northern District of Oklahoma's amendments to its CJA Plan, effectively splitting the Federal Public Defender office that had, up until this point, served both Northern and Eastern Oklahoma. As amended, each district will now maintain its own Federal Public Defender office. The Northern District of Oklahoma may choose the effective date of its new CJA Plan, and shall notify the Administrative Office of the United States Courts of the modifications to the plan in accordance with 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(a)(3).

The Judicial Council

By:



David Tighe
Circuit Executive and Secretary to the
Judicial Council of the Tenth Circuit