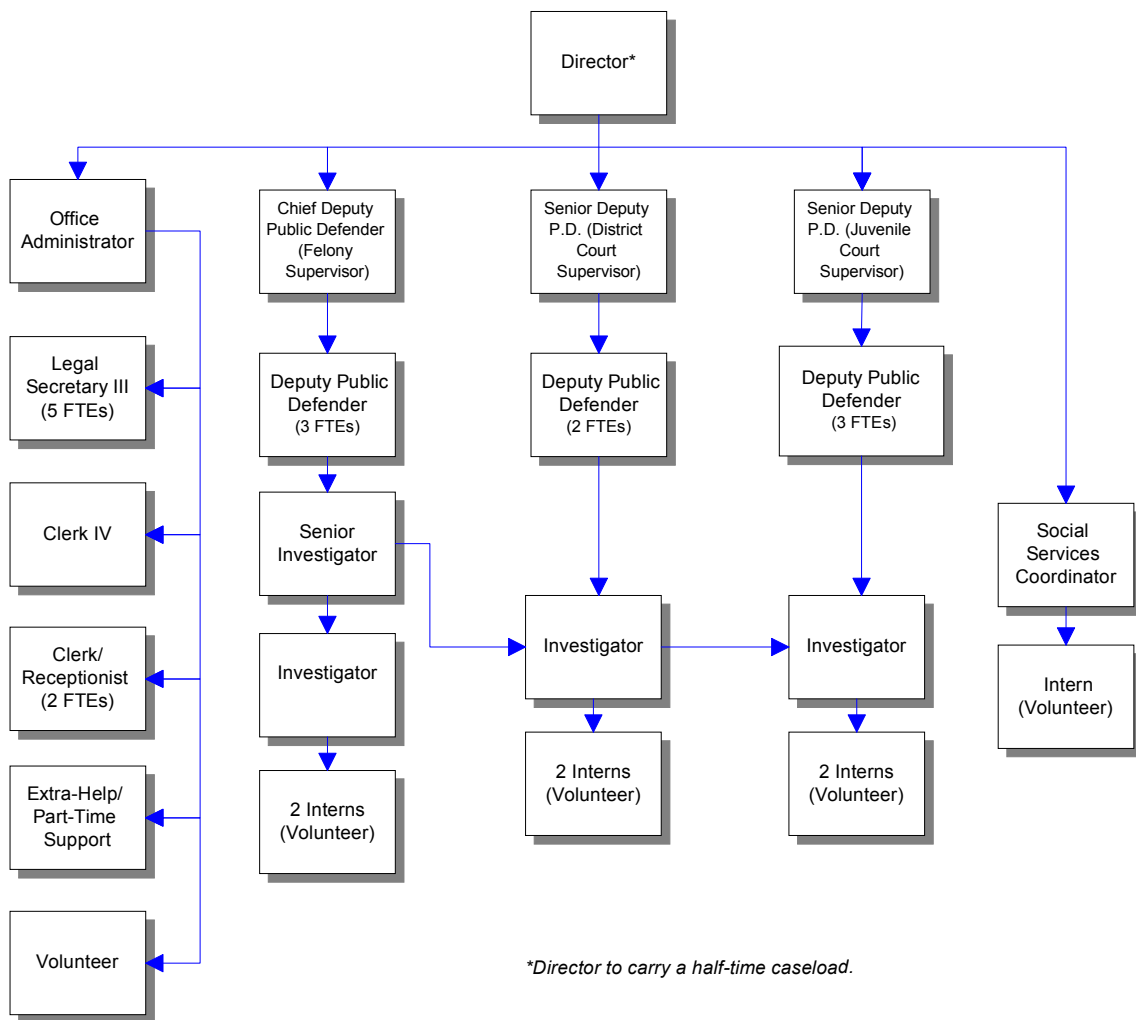


# Public Defender's Office



## Mission & Objectives

### Mission

The Public Defender's Office was created in 1982 by county ordinance pursuant to RCW 36.26 and mandated to provide legal representation for those who cannot afford an attorney and who are entitled to legal defense at public expense pursuant to the constitutions of the United States and the State of Washington, or pursuant to statute. The overall mission of the department is to provide high quality legal representation as efficiently and economically as possible, while maintaining the confidence of clients that they are receiving competent and skilled representation.

### Objectives

- Work toward reducing caseloads to national and state standards. Our attorneys presently carry caseloads 33% above national standards for felonies and 67% above national standards for juvenile and misdemeanor cases. These high caseloads require the director to also carry a full time felony caseload in order for the department to manage. These figures do not include probation violations, mental health commitments, appeals, and other miscellaneous matters that the attorneys handle as well. The Whatcom County Law and Justice Plan recommends that the staffing of both the Prosecutor's Office and the Public Defender's Office be increased to the point where the caseloads meet the national and state standards.

*Goal 2B of the Whatcom County Strategic Plan also states as an objective the implementation of the appropriate Law and Justice Plan recommendations.*

- Work with the other branches of the criminal justice system to fully implement Adult Drug Court and to establish a Juvenile Drug Court in Whatcom County. In July, 1999, Whatcom County established a pilot drug court which we believe has been very successful to date. In August of 2000 the first of the Drug Court participants will be graduating. However, to make the Drug Court a success, and to achieve economies of scale, funding sources need to be found to expand the Drug Court to at least 60 or 70 members. We also hope to be able to begin a Juvenile Drug Court in the last quarter of 2000 or in the first quarter of 2001. Drug courts have generally been recognized nationwide as the most successful innovation in criminal justice in the last 10 years. They have been implemented in every state of the union.
- Develop space need projections for the Whatcom County Public Defender's Office for the next five years. The population of the county is continuing to grow. Even if crime rates continue to fall, caseloads for the Public Defender's Office will continue to grow over time, which will require additional staffing. At present we have no ability to expand or add additional staff within our existing facility. We have requested the addition of one attorney in 2001, which will create immediate space needs.

*This need to develop long-range facility needs is also recognized in Goal 1B of the Whatcom County Strategic Plan.*

## Objectives continued

- Continue to work with Information Services and other branches of the criminal justice system to implement the MIS/Data Integration System. The implementation of this plan is imperative to alleviate multiple duplication of data input among all of the criminal justice system departments and is long overdue.

*Implementation of this goal is specifically set forth in Goal 2B of the Whatcom County Strategic Plan.*

- Implement a case weighting system for internal case management and performance evaluation. Since the office was established in 1982 we have measured performance and caseloads by the most simple method, that is, counting of actual cases and actual number of cases assigned to each attorney. However not all cases are equal. In order to more effectively measure the work load and work performance of each attorney, as well as the actual work load at the office, we would like to try to implement a case weighting system. The National Legal Aid and Defender Association has encouraged defender offices across the country to implement this system. However, implementation and effective use of the system does require more work on the part of the attorneys and requires record keeping of actual time spent on cases. For this reason we have resisted implementing this system in the past.

*The implementation of this sort of system, which would more effectively measure performance, is consistent with Goal 1B of the Whatcom County Strategic Plan.*

- Reach out to the community. In 2001 we hope to meet regularly with representatives of the Nooksack and Lummi Tribes, as well as the Whatcom County hispanic community to determine how we can better serve the

members of these communities who are our clients. We also plan to determine what resources these various communities can provide to our clients to help them help themselves break the cycle of involvement with the criminal justice system. At the same time we intend to try to meet regularly with other community organizations, such as churches, service clubs, the university, and mental health and drug and alcohol services, to determine how we can better serve our clients and what resources can be made available to provide assistance to our clients in becoming productive, law-abiding citizens.

*This goal is also consistent with Goals 3A and 6A of the Whatcom County Strategic Plan. Public defender offices are also being encouraged nationally to reach beyond their traditional roles to better serve their clients.*

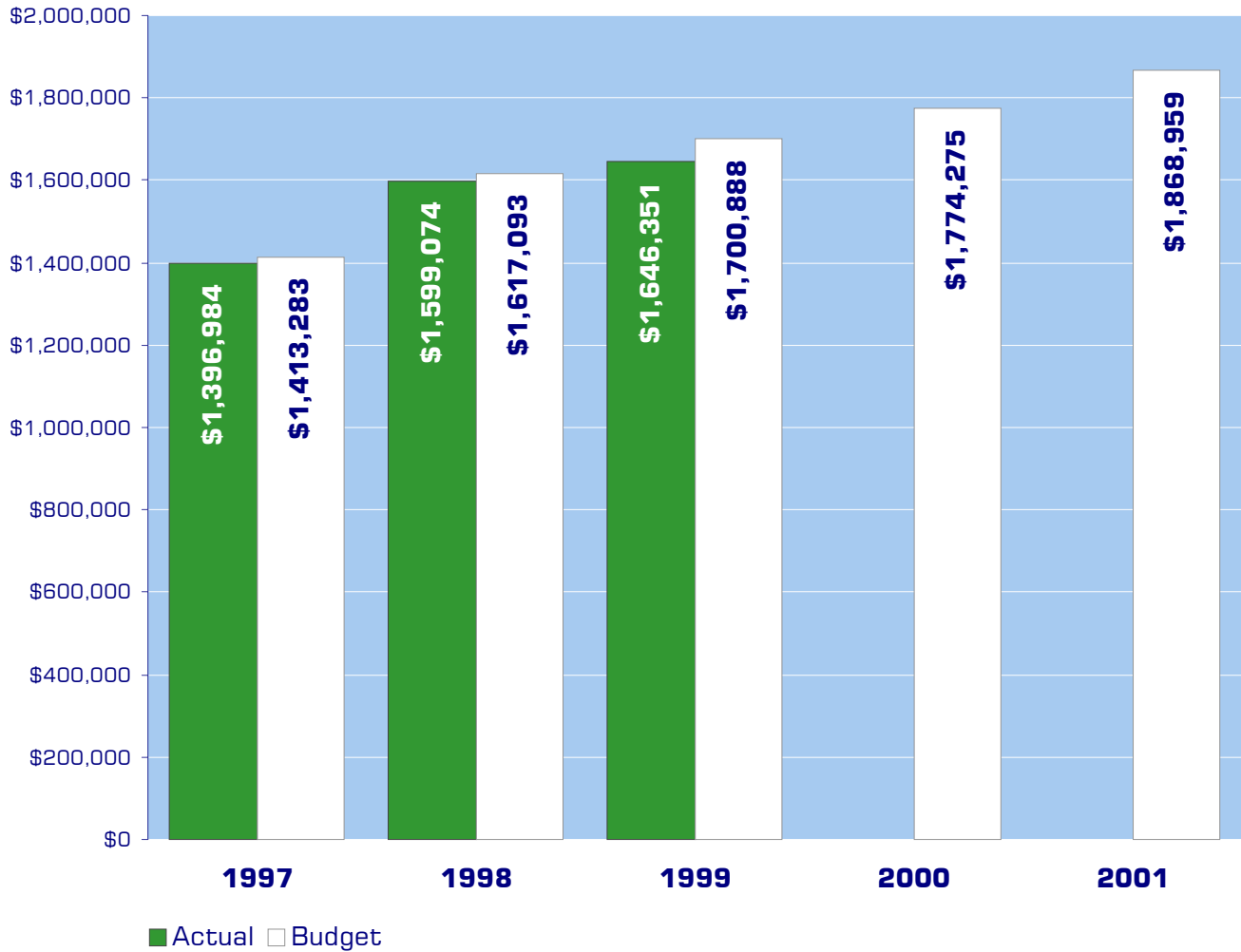
- Seek appropriate grant funds. As mentioned above, the federal government is encouraging public defender offices to reach beyond their traditional roles to better serve their clients. We believe that there are and will be federal grants available for which we may be eligible. We hope to apply for appropriate grants that will help us better serve our clients and will benefit Whatcom County as a whole.

*This goal is also consistent with Goal 4B of the Whatcom County Strategic Plan.*

- Improve and expand attorney and staff training. It is imperative that we increase and improve both out of house and in house trainings for our attorneys, investigators, and social worker in the coming year, as well as management training opportunities for our supervisors.

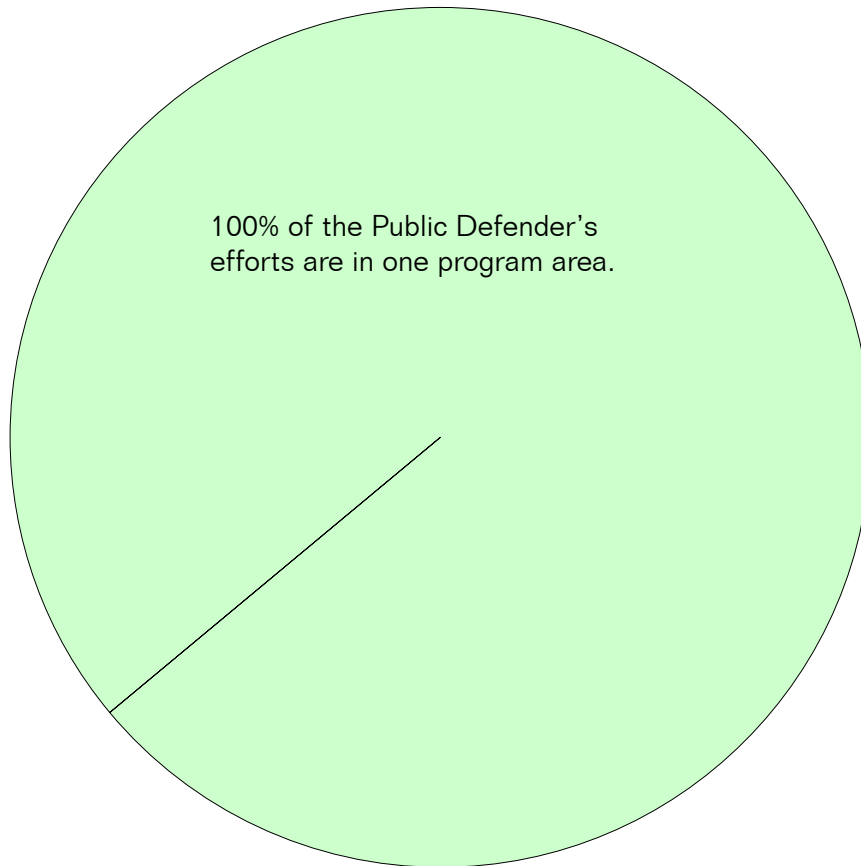
*This goal is also consistent with Goal 5B of the Whatcom County Strategic Plan and is very important for the morale of this staff. The attorney training is mandated.*

# Expenditure Trends



NOTE: Capital expenditures and interfund operating transfers are not shown to more accurately reflect ongoing operational costs.

## 2001 Budget by Program



*NOTE: Capital expenditures are not shown to more accurately reflect ongoing operational costs.*

## Program Summary

	Actual 1997	Actual 1998	Actual 1999	Budget 2000	Budget 2001	\$ Change 2000 to 2001	% Change 2000 to 2001
<b>OPERATIONS</b>							
<b>General Fund</b>							
2650 Public Defender	1,396,984	1,594,228	1,646,351	1,774,275	1,868,959	94,684	5.34%
2670 Civil Commitments	-	4,846	-	-	-	-	0.00%
<i>Total Public Defender Operations</i>	<i>1,396,984</i>	<i>1,599,074</i>	<i>1,646,351</i>	<i>1,774,275</i>	<i>1,868,959</i>	<i>94,684</i>	<i>5.34%</i>
<b>CAPITAL</b>							
<b>General Fund</b>							
2650 Public Defender	9,544	38,115	-	-	-	-	0.00%
<i>Total Public Defender Capital</i>	<i>9,544</i>	<i>38,115</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>0.00%</i>
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC DEFENDER</b>	<b>1,406,528</b>	<b>1,637,189</b>	<b>1,646,351</b>	<b>1,774,275</b>	<b>1,868,959</b>	<b>94,684</b>	<b>5.34%</b>

# 2001 Funding Sources

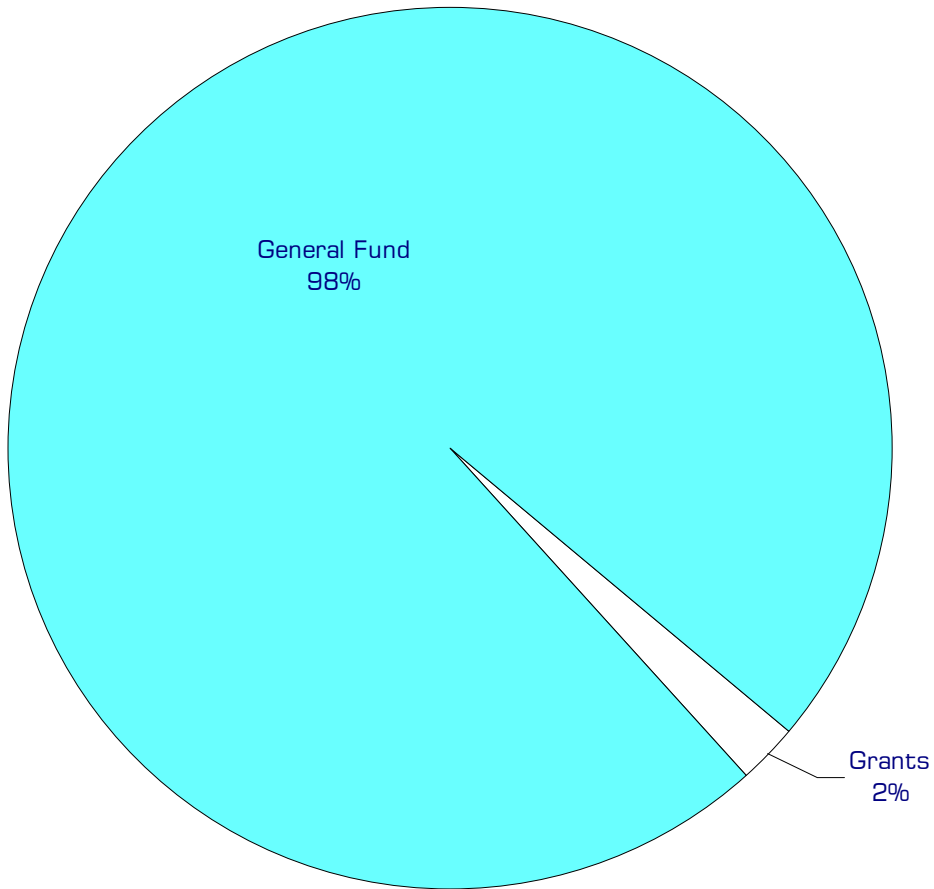
Grants	43,500
General Fund	1,825,459
<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Funding	1,868,959

**Grants**

Revenue received from the State of Washington, based on the funding model for the Becca Bill.

**General Fund**

Undesignated General Fund resources.



## Performance / Activity Measures

	Actual 1997	Actual 1998	Actual 1999	Projected 2000	Projected 2001
Felonies	965	1,128	1,123	1,120	1,120
Probation Violations (Sup/Dist Cts)	699	793	839	874	850
Misdemeanors	2,308	1,656	1,454	1,442	1,500
Juvenile (Delinquency)	1,291	1,653	1,323	1,230	1,300
Juvenile (Probation)	616	651	726	808	800
Juvenile (Dependency)	113	170	153	136	150
Mental/Alcohol Commitments	168	186	240	262	275
Appeals/Other	56	46	54	34	50
Total	6,216	6,283	5,912	5,906	6,045

# Expenditures Summary

	Actual 1997	Actual 1998	Actual 1999	Budget 2000	Budget 2001	\$ Change 2000 to 2001	% Change 2000 to 2001
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>							
2650 Public Defender							
Salaries & Wages	971,975	1,061,172	1,124,463	1,187,053	1,231,430	44,377	3.74%
Benefits	253,751	273,850	286,864	286,678	312,056	25,378	8.85%
Supplies	25,276	30,385	24,239	27,810	32,960	5,150	18.52%
Other Services & Charges	145,982	228,821	210,785	272,734	292,513	19,779	7.25%
Capital Outlay	9,544	38,115	-	-	-	-	0.00%
<i>Total Public Defender</i>	<u>1,406,528</u>	<u>1,632,343</u>	<u>1,646,351</u>	<u>1,774,275</u>	<u>1,868,959</u>	<u>94,684</u>	<u>5.34%</u>
2670 PD - Civil Commitment							
Other Services & Charges	-	4,846	-	-	-	-	0.00%
<i>Total Civil Commitments</i>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,846</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>0.00%</u>
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC DEFENDER</b>	<u>1,406,528</u>	<u>1,637,189</u>	<u>1,646,351</u>	<u>1,774,275</u>	<u>1,868,959</u>	<u>94,684</u>	<u>5.34%</u>

