



## State Appellate Defender Office

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## Request for Proposals – State Appellate Defender Office Jail Release Project

**Anticipated contract start date: November 1, 2020**

**Anticipated contract end date: September 30, 2021**

**Deadline for submitting proposals: October 21, 2020**

### SUMMARY

Our clients face grave risks to their health and safety from the coronavirus in Michigan's county jails. Individuals in jail awaiting trial have counsel who can file bond modification motions advocating for their release. However, in Michigan, the work of the Joint Task Force on Jail and Pre-Trial Incarceration has shown that half of the people incarcerated in county jails are already serving sentences. With few exceptions, this group of people lack access to lawyers to file early release motions and advocate for their release.

Over the course of the pandemic, SADO has provided advocacy for this neglected group in Macomb, Wayne, and Oakland Counties. Each county has appointed SADO for purposes of emergency COVID-19 motions, and SADO has coordinated volunteer staff and private attorneys for this advocacy. In Macomb County, SADO attorneys and volunteers filed 86 early release motions and only nine were denied by the court. In Oakland and Wayne several more clients were released as a result of our advocacy.

This work represents just three of Michigan's counties and the same dynamics of incarcerated individuals serving sentences apply in dozens of other jails. SADO has received special COVID-19 grant funding to continue this project through September 30, 2021.

**SADO now seeks contracts with three attorneys for up to 400 hours per contract at \$100 per hour, to continue this work in Michigan's jails through September 30, 2021.**

Following a training and orientation by SADO, contractors will communicate with criminal justice stakeholders in different counties to set up a process for appointment and advocacy for clients incarcerated in the jail and serving sentences to SADO. The contractors will then advocate for the release of these clients.

Independent contractors will receive no equipment, materials, or supplies. Each contractor is presumed to have the items necessary for performance. Mileage and travel expenses are the responsibility of the contractor. Independent contractors will receive sample pleadings used in prior jail projects and will receive online access to the resources located at [www.SADO.org](http://www.SADO.org).

## **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Include the following.

- Work with SADO and criminal justice stakeholders in different counties to set up a process for identifying clients, securing appointments, and advocating for individuals serving jail sentences.
- Advocate for early release of clients serving jail sentences through post-judgment motions, quarter reduction motions, motions to modify probation, and early release motions focused on the circumstances of the global pandemic.
- Communicate with clients to assist with jail release advocacy and to review any risk. Communication may be conducted remotely when feasible.
- Advocate in multiple circuit and district courts for clients. This advocacy may be done remotely, but could be in person if the court requires it and if court procedures provide for sufficient social distancing and other COVID-19 safety measures.
- Recruit and train volunteers from the criminal defense bar and local county bar associations to assist with this advocacy.
- Work with the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice at the Wayne State University School of Social Work, so that their jail diversion in 21 counties may help with reentry for clients to be released from jail.

### **Experience**

Contractors should be active and in good standing with the State Bar of Michigan. Candidates should have experience representing indigent individuals. Preferred candidates will have some experience in post-conviction motions for sentencing reductions or early release from jail.

### **Proposal should include:**

- A detailed description of the contractor's motivation and ability to accomplish this work.
- A statement describing relevant experience work and confirming good standing with the State Bar of Michigan.
- A statement describing a process for working with local stakeholders for appointments, advocacy, and if needed, recruitment of volunteers.
- A list of counties where the contractor would like to focus work.
- A proposed number of hours per month spent on this work. Contractors should make a commitment, not to exceed 400 hours for November 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

The proposal should be sent to: [wdealca@sado.org](mailto:wdealca@sado.org) by October 21, 2020.

People of color, women, LGBTQ people, veterans, people with disabilities, and individuals with past involvement in the justice system are strongly encouraged to apply. Felony conviction is not a bar to a contract as long as the applicant is a member of the State Bar of Michigan.