

# SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC DEFENDER



## FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

*Fighting for Public Defender Clients and their Families during COVID-19*

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# MESSAGE FROM PUBLIC DEFENDER MANO RAJU

*This has been an incredibly difficult and unprecedented year, with the COVID-19 pandemic, economic crisis, and national reckoning with racism and police brutality. Throughout this fiscal year 2020-2021, the San Francisco Public Defender's Office has done everything in its power to advocate both inside and outside the courtroom for the health, safety, and human rights of our clients, their families and communities.*

*The global pandemic not only put the lives of those incarcerated and all who work in the courts and jails at heightened risk of infection, but it completely transformed the daily operations of the criminal legal system. Our office quickly adapted as jail visits ceased, trials came to a halt, and many of our clients relied on us to help free them from the confines of jail, prison, juvenile detention and immigration detention.*

*While we have experienced pain and struggle, we have also witnessed and experienced true resilience. In this year's annual report, I am proud to share how we have worked collaboratively and innovatively to provide high quality services to our clients, their families and communities in the midst of these trying conditions, while also actively fighting for racial justice and equity in our criminal legal system and broader community.*

**Mano Raju**  
San Francisco Public Defender

# OUR MISSION

The mission of the San Francisco Public Defender's office is to protect and defend the rights of our indigent clients accused of crimes, through effective, vigorous, compassionate, and creative legal advocacy.

We aspire to provide the highest level of legal advocacy for each of our clients, and to be a nationwide model for the delivery of indigent defense services.

In addition to advocating for clients in the courtroom in criminal cases, the office also:

- Steers clients to treatment in Behavioral Health Court, Drug Court, Veterans Court, and other collaborative courts;
- Works to clear people's records so they can seek employment;
- Keeps youth out of the system through our MAGIC programs;
- Represents immigrants facing deportation in immigration court;
- Advocates for changes in laws and policies to make the criminal legal system more fair and equitable, and address racial injustice

# BUDGET AND OPERATING EXPENDITURES

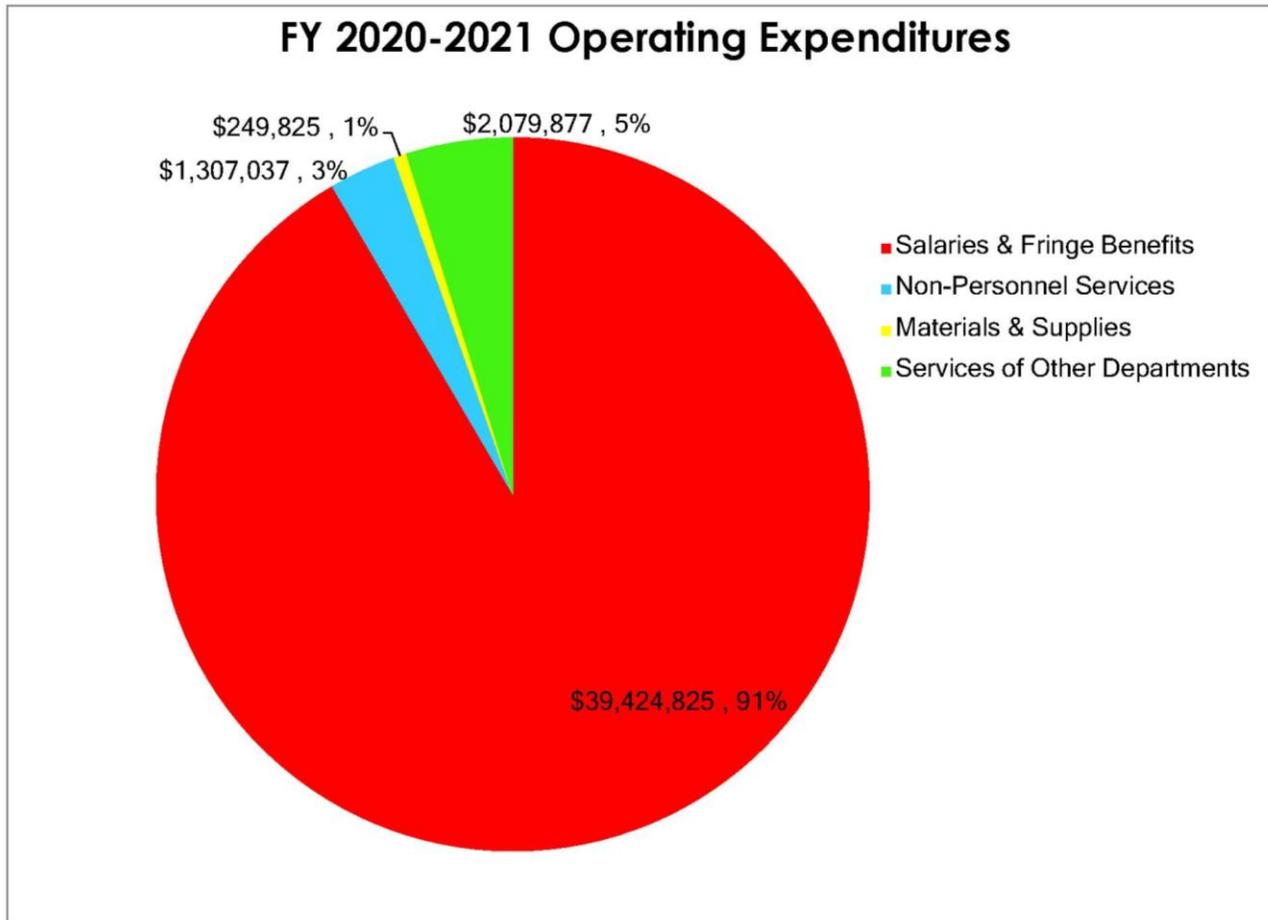
## a. Budget and Staffing

In fiscal year 2020-2021, the budget for the Public Defender's Office was \$42,256,703 with 188.44 FTEs. This represents an increase of \$983,258 from fiscal year 2019-2020, which was \$41,273,445 with 189 FTEs. In 2018-2019, the total budget was \$38,857,241 with 186 FTEs.

<b>Public Defender Budget and FTE Summary (FY2018 – FY2021)</b>		
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>FTE</b>
<b>FY2018-19</b>	<b>38,857,241</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>FY2019-20</b>	<b>41,273,445</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>FY2020-21</b>	<b>42,256,703</b>	<b>188.44</b>

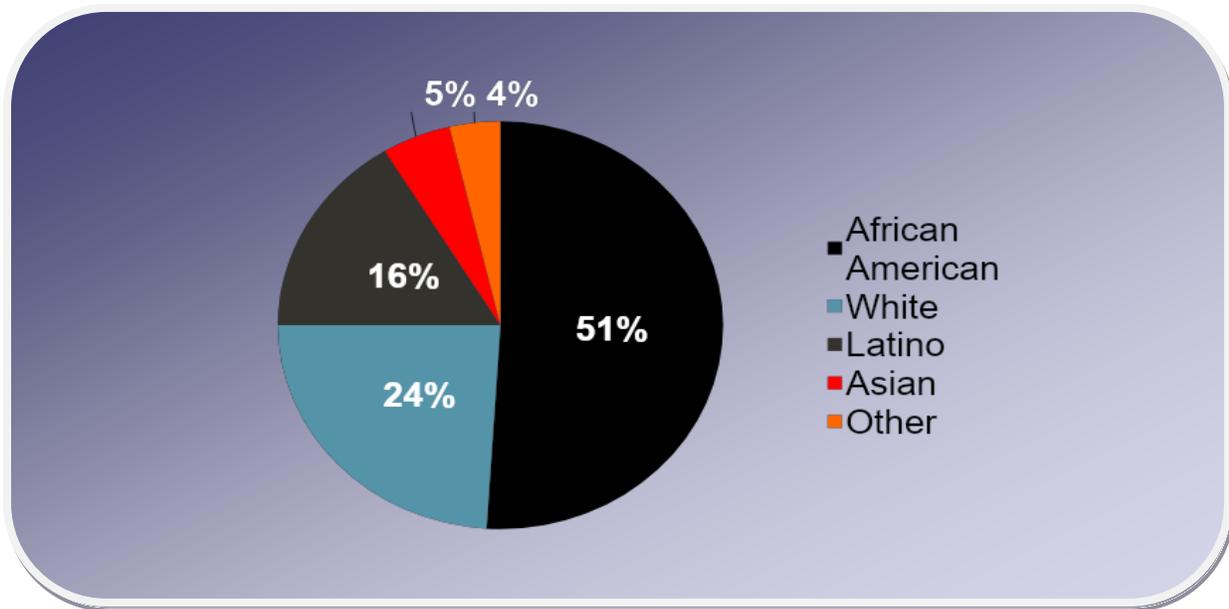
## b. Operating Expenditures

91.55% of the Public Defender's 2020-21 budget went to salaries and benefits. Services of other departments (4.83%), non-personnel services (3.04%), and materials and supplies (.58%) made up the remaining 8.45% of the budget.



# CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The Public Defender's Office serves approximately 20,000 clients per year. All our clients are low-income, over 75 percent are people of color, and over 50 percent are Black.



- 5% Undocumented
- 10% Non-English Speaking
- 15% Severely Mentally Ill
- Most Below Poverty Level

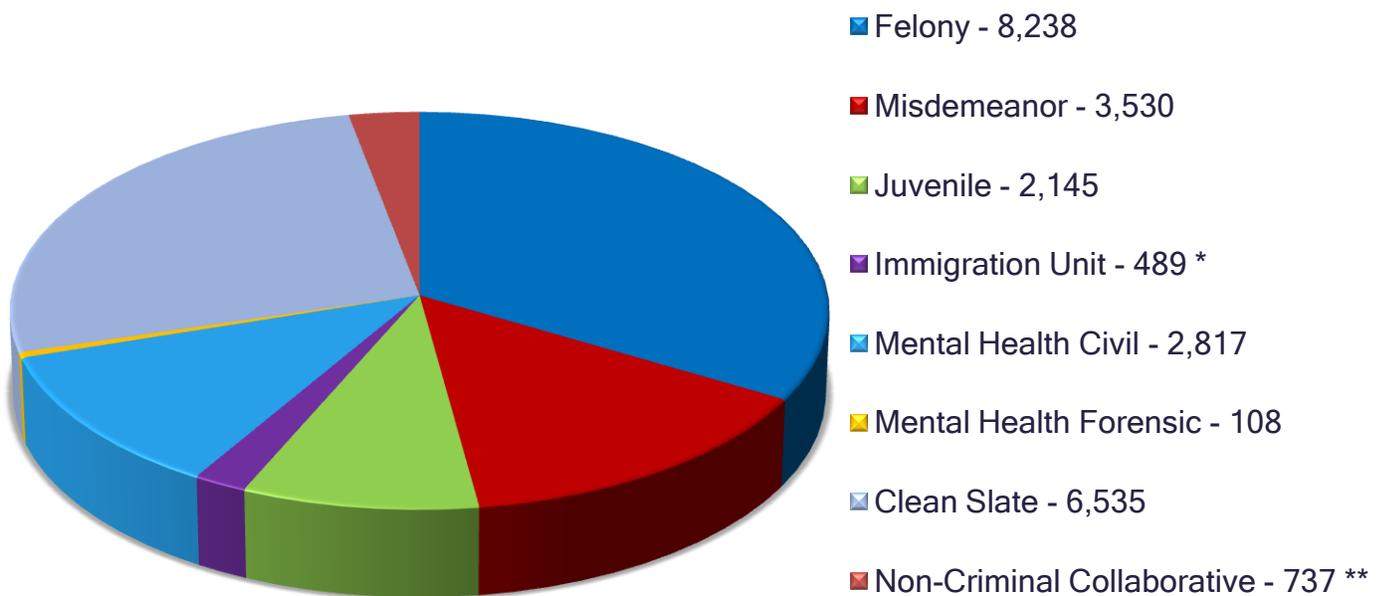
# KEY SERVICES PROVIDED

## a. What We Do

- Support upon arrest and booking into San Francisco Jail
- Pre-trial support and preparation
- Legal support throughout the criminal court process
- Mental health support and advocacy
- Addiction treatment support
- Immigration support
- Re-entry support
- Social work & referrals
- Diversion court support and advocacy
- Juvenile & family support
- Clearing criminal records for employment & housing
- Post-Conviction support
- Community empowerment and connection
- Policy advocacy
- Law enforcement accountability

## b. Public Defender Cases

### Public Defender Cases FY 2020-2021 Total: 24,599 Cases



\*This number does not include consultations related to immigration consequences (pursuant to Padilla v. Kentucky), which are listed on the following page under “Other Direct Services”

\*\*This does not include an additional 1,039 cases in other collaborative courts. Many of those cases start as Felony or Misdemeanor cases and therefore are included in those case numbers

### **c. Other Direct Services**

- The Pretrial Release Unit provided services to approximately 2,940 incarcerated people in San Francisco jails in FY 2020-2021
- The Clean Slate Unit provided client consultations to approximately 3,181 people, through new client emails and phone consultations and in-person connection at events
- The Immigration Unit provided 391 Padilla consultations, on top of the deportation defense cases they handled
- BMAGIC and Mo'MAGIC programs provided connections, services and referrals to over 4000 families in the Bayview and the Fillmore-Western Addition
- The front desk provided hundreds of phone consultations and referrals, including "Attorney of the Day" calls
- The Post-Conviction Unit provided consultations to dozens of incarcerated people in California prisons and their loved ones

# MAJOR NEW INITIATIVES

## a. Fighting for Freedom During COVID

On top of fighting to release people from San Francisco Jail and San Francisco Juvenile Hall this year, the Public Defender also took on the California prison system as well as ICE detention center.

In this past year San Quentin suffered a severe COVID-19 outbreak, leading to 28 deaths. In 2020 - 2021, the Public Defender's office was co-counsel in a case representing over 300 petitioners from San Quentin seeking release by petition for writ of [habeas corpus](#), arguing the California prison system (CDCR) should immediately release people from its dangerous conditions.

The Public Defender Immigration Unit also fought hard to free and protect those detained by ICE. ICE detention centers were especially susceptible to the spread of the coronavirus. The unit joined forces with the ACLU of Northern & Southern California, the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights of the Bay Area, Lakin & Wille LLP, and Cooley LLP, in a joint class action lawsuit (*Zepeda-Rivas v. Jennings*) on behalf of all the people detained by ICE in two California detention centers and won some of the strongest protections for detained immigrants in the country. The ongoing lawsuit allowed us to file bail motions to get hundreds of people released from the dangerous conditions and reunited with their families.

## b. Keeping Law Enforcement Accountable

The Integrity Unit, a new unit devoted to confronting state violence and holding law enforcement accountable, created a cutting-edge [CopMonitor public database](#) that gathers all publicly available records of SFPD and other law enforcement officers in one place. This grew from our core work defending clients whose freedom often depends on police witness credibility.

## c. Amplifying Voices of Clients through “The Adachi Project”

The office created the [Adachi Project](#) in January 2021 to illuminate unseen aspects of the criminal legal system and to amplify the voices of those most impacted. One of the short films created through this initiative, [“From Inside”](#) illustrates some of the physical and psychological impacts that being in jail during the pandemic has had on our clients.

#### **d. Supporting Youth and Families through MAGIC Initiatives**

Throughout this year, the office's B'MAGIC and Mo'MAGIC programs served as networks for critical family serving organizations in Bayview Hunters Point and the Fillmore-Western Addition. During this time, when children were out of school, people lost jobs, and community health was at risk, these MAGIC programs quickly adapted to connect people and resources throughout the year. In 2020, B'MAGIC and Mo'MAGIC supplied thousands of books, backpacks, and school supplies to the community and partnered with the Department of Public Health to connect over 5,000 families with the city-wide holiday giveaway. Furthermore, Mo'MAGIC distributed over 20,000 hygiene kits in partnership with SFUSD and Simply the Basics, along with 500,000 PPE supplies to the community in partnership with Collective Impact.

#### **e. Building Youth Power through the "Young Defenders" Program**

In August 2020, the Public Defender's Office started the [Young Defenders program](#), a paid internship for local high school students to learn about the criminal legal system through the lens of public defense. The Office partnered with Opportunities for All, the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, and Teachers for Social Justice to create this program. While they could not physically come into the office due to health protocols, these dedicated youth and their program coordinators were excited to learn and give back to the community. This year there were 16 dedicated student interns. During their time with us, they designed and hosted 4 virtual events on the topics of: Knowing your Rights, the Importance of Jury Diversity, and a Young Defender Summit.

*For more information about what the Public Defender accomplished during this fiscal year, please see our 2020 and 2021 [community newsletters](#).*