Clean Slate Program
Phone: 415-553-9337
Email: cleanslate@sfgov.org

Hours and Locations:

Arriba Juntos Office
1850 Mission Street
2nd & 4th Monday of the Month
10:30am-12:30pm
Se habla Español.

Main Office
555 7th Street
Every Tuesday, 9am-11am

Up From Darkness Office
1075 Fillmore Street
1st Wednesday of the Month
3pm-5pm

The Village Community Center
1099 Sunnydale Avenue
4th Wednesday of the Month
3pm-5pm

Southeast Community Center
1800 Oakdale Avenue
1st & 3rd Thursday of the Month 9am-11am
Message from the Public Defender

When the Public Defender’s office was first created in 1921, the office had one attorney – the Public Defender, Frank Egan, who had just been appointed. In his first annual report, Egan wrote that he had no deputies, office or support staff, and found it “very difficult to carry out” his duties.

A look at this year’s annual report – a report that chronicles this Office’s 90th year – today’s Public Defender’s office resembles nothing like the office that Frank Egan described in 1921. We are an office of over ninety attorneys and eighty support staff – one of the most respected and accomplished public defender offices in the country.

In our ninety-year history, The City has had seven elected Public Defenders, each one building on the work of their predecessor to create a more effective and professional office. We went from cramped quarters at the Hall of Justice to our current location in 1986. In 2003, paralegals and social workers joined our team to provide clients in need with more resources. In 2007, we received the American Bar Association’s top award for the best public law office in the nation. Our Clean Slate Program, a record expungement service that we pioneered, celebrated its 10th Anniversary in 2009.

Our advances have meant for success outside and inside the courtroom. This year, we uncovered a wide-spread police misconduct scandal in several Tenderloin hotels. Undercover narcotics officers illegally searched rooms, committed perjury and in some cases, stole property from the poorest San Franciscans. In court, our Misdemeanor team tried over 140 jury trials this year alone. Our reentry council became the model for the court’s Realignment Program.

Looking back on our history, it is clear that these accomplishments were by no means guaranteed. It was a long road between 1921 and 2011 and this annual reports serves to honor not just the clients we’ve represented over our ninety-year history, but the work of those pioneering defenders and supporters who defined what we’ve become. We thank you for being a part of our office’s legacy and for keeping the promise of justice alive.

Sincerely,

Jeff Adachi

photo: Luke Thomas
Clara Shortridge Foltz, the first woman lawyer in the State of California, founded the Public Defender System. After successfully challenging the law excluding women from the legal profession and from law schools, Foltz became a skilled trial lawyer. In 1892, Foltz introduced the Foltz Defender Bill. 29 years later, the California passed the Foltz Bill and the SF Public Defender’s Office was created the same year.

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<td>Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday</td>
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San Francisco’s first Public Defender was Frank Egan, a former police officer who was appointed in 1921. Under the City Charter, San Francisco became the first and only city in the state to elect its Public Defender by popular vote. When Egan was first appointed, he was the only lawyer in the office. However, Egan advocated for more staff and soon grew the office to over a dozen lawyers and a few support staff.
Shock waves shook the City when Public Defender Frank Egan was arrested for murder. When a close friend and former client of Egan was found dead, suspicion focused on Egan, who had managed her financial affairs. After a lengthy trial Egan and another man were found guilty of murder, and Egan was sentenced to life in prison.
Following Frank J. Egan’s removal from office, Gerald J. Kenny was appointed Public Defender in 1932 and subsequently elected. In 1935 the Civil Grand Jury found that “The office of Public Defender, under the direction of Mr. Gerald J. Kenny, has been handled in a most efficient manner.” Kenny served as Public Defender for two decades, until 1954.
Over the years, the SF Public Defender’s office has handled many high profile cases, including the 1931 trial known as the “Spokane bomb case.” Henry Ilse, a fireman and Thomas Boyle, an accountant were charged with attempting to dynamite a publishing company. Public Defender Gerald Kenny represented Boyle (pictured with Kenny, above), who was convicted for his role in the bombing.
Although reentry and “realignment” programs for former prisoners have only been recently implemented statewide, San Francisco has a long tradition of helping former prisoners turn their lives around. In 1934, Public Defender Gerald Kenny met with a group of “non-sectarian organizations to assist men and women who have been penalized for first and second offenses against society.” Today, the Public Defender’s office has won nationwide recognition and awards for its Clean Slate and prison reentry programs.
### Felony
- 91 Cases dismissed due to police misconduct
- 62 Jury trials
- 71% Success rate*
- 8 Homicide trials
- 50% Homicide trials won

* acquittal/mixed verdict/hung/dismissed at trial

### Misdemeanor
- 145 Jury trials
- 78% Success rate*
- 21 Domestic violence trials
- 9 Domestic violence trials won*
- 14 Participants in Volunteer Attorney Program
- 38 Trials by volunteer attorneys

### Combined Felony and Misdemeanor Trial Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Not Guilty</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guilty</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<td>Hung</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<td>Dismissed</td>
<td>1%</td>
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### Behavioral Health Court
- 40 Number of graduates

### Research Unit
- 35 Memorandum of Law
- 83 Motions
- 135 Writs and appeal
- 25 Office trainings and seminars
- 850 Number of files reviewed
- 90 Number of clients tracked down
Investigation Unit

2921  Written requests
5000  Database searches
1:6   Ratio of investigators to attorneys
2880  Interviews
3600  Subpoenas

Paralegal Unit

2     Number of new hires
2500  Subpoenas created and sent out
100   Clients clothed for trial
500   Blowups printed

Mental Health Unit

2839  Total cases handled
4     Criminal dismissals for conserved clients
4     Jury trials
3     Jury trials won

Training Unit

50    In-house workshop and lectures
53    Case conferences
110   New attorney training sessions

Volunteer Intern Program

285   Participants in VIP
Juvenile

0  Youth sent to state incarceration facilities or transferred to adult court
194  Youth diverted from formal juvenile probation
  75% success rate
63  Social work recommendations adopted by the juvenile courts
98%  Success rate in preventing school expulsion and securing services for special education students
382  Interviews conducted by investigators
209  Subpoenas served by investigators
32  Juvenile delinquency cases dismissed due to investigations

Specialty Courts & Reentry

306  Assessments by Social Worker and referred to residential and outpatient program, shelter and other services
246  Of those assessed, success rate

Drug Court

406  Total cases
168  Number of graduates

Proposition 36

57  Total cases
29  Number of graduates

Clean Slate

1194  Motions filed
94%  Motions successfully granted
969  Convictions expunged
62  Arrest records sealed and destroyed
81  Felony conviction reduced to a misdemeanor
10  Certificate of Rehabilitation after serving state prison sentence
3800  Individuals served by Clean Slate
**Clerical Unit**

- 550  Files pulled  
- 110,000 Front desk telephone calls  
- 22,334  New criminal files created

**Word Processing**

- 667  Rush pages completed  
- 113  Requests received  
- 5331  Pages of transcripts completed

**Information and Technology Unit**

- 31  New laptops available to trial attorneys  
- 7092  Wiki articles  
- 190  PowerPoints used in trials

**BMAGIC and Mo’MAGIC**

- 2096  Backpacks given away  
- 2841  Total youth served  
- 690  Participants in Literacy is Freedom event  
- 55  Youth attending winter ball  
- 45  Partners in Bayview-Hunters Point
Molly Minudri, the office’s first female Public Defender, is shown representing Leslie “Mad Dog” Irvin, who had escaped from an Indiana prison and was later apprehended in San Francisco. Charged with six murders, Irvin’s case was heard in the US Supreme Court, where it set the legal standard for prejudicial pretrial publicity.
Edward Mancuso was appointed in 1954 by Mayor Elmer Robinson to complete Gerald Kenney’s term and the Public Defender began to represent indigent people accused of misdemeanors as well as those accused of felonies. Mancuso appointed the office’s first African-American female attorney, Estella Dooley, in 1965. Dooley later established the Mental Health unit of the office. Today, the Public Defender’s office is one of the most diverse law offices in the country, with over 55% women and 50% minorities and LGBT attorneys and staff.
Upon the retirement of Edward Mancuso in 1974, Robert Nicco, who had been Chief Attorney under Mancuso was appointed Public Defender and then elected in November of 1974. Under Robert Nicco’s tenure, the office’s diversity was broadened, including the hiring Fred Smith, an African-American man who served as the office’s Chief Attorney from 1974-1979, and Manoucher Farzan, who was the first Persian-American attorney in the United States.
Kids Have Rights, too!
WHERE'S MY PUBLIC DEFENDER?
DON'T SAY ANYTHING WITHOUT YOUR PUBLIC DEFENDER

S.F. PUBLIC DEFENDERS

JUV COURT PROCESS
ALLEGED DELINQUENT OFFENSE

ARRESTED AND RELEASED
ARRESTED AND DETAINED
APPEALS (ATTY. ON APPEAL)

DESTRUCTION AND OR FILING OF CHARGES

NO FILING GO HOME
PETITION FILED ATTORNEY APPOINTED
PETITION FILED AND UNPROBATION
PETITION FILED NO DETENTION

J-1 JURISDICTIONAL HPG
J-25 SECOND JURISDICTIONAL HPG

photo: Public Defender Files
In the late 1970’s and early 80s, the Public Defender’s juvenile unit became known as one of the most effective models for providing legal representation to youth. Juvenile court became the battlefield for expanding constitutional protections afforded to adults to juveniles. Today, the juvenile unit provides holistic representation to over 1,000 youth each year, and is equipped with social workers, youth advocates, educational specialists and top-notch attorneys.
When Robert Nicco chose not to run for Public Defender, Jeff Brown was elected Public Defender in 1978. Under Jeff Brown’s tenure as Public Defender, after decades of occupying cramped space in the Hall of Justice, the Office moved across Bryant Street into its current location at 555 7th Street in 1987. Brown also worked to increase staffing to handle the office’s growing caseload, which had grown to 20,000 clients each year. When Brown resigned from office in 2001, Kimiko Burton was appointed Public Defender and served until Jeff Adachi was elected in 2002.
San Francisco Public Defender attorneys and support staff gather in front of the Public Defender’s Office. Over the past 90 years, the office has grown from a single lawyer to a full-service law office which has been recognized as one of the country’s best public service law firms.