

# Public Defender Equity Update

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# MISSION STATEMENT

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We are dedicated to ensuring justice for indigent persons accused of crimes. Our overriding goal is to serve the best interests of our clients in everything that we do. We tirelessly fight for our clients and ensure that individuals receive excellent representation.

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## Equity Efforts: Who the Public Defender Represents

- Majority of Public Defender clients are people of color: approximately 37% are Black and 30% are Latino
- All clients are indigent
- Many clients are unhoused, suffering from mental health issues, and have experienced past trauma

# Public Defender Programs Advancing Equity

- Holistic Intervention Partnership (HIP)
- Stand Together Contra Costa
- Clean Slate Program
- Post-Conviction Unit
- Youth Early Intervention Partnership (YEIP)
- Social Work & Reentry Services Unit



# Public Defender Community-Based Equity Work

- Outreach work: Clean Slate, Immigration, Know Your Rights, Voting Rights Education
- Engagement with community-based providers, racial and immigrant justice groups
- In-house Client Services team connects clients with community-based reentry resources
- Bilingual attorneys and staff ensure language access to clients and community-members





# Racial Justice Work

- Racial Justice Act Litigation: leading the state in litigating disparities in the criminal legal system
- Newly hired Racial Justice Act attorneys will expand litigation challenging systemic racism
- Data collection to identify racism in policing, charging, and sentencing
- Leadership role on the County's Racial Justice Oversight Body (RJOB)



# Advancing Racial Equity Internally

- Leadership and culture focused on DEI
- Developed DEI training framework for attorneys and other staff
- Appointed 1st departmental Equity Officer in July 2022
- Prioritize diversity in recruitment and retention
- Host equity centered staff events