



Office of the State Public Defender
Indigent Defense Improvement Division

IDID Bulletin
May 2026

Public Defense Updates

Pretrial Bail

Last week, the California Supreme Court issued its opinion in [In re Kowalczyk](#) addressing pretrial detention/bail. Key holdings:

1. For noncapital cases, a court may order pretrial detention only in the circumstances specified in subdivisions (b) and (c) of section 12 of the California Constitution (which apply to certain felony cases involving violence, sexual assault or threats of great bodily harm and only if the court makes specified findings). Section 28 of the Constitution does not expand pretrial detention beyond the section 12 subdivisions. Objectively unattainable bail is a detention order.
2. A court may not condition release on the posting of bail unless it has assessed the defendant's financial situation and determined by "clear and convincing evidence" that no nonfinancial conditions of release will "reasonably vindicate [the state's] interests" in ensuring public safety and the defendant's appearance.
3. If the court finds it necessary to condition release on monetary bail, the court must set bail in an amount that is reasonable, considering the purposes of bail and based on an individualized assessment of the totality of the circumstances in a case, including the defendant's financial situation.
4. If a defendant alleges the inability to pay a certain bail amount, the burden is on the defendant to support that allegation with reliable evidence.

Civil Rights Corps has created a one-page handout to assist with oral argument at post-*Kowalczyk* bail hearings. You can find the handout in the [Pretrial Release Litigation folder](#) of the IDID Library on the Training SharePoint. Access to the Training SharePoint is limited to indigent defense practitioners and is free (registration is required: <https://bit.ly/OSPDRag>).

National Public Defense Well-Being Study

Public Defenders in all job roles are invited to participate in a research survey conducted by the Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health at the University of Utah, in collaboration with BeSustained, a national nonprofit with the mission of improving access to justice by advancing the well-being of public defenders. This study seeks to deepen our understanding of the real, day-to-day factors that impact well-being across the public defense profession.

Learn more at the [National Public Defense Well-Being Project page](#), and register to take part in the study [here](#).

Statewide Summer Defender Series

The Statewide Summer Defender Series is a free virtual training program designed for law school interns, post-bars, and new attorneys in public defender offices. Webinars will be offered between May and early August and are designed to provide training on the grounding concepts and fundamental skills all new defenders need. See below for our May offerings, and the attached flyer for more information.

Empowering Team Defense

May 19th, 2026 - In Person Convening

Ontario Airport Hotel and Convention Center

[REGISTER HERE](#)

OSPD is hosting this live, in-person convening meant for all members of interdisciplinary defense teams including attorneys, investigators, social workers, mitigation specialists, administrative professionals, service coordinators, supervisors, and all others who work on or with a defense team. We will explore how defense teams can collaborate to better support clients, improve outcomes, and demonstrate their impact with data-driven narratives.

This summit is **free** to attend. Lawyer attendees can also earn MCLE credit for attendance. Advance [registration](#) is required and space may be limited. Our goals are to equip participants to:

- Center the person we represent within the defense team.
- Communicate and collaborate effectively to utilize the many skill sets of interdisciplinary teams.
- Build sustained support for holistic programs through data and client stories.

IDID Connection Hours

Monday 5/11/2026 3pm-4pm [Join Meeting](#)

Monday 5/25/2026 3pm-4pm [Join Meeting](#)

These connection hours happen on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 3-4pm. They are an open 'drop-in/drop-out' space where defenders can come to learn about IDID defense training and ask questions about connecting with our resources. Technical questions about getting on the IDID Training SharePoint and registering for online resources are welcome, and you can get guidance in real time as you complete your enrollment. Bring your questions, suggestions, and ideas!

Public Defense Opportunities

Executive Director - California Youth Defender Center (formerly PJDC)

California Youth Defender Center is seeking its next Executive Director to lead the organization in shaping the future of youth defense in California through training and policy advocacy on behalf of California's youth. [More Information](#) and [Link to Apply](#)

May 2026 IDID Training Events

Unless otherwise noted these trainings are intended for criminal defense team members only, including attorneys, investigators, social workers, paralegals, mitigation specialists, law office professionals, and other job roles on defense teams.

5/14

Summer Defender Series: Visible Impact: The Power of Public Defense

In Collaboration with Partners for Justice

EMILY GALVIN-ALMANZA, Co-Founder, Partners for Justice

12:15 PM - 1:15 PM [Zoom Registration Link](#)

Emily Galvin-Almanza, former public defender, co-founder of Partners for Justice, and author of the recently released book Price of Mercy, will discuss the profound

impact of public defenders, their critical role not just in the courtroom, but in society, and what it means to provide truly client-centered advocacy. She will explore how to work inside an oppressive system while simultaneously seeking to dismantle it, and how defenders can sustain themselves as they fight for their clients. This presentation will kick off the Statewide Summer Defender Series Program, and is also open to everyone working in public defense, regardless of experience.

****1 hour of MCLE is offered for this training****

Summer Defender Series: California Criminal Procedure for the Summer Defender

5/27

CHELSEA BOND, Training Attorney, Office of the State Public Defender
HAYLEY DEWEY, Training Attorney, Office of the State Public Defender

3:00 PM - 4:30 PM [Zoom Registration Link](#)

Learn the language of the criminal courtroom and understand the basic path of a criminal case from arrest to disposition. Webinar participants will learn what makes a misdemeanor different from a felony, and how those differences play out in the life of a criminal case. After this session, you will know which Constitutional rights attach at which stage of the proceedings, the critical timelines and significance of time waivers, common pre-trial motions, and some introductory sentencing information. **1.5 hours of MCLE is offered for this training**

Other Training Opportunities

Provided for information only and are not affiliated with OSPD

CALIFORNIA LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

Webinar: Challenging Forensic Science: Exposing Cognitive Bias in Criminal Cases

American Academy of Forensic Psychology

May 20, 2026. 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Webinar

[More Information and Registration](#)



Minneapolis 2026: Contemporary Issues in Forensic Psychology

American Academy of Forensic Psychology

June 10 - June 14, 2026

Hilton Minneapolis, Minneapolis, Minnesota

[More Information and Registration](#)



The Deryl Dantzer Trial Practice Institute

National Criminal Defense College

Session I - June 14 - June 26, 2026

Session II - July 19 - 31, 2026

Located in Iowa City, IA at the University of Iowa School of Law

[More Information and Registration](#)

The Office of the State Public Defender is a state agency founded in 1976 to represent indigent criminal defendants on appeal. Today, the agency has two divisions. The Appellate Division provides high quality appellate representation for those convicted of capital offenses. The Indigent Defense Improvement Division supports trial level indigent defense systems across California by providing defense attorney training and assistance to counties with public defense systems. See Gov. Code Section 15420(b).
