

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION
JULY 14, 2026

The special meeting of the Public Defender Services Commission was convened at 4:55 p.m., at the Office of Chief Public Defender, Rooms 1008/1011, Hartford, Connecticut.

Members Present

Honorable Richard N. Palmer, **Chair**

Honorable Jane K. Grossman

Michael Jefferson, Esq.

Honorable Elliot N. Solomon

Herman Woodard, Jr., Esq.

Others Present

John R. Day, Chief Public Defender

Bevin O. Salmon, Deputy Chief Public Defender

Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director

Erin M. Ryan, Director of Human Resources

John R. DelBarba, Assistant Legal Counsel

Legal and Legislative Affairs Unit

Todd Bussert, Director of Complex Litigation

Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford

Jennifer Lee, Acting Chief Investigator

Chaneil Beckford, Social Worker II

Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury)

Dawn Crimmins, Social Worker III

Waterbury/Torrington Juvenile Matters

Bryan Habif, Social Worker III

Geographical Area 14 (Hartford)

Louis Montagna, Social Worker III
Hartford Judicial District
Kelly Symolon, Social Worker III
Hartford Judicial District
Leonie Campbell
Executive Assistant to the Commission

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2026, special meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chief Fiscal Officer, Stephen Hunt, provided a budget update summary for FY 26. There was a brief question-and-answer segment.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to go into Executive Session at 5 p.m. The reason for convening in Executive Session was in accordance with Section 1-200(6)(A) and Section 1-210(b)(10) of the Connecticut General Statutes to discuss the following: Authorizations to Incur Expenses, Appointments, Reclassifications, Reappointments & Permanent Statuses, Outside Employment Requests, Educational Leave Requests, Strategy and Negotiations with Respect to Collective Bargaining, and Litigation Involving the Commission.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Other attendees included the Chief Public Defender, John R. Day; Deputy Chief Public Defender, Bevin O. Salmon; Legal Counsel, Director, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan; Director of Human Resources, Erin M. Ryan; Assistant Legal Counsel, John R. DelBarba, Legal and Legislative Affairs Unit; Director of Complex Litigation, Todd Bussert, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford;

Acting Chief Investigator, Jennifer Lee; Social Worker II, Chaneil Beckford, Geographical Area 4 (Waterbury); Social Worker III, Dawn Crimmins, Waterbury/Torrington Juvenile Matters; Social Worker III, Bryan Habif, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford); Social Worker III, Louis Montagna, Hartford Judicial District; and Social Worker III, Kelly Symolon, Hartford Judicial District.

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 9:06 p.m.

Legal Counsel, Director, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, discussed the proposed updates to the Division's Administrative Manual.

Legal Counsel, Director, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, further discussed the proposed changes to the Financial Eligibility policy for Public Defender Services.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the proposed changes to the Financial Eligibility policy for Public Defender Services.

APPROVAL OF CHANGES TO
THE FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY
POLICY

Legal Counsel, Director, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, further discussed the proposed changes to the Records Retention and Storage Policy for the Division.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the proposed changes to the Records Retention and Storage Policy for the Division.

APPROVAL OF CHANGES TO
THE RECORDS RETENTION
AND STORAGE POLICY

The Commission noted the Report of the Chief Public Defender.

NOTATION OF THE REPORT OF
THE CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the following Authorizations to Incur Expenses: 7-2026-01; 7-2026-02; 7-2026-03; 7-2026-04; 7-2026-05; 7-2026-06; 7-2026-07; and 7-2026-08.

APPROVAL OF EXPENSES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Kelly Symolon to the position of Chief Social Worker, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

APPOINTMENT OF
CHIEF SOCIAL WORKER,
KELLY SYMOLON

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Jayasudha Joseph to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Geographical Area 1 (Stamford).

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
JAYASUDHA JOSEPH

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Attorney Sebastian B. Ullman to the position of Deputy Assistant Public Defender, Complex Litigation Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

APPOINTMENT OF ATTY.
SEBASTIAN B. ULLMAN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to appoint Adam Stanclift to the position of Investigator III, Complex Litigation Unit, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

APPOINTMENT OF
ADAM STANCLIFT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to ratify the appointment of Rochelle Buchanan to the position of Public Defender Secretary II, Geographical Area 23 (New Haven).

RATIFICATION OF
ROCHELLE BUCHANAN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the Division's transfers, retirements, and resignations.

APPROVAL OF TRANSFERS,
RETIREMENTS, AND
RESIGNATIONS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to reappoint the following attorneys to a new four-year term: Assistant Public Defender, Robert Fontaine, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford), expiring on 7/15/2030; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Scott Abkowicz, Hartford Judicial District, expiring on 8/5/2030; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Sean Crowshaw, Geographical Area 15 (New Britain), expiring on 8/11/2030; Assistant Public Defender, Trudy Condio, Hartford Juvenile Matters, expiring on 8/12/2030; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Benjamin Aponte, Stamford/Norwalk Judicial District, expiring on 8/21/2030; Assistant Public Defender, Paul Scafariello, Bridgeport Judicial District, expiring on 8/22/2030; Senior Assistant Public Defender, Kelly Goulet, Geographical Area 10 (New London), expiring on 8/31/2030; Assistant Public Defender, Alexandra O'Keefe, Hartford Judicial District, expiring on 8/31/2030; Assistant Public Defender, Dean Velodota, Geographical Area 14 (Hartford), expiring on 8/31/2030; and Assistant Public Defender, Nicole Feinberg, Bridgeport Judicial District, expiring on 9/5/2030.

ATTORNEY
REAPPOINTMENTS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Paralegal I, Edith Bruce, Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford, upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

PERMANENT STATUS

Upon motion duly made and seconded, in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Public Defender, it was VOTED unanimously to grant permanent status to Public Defender Secretary

PERMANENT STATUS

II, Ashley O'Brien, Windham Judicial District/Geographical Area 11, upon the successful completion of her probationary period.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the outside employment request of Social Worker III, LaQueshia Clemons, Middletown Judicial District/Geographical Area 9.

APPROVAL OF OUTSIDE
EMPLOYMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to deny the Tuition Reimbursement Request for Public Defender Administrative Assistant, Verinda M. Birdsong, Office of Chief Public Defender, Hartford.

DENIAL OF TUITION
REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the Paid Educational Leave Request of Social Worker III, LaQueshia Clemons, Middletown Judicial District/Geographical Area 9.

APPROVAL OF PAID
EDUCATIONAL LEAVE
REQUEST

The Commission noted that its August 4, 2026, meeting has been canceled.

CANCELLATION OF MEETING,
AUGUST 4, 2026

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bevin O. Salmon
Deputy Chief Public Defender