



September 23, 2025

**HARTFORD, CT – On Thursday, October 9, 2025, at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville, CT, the Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services (DPDS) celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Connecticut's statewide system of public defense.** We are looking forward to gathering with employees, past and present, as well as others who have worked diligently defending persons who are indigent within the judicial system. Government leaders and members of the legal field from across the state will join the DPDS as we look to honor the collective accomplishments of the DPDS throughout the last 50 years.

The importance of public defense cannot be over emphasized. DPDS employees and the private bar who provide legal representation as assigned counsel can attest to the rewarding public service work by serving the people of Connecticut across the state who need passionate, zealous, and committed legal representation.

**Here are some reflections from DPDS employees:**

*"It's more than just a job; it's a reflection of my passion for justice and fairness."*

*"It's very rewarding to be a part of a client's journey through what can be one of the most difficult times in their lives. It takes work to gain their trust, but when that happens, a very special bond is born that will last forever."*

*"My experience here has shaped the way I live my life outside of the office walls – with grace and compassion for others."*

*"Being a public defender means standing with someone the system has already decided against. It means pushing back and fighting for a justice that hears the whole story and sees the full person. It means winning when we can but never losing sight of who our clients are."*

The power of presence, of standing with and assisting people as they navigate through complex legal processes is a vital part of the representation the DPDS provides to its clients.

*"I am very inspired by the sheer hard work that the staff of this agency puts in daily on cases whether very large and complicated or something that may appear relatively small that can have significant impact on our client's lives. Clients often feel hopeless and alone when they arrive at our doorstep. Knowing that these folks receive respect, dignity and 'no stone unturned' representation is very comforting. It is a given that all members of the agency are subjected to the highs and – sometimes very difficult – lows this job provides. It takes a uniquely special and dedicated person to return each day and give it their all. And that describes every person in this organization, which I feel proud to be one of."*

**– Acting Chief Public Defender John Day (DPDS Attorney for 27 years)**

We salute and celebrate all of the past and current dedicated employees and assigned counsel of the Division of Public Defender Services as we look forward to continuing public defense in the future. The DPDS will also commemorate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary by planning community service events throughout the state.

**Connecticut Public Defender Services Mission Statement**

**"Striving to ensure justice and a fair and unbiased system, and to zealously promote and protect the rights, liberty and dignity of all clients entrusted to us. We are committed to holistic representation that recognizes clients as individuals, fosters trust, and prevents wrongful convictions."**

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