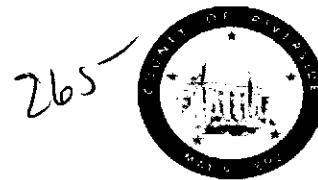


**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



265

FROM: District Attorney

SUBMITTAL DATE:
June 18, 2009

SUBJECT: Cost-Saving Measures

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors direct the County Executive Officer to analyze the following cost-saving suggestions and report back to the Board on their implementation. These suggestions have been recommended as possible cost-saving measures in an effort to hold any projected employee layoffs to a minimum.

BACKGROUND: The District Attorney's Office is fully engaged in exploring cost-cutting ideas to limit the effect of the decline in discretionary revenue facing the Board of Supervisors. Heeding the call of Board members for any ideas to reduce costs for county government, the District Attorney's Office has reviewed county operations from the perspective of public safety and as a user of services provided by the County. From this perspective, we have viewed cost inefficiencies in the courts, cost increases in county services, and the continuation of projects which send mixed messages to county employees.

Departmental Concurrence

Continued on page 2.

Rod Pacheco, District Attorney

FINANCIAL DATA

Current F.Y. Total Cost: \$
Current F.Y. Net County Cost: \$
Annual Net County Cost: \$

In Current Year Budget:
Budget Adjustment:
For Fiscal Year:

SOURCE OF FUNDS:

Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30

Requires 4/5 Vote

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Direct the Executive Office to review the recommendations contained in this form 11 and report back in 90 days.

County Executive Office Signature

Robert W. Tremaine

Policy

Consent

Dep't Recomm.:

Policy

Consent

Per Exec. Ofc.:

Prev. Agn. Ref.:

District:

Agenda Number:

3.55

As a result of a review, the District Attorney's Office suggests potential cost-saving measures that will save money, provide for a more efficient work force, and send a clear message that the County is serious about saving money. These suggestions include:

1. The law requires the court to appoint an attorney, at the County's expense, to represent criminal indigent defendants. The law allows the court to screen defendants at the outset to determine if they qualify to receive free legal representation. The court also has the authority to review, at the conclusion of the criminal case, the defendant's ability to pay in whole or in part for the free legal services received. A few courts in Riverside County have been diligent in ensuring that only those defendants who are unable to afford an attorney receive free legal counsel. Unfortunately, this is not a standard practice in all of the courts throughout the County giving criminal defendants a windfall at the County's expense. We request the Board to direct the Executive Office to implement the following suggestions designed to safeguard County funds and recuperate legal fees from defendants who are able to shoulder the cost of legal representation for the crimes they commit.
 - a) Develop, in collaboration with the court, a standard countywide screening method to determine the ability of criminal defendants to pay for their legal representation at the time legal counsel is initially assigned to them.
 - b) Encourage the court to implement a standard court evaluation practice to determine the defendant's ability to provide for his/her legal representation with this evaluation being conducted at the outset of the case and at the conclusion of the defendant's case or at the time County provided legal representation terminates.
 - c) Adopt, in collaboration with the court, a standard fee schedule that would assist the court in determining the appropriate reimbursement amount and provide consistency countywide.
 - d) Collaborate with the court to ensure court orders are consistently made countywide in all cases where the defendant has the ability to pay for all or some of the legal services he/she received and assist in the collection of the monies ordered reimbursed by the court to the County. Alternatively, designate a county financial evaluation officer to make financial evaluations of defendants' liability for reimbursement to the County for court appointed counsel and to collect such reimbursement. (Sections 27750 through 27758 of the Government Code)
 - e) Require the Office of the Public Defender and all attorney groups who contract with the County in the Indigent Defense Program to seek orders from the court to reimburse the County for the costs of legal services they provided to defendants.
 - f) Monitor and evaluate the compliance with the implemented practices and fee schedule for consistency in rates and fees charged and monies received from reimbursement orders.

g) Direct the Executive Office to prepare and file a quarterly report with the Board detailing the court ordered reimbursement amounts and funds recuperated by the County from defendants.

This cost saving measure will reduce County costs and help save jobs in every county department. With more county employees remaining in their authorized positions, the County can continue to provide the services necessary for the well being of the citizens of the County.