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Michigan Indigent Defense Commission Releases First Annual Report and First Survey of Indigent Defense in Michigan *Releases mark the end of the agency's first full year of operation.*

LANSING, MI -- The Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC) announced the release of its 2015 Impact Report and the results of the first-ever comprehensive survey of indigent defense in the state.

Survey highlights include:

- Only 6% of district courts require attorneys to be present at both the bail hearing and at arraignment, despite the documented importance of legal guidance in these early stages.
- Only 15% of indigent defense systems currently report the existence of local guidelines requiring participation in Continuing Legal Education courses.
- Despite the critical role of confidential meeting space in legal representation, 9% of indigent defense systems in Michigan report that neither the courthouse nor the holding facility have private space for attorney-client meetings.

"These survey results reinforce the need for uniform public defense standards in our state," said MIDC Executive Director Jonathan Sacks.

The MIDC's initial set of standards would address some of the major problems Michigan faces in the delivery of adequate indigent defense systems: training and education of counsel, the initial client interview, use of investigation and experts, and counsel at first appearance and other critical stages.

The entire survey report is available on the MIDC's website: <http://michiganidc.gov/policies-and-reports/#tab-id-5>. The 2015 Impact Report is also on the website: <http://michiganidc.gov/policies-and-reports/#tab-id-2>.

The MIDC is housed within the judicial branch of state government. Its members are appointed by the Governor with recommendation of the Legislature, Supreme Court, the State Bar, and representing interests from the criminal justice system.

Please see the MIDC's website for additional information: www.michiganidc.gov.

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