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Subject: MIDC Update COVID-19
Date: Friday, March 13, 2020 5:15:39 PM

Dear Commissioners:

Below please find a message that was sent to all indigent defense funding units and leadership today with respect to MIDC's efforts to act in alignment with the Governor's Executive Orders and mitigate the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). In addition, we have worked in partnership with LARA to implement teleworking for MIDC staff. We are well equipped to continue our work remotely and with a few tweaks to our day to day operations, I do not anticipate any significant barriers to things running smoothly. I believe this is the best solution to ensure that we are protecting the health and safety of our staff and stakeholders. All of our staff will remain fully accessible through email, phone and video conferencing.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions or concerns.

Best,
Loren

Dear Indigent Defense Stakeholders:

The MIDC is working to take necessary precautions to combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Governor Whitmer and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) are providing recommendations designed to help prevent the spread of the virus. In alignment with those recommendations, the MIDC will make the following adjustment to its work:

- Regional Managers will make efforts whenever possible to conduct compliance planning meetings with indigent defense stakeholders remotely by video or phone conference. Limiting travel as much as possible is necessary to ensure the health and safety of staff and stakeholders. We are confident that we will be able to support and work with systems to submit fiscal year 2021 compliance plans by April 30th by utilizing accessible tools to conduct meetings remotely.
- In-court observation scheduled during the month of March will be canceled and rescheduled.
- Your Regional Manager can provide information to communicate to your attorneys about web-based opportunities to satisfy MIDC's Standard 1, training and education of

assigned counsel. **Conferences and in-person events will likely be postponed for some time.** There are a number of online resources available to satisfy the standard to ensure that attorneys are staying up to date about the latest developments in the law in order to provide high quality representation to their indigent clients.

- We are aware that multiple indigent defense stakeholders, including local funding units, the Judiciary, law enforcement agencies and prosecutor's offices are currently implementing plans to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. With respect to MIDC minimum Standard 2 (initial confidential interviews within 3 business days for in-custody clients) and Standard 4 (counsel at first appearance), we urge stakeholders to use technology (polycom, telephone) to facilitate **confidential** access to attorneys. If it is necessary to purchase technological equipment, or if you are allowing in-person meetings and need to purchase supplies such as hand sanitizer or sanitizing wipes related to continuing those visits, please contact your Regional Manager to facilitate a budget adjustment to your system's grant. You can review all of the standards on the MIDC's website at www.michiganidc.gov/standards.

If possible, please share with your Regional Manager information related to your funding unit's response to COVID-19 that may affect the delivery of indigent defense services under your compliance plan. This will help us be stronger partners and facilitate consistent state/local communication.

Information about the COVID-19 pandemic is changing rapidly and MIDC staff will evaluate the need for responsive changes to its operations regularly. Please be assured that we will remain accessible by phone and email and that we are well-equipped to serve you remotely. Do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need assistance.

We appreciate your flexibility and partnership as we all work to keep our state healthy and safe. To stay informed, please visit Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

Sincerely,

Loren Khogali, Executive Director

Michigan Indigent Defense Commission

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