# **MICHIGAN INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION**

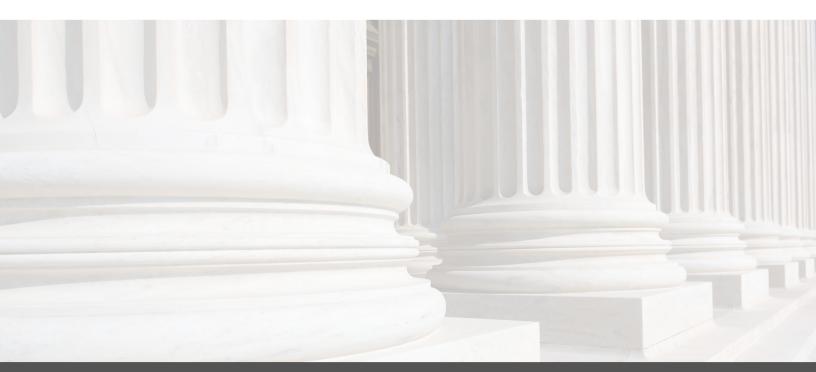
# ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2023

1

Racing from the Bottom to the Top: Ten Years of Transformational Reform from the MIDC

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#### Commissioners

#### Christine A. Green, Ann Arbor *Represents the State Budget Office* Chair of the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission

Thomas Adams, Detroit Represents the General Public

Joshua Blanchard, Greenville Represents the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan Tracey Brame, Grand Rapids Represents the Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court Kimberly Buddin, Novi Represents those whose primary mission or purpose is to advocate for minority interests

Paul E. Bullock, Evart Represents the Senate Majority Leader
Andrew D. DeLeeuw, Manchester Represents the Michigan Association of Counties
Hon. James Fisher (Retired), Hastings Represents the Michigan Judges Association
David W. Jones, Detroit Represents the State Bar of Michigan
James R. Krizan, Allen Park Represents the Michigan Municipal League
Debra Kubitskey, South Lyon Represents the Senate Majority Leader
Hon. Paula B. Mathes, Muskegon Represents the Michigan District Judges Association
Margaret McAvoy, Owosso Represents the Michigan Association of Counties
Tom McMillin, Oakland Township Represents the Speaker of the House of Representatives
Alicia Moon Supreme Court Chief Justice Designee, ex officio member
John Shea, Ann Arbor Represents the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan
William Swor, Grosse Pointe Woods Represents the Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan
Robert VerHeulen, Walker Represents the Speaker of the House of Representatives
Gary Walker, Marquette Represents the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan



The Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC) was created by legislation in 2013. The MIDC Act is found at MCL §780.981 et seq.

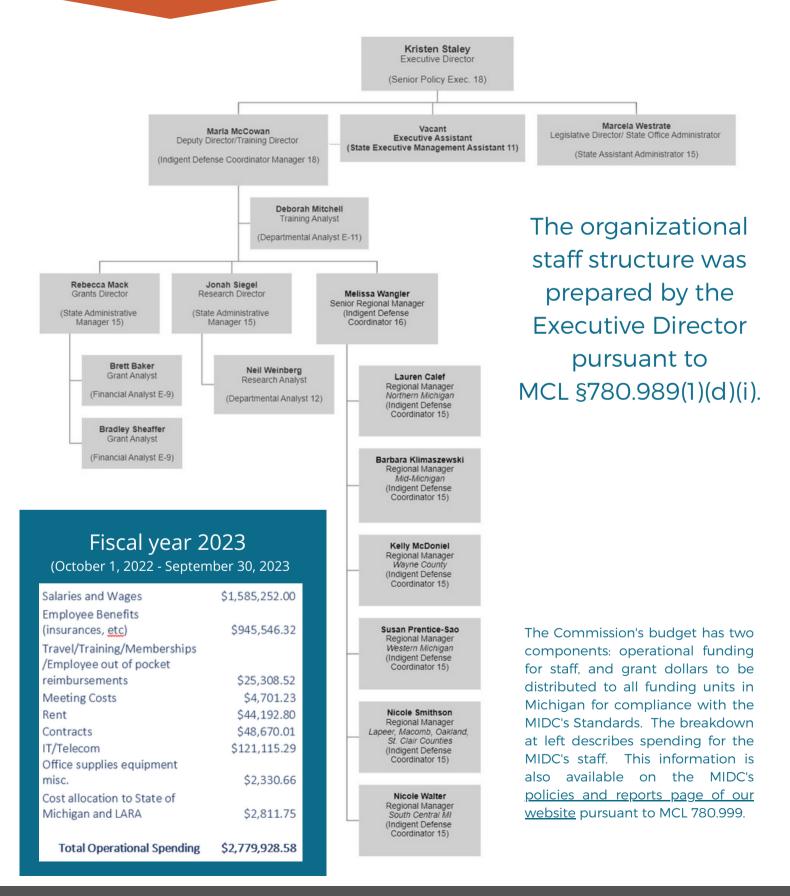
The MIDC develops and oversees the implementation, enforcement, and modification of minimum standards, rules, and procedures to ensure that criminal defense services are delivered to all indigent adults in this State consistent with the safeguards of the United States Constitution, the Michigan Constitution of 1963, and with the MIDC Act.

The Governor makes appointments to the 18-member Commission pursuant to MCL §780.987, and began doing so in 2014. The interests of a diverse group of partners in the criminal legal system are represented by Commissioners appointed on behalf of defense attorneys, judges, prosecutors, lawmakers, the state bar, bar associations advocating for minorities, local units of government, the state budget office, and the general public.

The MIDC met six times in 2023 to review and approve compliance plans and receive information about implementation of the MIDC's Standards. The Commission distributed over \$170 million statewide for local indigent defense services and MIDC's staff provided technical assistance to systems as plans for compliance were implemented.



#### **Executive Director and Staff**



#### Michigan's Pathway to Overdue Reform

More than two decades ago, the American Bar Association (ABA) recognized the need to create clear policies to evaluate effective public defense delivery systems consistent with the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as well as the body of caselaw that developed after the landmark case of *Gideon v. Wainwright*. The ABA's original *Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System* were approved in 2002 to provide stakeholders in the public defense community with the tools to assess delivery systems and identify areas requiring reform. These *Principles* established critical public defense standards and served as national guidance for policy makers to develop laws consistent with best practices.

After the ABA approval of the *Principles*, the Michigan Legislature sought to review the state's public defense delivery system and requested an evaluation to be conducted by National Legal Aid and Defender Association (NLADA). The result was a blistering account of Michigan's trial-level indigent defense system. Assessed through the lens of the ABA's Ten *Principles*, the 2008 NLADA report found the state failing to provide constitutionally adequate public defense services. The inescapable result was a need of increased state funding and oversight to ensure the right to counsel was being met in Michigan.

In response, then-Governor Rick Snyder created an advisory commission to recommend improvements to the state's indigent defense system. In 2013, the advisory commission made a number of recommendations, including the creation of the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission, a permanent governing body charged with promulgating, overseeing implementation and enforcing standards consistent with the ABA's *Ten Principles*.

# Sources and Additional Reading:

ABA Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System, available at americanbar.org

A Race to the Bottom. Speed and Savings Over Due Process: A Constitutional Crisis NLADA, June 2008

Advisory Commission Report (2011) available on the MIDC's website at michiganidc.gov

The ABA's Revised Ten Principles of Public Defense Delivery Systems: How Michigan is Meeting the Core Best Practices through Funding and Reform Established by the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission, SADO's Criminal Defense Newsletter, Vol. 47 Issue 4, January 2024, available at sado.org

Sixth Amendment Center, 6ac.org

#### ABA Ten Principles and MIDC Standards

The standards identified for development in the MIDC Act mirror the ABA's *Ten Principles* and serve as the basis for significant public defense reform in Michigan. Recently, the ABA revised these *Ten Principles* to reflect changes that have occurred in public defense over the past twenty years. The ABA recommends that all jurisdictions should strive to bring their public defense systems into compliance with the revised Principles.

Through the work of the MIDC, Michigan now meets and exceeds all of the revised *Principles* and serves as a model for public defense delivery systems nationwide. The ABA's Revised *Ten Principles* are identified below, with information about compliance in Michigan for each of these principles in every court system statewide.

#### **ABA Principle 1: Independence**

Independence from the judiciary has been described as the "bedrock" of a constitutional public defense system. In 2018 the MIDC approved a standard requiring that public defense systems operate independently from the judiciary to guarantee the integrity of the relationship between lawyer and client. The standard requires independence in all aspects of defense representation, including: attorney selection, payment, and approval of funding for defense investigators and experts. In Michigan, judges and court staff are limited to informing a defendant of their constitutional rights, screening for access to counsel, and referring for assignment to the appointing authority. Judges are permitted and encouraged to contribute information and advice concerning that delivery of indigent criminal defense services. This standard has been fully implemented in nearly all systems in the last two years through the creation of public defender offices and by establishing new managed assigned counsel systems (MACs). MACs are tasked with managing the roster of attorneys through assignments and approval of requests for funding for services, including expert and investigator fees. Ultimately, defense counsel's independence serves the court's role in protecting the constitutional right to counsel and enhances the ability of appointed counsel to effectively advocate for their clients.

Through tremendous bipartisan support, the state has allotted the MIDC hundreds of millions of dollars since 2019 to distribute to trial court funding units around the state for compliance with its standards. This year, the MIDC approved compliance plans covering a new attorney compensation standard, designed to ensure attorneys have the time, fees, and resources to provide effective assistance that is constitutionally guaranteed to indigent Michigan citizens facing criminal charges. Contracted attorneys are paid at hourly rates that account for office overhead and salaried defenders have salary guidelines consistent with state and local prosecuting attorneys. The MIDC expressly allows funding for other direct service providers serving as employees and contractors, provided they are hired to meet compliance with the standards.

#### ABA Principle 3: Control of Workloads

One of the most recently approved MIDC standards covers workloads for assigned counsel, which will allow lawyers to give each client the time and effort necessary to ensure effective representation. Trial court systems in Michigan are beginning to prepare for compliance with this standard, with proposals and funding requests due in April 2024. The standard specifies that attorneys should not exceed 150 felonies or 400 non-traffic misdemeanors per attorney per year. The standard contemplates revision of these caseload numbers in light of national and local studies. The MIDC has already contracted with the RAND Corporation to provide recommendations on possible revisions in the future.

Many funding units with public defender offices have used a combination of the MIDC standard and guidance from the RAND study to develop staffing needs in anticipation of the standard. The MIDC has also authorized funding for attorneys to travel to areas of the State where there are not enough attorneys to provide services already. The MIDC is aware of a shortage of attorneys in rural areas and understands that implementation of a caseload standard will be challenging in some areas of the state and has authorized studies and funding for innovative solutions to attract people to careers in public defense in the future.

#### ABA Principle 4: Data Collection and Transparency

The MIDC undertook a Strategic Planning process and recognized that to accomplish its mission, the Commission must, among other activities, monitor compliance with minimum standards for indigent defense and collect and analyze data to assess the impact of the Commission's work and inform its decisions.

Compliance is evaluated by the MIDC using a combination of quarterly reporting, court watching, and a rubric approved by the MIDC that scores each funding unit's efforts to meet the objectives of each standard annually. The MIDC worked to develop a grant management system to facilitate submission of compliance planning and streamline reporting for local systems and was designed to promote transparency and efficiency in the compliance planning and reporting process. MIDC Staff provides regular updates about compliance to the MIDC at public meetings, with a full report on compliance for all systems each year. The MIDC's website is regularly updated with information about grants funded for all 133 trial court funding units in Michigan as well as the MIDC's operational spending. Information collected by the MIDC about compliance with the MIDC's standards is available to the public through the Freedom of Information Act.

#### ABA Principle 5: Eligibility and Fees for Public Defense

The MIDC's mission is to ensure that quality public defense services are accessible to all eligible adults charged with a criminal offense in Michigan. The MIDC Act describes in detail the requirements for consideration of eligibility for assigned counsel and public defense resources. In developing the standard that was approved in 2021, the MIDC surveyed defense attorneys, conducted focus groups with judges and attorneys, and sought feedback from the State Bar of Michigan and the State Court Administrative Office. The standard provides a framework for determining whether an individual qualifies for representation and other defense funding. It also provides guidance regarding the recoupment of defense costs from individuals with the ability to repay them. The standard expressly states that there are no costs for requesting an assessment and that no screening costs can be passed to defendant.

#### ABA Principle 6: Early and Confidential Access to Counsel

The MIDC's first standards included transformative ideas around counsel at first appearance and attorney-client interviews. Standard 4 requires that counsel shall be assigned to every critical court proceeding, including arraignments, pre-trial proceedings, and plea negotiations, as soon as a person is determined to be eligible for indigent criminal defense services and their liberty is subject to restriction. Standard 2 requires that when a client is in local custody, counsel conduct an initial client intake interview within three business days after appointment. The standard goes on to require systems provide confidential settings for initial interviews in the courthouse and jail to the extent reasonably possible.

In 2023, appointed counsel was present at approximately 260,000 arraignment proceedings statewide; prior to implementation of Standard 4, attorneys were present at approximately 1,000 total arraignments each year. Over the years, the Commission has approved grant funding to create or renovate confidential meeting spaces in courthouses, jails, and defender offices for compliance with Standard 2. The MIDC now collects data quarterly regarding the timing of initial interviews and compliance with the standards. Together, these standards allow early and meaningful access to counsel in every courthouse in Michigan.

#### ABA Principle 7: Experience, Training and Supervision

Michigan is one of only four states in the country that does not have a general requirement for attorneys to attend continuing legal education. However, pursuant to MIDC Standard 1, attorneys accepting adult criminal case assignments in Michigan must annually complete courses relevant to indigent criminal defense practice. This standard has been in place with annual funding since 2019 and compliance is monitored quarterly through a combination of system and attorney self-reporting to the MIDC. A standard addressing qualification and review of counsel was approved in 2023, and, like the workload standard described in Principle 3, planning is underway.

The MIDC approved and published *Guidelines for Trainers and Training Providers* in 2021 and continues to work with local partners to develop training programs and evaluate the effectiveness of required training for assigned counsel. These Guidelines address cultural competencies and fortify the position that the training community is committed to diversity and inclusion.

#### ABA Principle 8: Vertical Representation

The MIDC Act contemplates that the same attorney should continuously represent a person at every court appearance throughout the pendency of the case. Every trial court system in Michigan makes counsel available for all proceedings beginning with arraignment. Many trial court systems in Michigan have implemented vertical representation for all work after that initial arraignment. However, volume in some district courts necessitates alternate models including an on-duty attorney without formal assignment of counsel. The MIDC indicated that vertical representation will be the subject of a future minimum standard, and through strategic planning the Commission has set a long term goal of proposing all standards identified in the MIDC Act.

#### ABA Principle 9: Essential Components of Effective Representation

This Principle offers that public defense providers adopt a client-centered approach to representation based around understanding a client's needs and working with them to achieve their goals. Among the first standards approved by the Commission was a requirement for defense counsel to conduct an independent investigation of the charges against their client and consult with experts and investigators when appropriate. Since 2019, every trial court funding unit in Michigan has been required to comply with this standard, and every system has received funding every year for the purpose of using expert and investigative assistance for the defense and related resources. While many systems contract with professionals for these purposes, dozens of people are also employed in public defender offices working as investigators, social workers, mitigation specialists, client advocates, and related supportive positions. Access to funding is available to any defendant determined to be indigent, even if the client was originally able to retain counsel for representation in the case.

Further, and as part of its mandate to encourage best practices, the MIDC led reform through the implementation and evaluation of a holistic model of public defense in Michigan with the development of the Social Worker Defender Project (SWDP) beginning in 2016. The project culminated in the publication of a manual offering step-by-step program and training protocols for use by defense practitioners.

The MIDC is composed of a diverse group of partners in the criminal legal system appointed on behalf of defense attorneys, judges, prosecutors, lawmakers, the state bar, bar associations advocating for minorities, local units of government, the state budget office, and the general public. Commissioners, the MIDC Executive Director, and MIDC staff are often called upon to participate as defense representatives in policy work for decision making bodies organized by governmental agencies and diverse interest groups. Public defense providers participate in decisions around reform and conversations about funding needs in every local system across the state.

These partnerships are the primary reason for the MIDC's success in reforming public defense delivery across Michigan. Together, we will continue to strengthen the Commission's work in meeting the principles and best practices as described by the ABA and the MIDC Act in the coming years.



The full text of the ABA's Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System (revised 2023) can be found on <u>the American Bar Association's website</u>.

The full text of the MIDC's Standards can be found on the MIDC's website, <u>www.michiganidc.gov</u>

#### MIDC Standards



#### 1. Education and Training of Defense Counsel

Approved May 17, 2017, implemented in 2019



2. Initial Interviews Approved May 17, 2017, implemented in 2019



3. Investigation and Experts Approved May 17, 2017, implemented in 2019



4. Counsel at First Appearance and All Critical Stages Approved May 17, 2017, implemented in 2019



5. Independence from the Judiciary Approved October 29, 2020, implemented in 2022



6. Indigent Defense Workloads Approved October 24, 2023, to be implemented in 2025



7. Qualification and Review of Counsel
 Approved October 24, 2023, to be implemented in 2025



8. Attorney Compensation Approved October 28, 2022, to be implemented in 2024



Determining Indigency and Contribution Approved October 28, 2021, implemented in 2023



Under the MIDC Act, every system is given an opportunity each year to select its desired indigent defense delivery method to comply with the MIDC standards. Multiple models ranging from a defender office, an assigned counsel list with contracted attorneys, or a mix of systems are considered compliant.

All compliance plans and cost analyses for Michigan's 133 trial court funding units were approved by the MIDC this year. These plans address the MIDC's standards covering training for assigned counsel, initial interviews between attorneys and their clients within three business days from assignment, expert and investigator funding, counsel at first appearance and other critical stages of the proceedings, and independence from the judiciary. This year, a new standard establishing indigency screening requirements and eligibility for assigned counsel was implemented statewide.

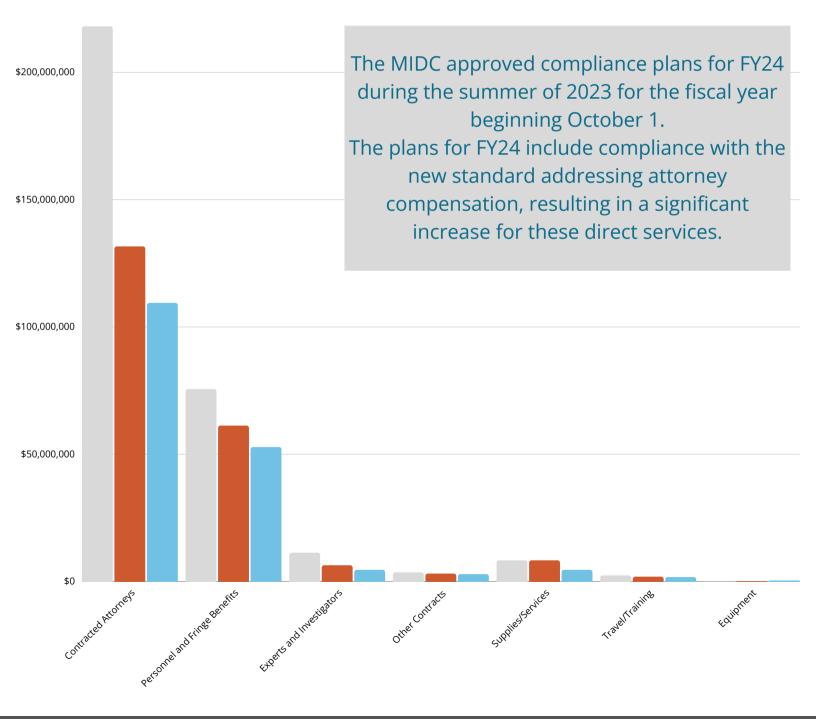
To comply with the standards, the State of Michigan distributed \$173,928,393.06 to local systems for indigent defense in Fiscal Year 2023. Funding units contributed an additional \$38,825,422.67 for public defense in their trial courts. Pursuant to the MIDC Act, a local system is required to comply with its approved plan within 180 days after receiving funding through the MIDC's grant process.

At the end of each fiscal year, all systems are required to submit the balance of unspent funds distributed for indigent defense. This balance is used to offset the compliance grant distribution for the following grant year. As annual grant cycles progress, local budget predictability and spending rates increase, resulting in lower projected unexpended balances over time.

As in past years, the MIDC was statutorily permitted to carry forward unspent appropriations for a maximum of four fiscal years. Each balance is placed within a specifically defined work project and can only be used to fund activities that fall within that project's definition. These work projects served to fund compliance planning costs for funding units and projects related to best practices, data collection, and the development of the MIDC's grant management system. Grant Funding Appropriation by Cost Category year over (fiscal) year

\$250.000.000

2024 2023 2022



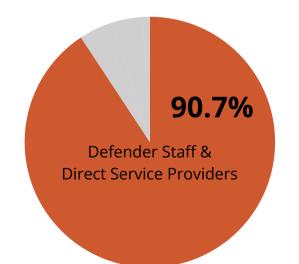
The MIDC received \$148,617,400 from the general fund to distribute to adult indigent criminal defense systems in fiscal year 2023. This was the same level of funding provided to the MIDC in fiscal year 2022. The new standard implemented this year established indigency screening requirements and did not necessitate additional state dollars in light of revised processes in place with the prior year's standard mandating independence from the judiciary. In other words: the standard was designed to provide direction to screeners as to eligibility for public defense resources; in most instances the screeners themselves did not change.

The MIDC approved plans for compliance totaling \$212,753,815.73 this year (state funding plus local share). The balance of funds on deposit with systems from FY22 was used to offset the approved totals and is included in the funding distributed for FY23.

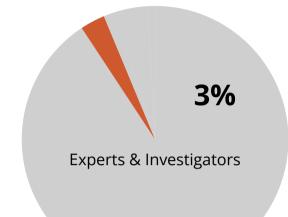
Of the approved total system costs, **\$192,869,446.01** is allocated for personnel for public defender offices and attorneys providing services on a contract basis with funding units. This funding ensures access to counsel in a timely manner and at all critical stages of every proceeding, beginning with arraignment before a magistrate or judge. Counsel is assigned and paid through a process completely independent from the judiciary. A small portion of the personnel also includes court and corrections staff to facilitate data collection and attorney-client meetings.

#### MIDC Standards funded by these costs:

- Initial Interviews
- Counsel at First Appearance and Other Critical Stages
- Independence from the Judiciary
- Indigency Screening



# Grant Funding by Cost Category *continued*



The MIDC's standards require attorneys to promptly conduct independent investigations of charges filed against their clients, and, when appropriate, request funds to consult with experts and investigators about for the case. This standard has dramatically changed the culture of Michigan's criminal defense practice, showing increased use of these resources each year. In 2023, the MIDC approved **\$6,392,608.77** of the total award for this category, and saw a significant increase in spending at the local level from the prior year.

#### MIDC Standard funded by these costs: Investigation and Experts

Michigan has 1625 attorneys accepting adult criminal case assignments. All must annually complete at least 12 hours of continuing legal education relevant to the representation of the criminally accused. Attorneys with fewer than two years of experience practicing criminal defense in Michigan must participate in one basic skills acquisition class. This training, including registration and all related travel expenses for course attendance, are funded in compliance plans in the amount of **\$1,902,028.30.** Despite being the smallest budget category, the training requirement has tremendous impact on the level of services provided to the most vulnerable citizens statewide.

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#### MIDC Standard funded by these costs: Education and Training of Defense Counsel



**Defender Training** 

#### Grant Funding by Cost Category concluded

The remaining categories of approved funding total **\$11,589,732.65**. This includes supplies, services, contracts, and equipment, all of which is necessarily tied to supporting the direct services provided by attorneys and staff. This funding also ensures meaningful implementation of the MIDC's standards.

Approved spending for these categories includes legal research, materials for trial preparation, meeting space and technology to facilitate visits with clients, leasing for public defender offices, and indirect costs to funding units. 5.4%

Equipment, Services, Supplies & Indirect Costs



The MIDC distributed funding to all trial court funding units statewide. Some systems have regionalized to provide public defense services, resulting in 120 contracts executed between the MIDC, LARA, and the funding unit serving in a fiduciary capacity.

The total system costs reflected on the following pages include the state grant dollars plus the local share. The listing of systems is organized by geographic region and MIDC staffing assignments. For information about funding in prior years, please see the MIDC's website at <u>www.michiganidc.gov</u>.

# Total System Costs by Region

#### Northern Michigan

Alger County	\$496,400.21
Antrim County	\$262,158.40
Charlevoix County	\$695,463.22
Cheboygan County	\$460,992.09
Chippewa County	\$649,473.57
Crawford County	\$650,700.19
Delta County	\$722,243.69
Dickinson County	\$574,081.63
Emmet County	\$605,458.00
Gogebic County	\$605,666.41
Grand Traverse County	\$1,279,246.59
Houghton/Baraga/Keweenaw Counties	\$857,528.43
Iron County	\$769,495.91
Kalkaska County	\$837,094.72
Leelanau County	\$236,539.38
Luce County	\$292,076.24
Mackinac County	\$213,188.97
Manistee/Benzie Counties	\$993,552.52
Marquette County	\$1,592,954.97
Menominee County	\$625,868.78
Ontonagon County	\$195,372.31
Otsego County	\$363,815.83
Presque Isle County	\$227,364.79
Schoolcraft County	\$230,112.80
Wexford/Missaukee Counties	\$1,267,214.70
Total Approved by MIDC	\$15,704,064.35

# Mid Michigan

Alcona County	\$257,925.00
Alpena County	\$941,015.04
Arenac County	\$435,013.83
Bay County	\$1,995,822.77
Clare/Gladwin Counties	\$1,670,441.96
Huron County	\$666,945.78
losco County	\$505,497.49
Isabella County	\$1,600,332.76
Lake County	\$333,474.87
Mason County	\$952,961.27
Mecosta County	\$537,451.28
Midland County	\$653,357.59
Montmorency County	\$282,306.91
Newaygo County	\$1,036,284.73
Oceana County	\$612,188.74
Ogemaw County	\$850,047.40
Osceola County	\$518,663.58
Oscoda County	\$369,601.33
Roscommon County	\$672,862.50
Saginaw County	\$6,891,142.75
Sanilac County	\$635,188.42
Tuscola County	\$1,391,050.50
Total Approved by MIDC	\$23,809,576.50

# Total System Costs by Region

## South Central Michigan

Clinton County	\$1,429,617.40
Eaton County	\$2,176,378.80
Genesee County	\$7,217,929.08
Gratiot County	\$656,968.43
Hillsdale County	\$429,707.30
Ingham County	\$7,039,157.78
Jackson County	\$4,230,599.59
Lenawee County	\$2,214,188.56
Livingston County	\$2,467,725.37
Monroe County	\$1,464,075.77
Shiawassee County	\$1,420,753.21
Washtenaw County	\$7,695,345.80
Total Approved by MIDC	\$38,442,447.09

#### Western Michigan

Allegan/Van Buren Countie	es la	\$4,869,691.90
Barry County		\$901,388.10
Berrien County		\$4,597,652.00
Branch County		\$1,304,735.10
Calhoun County		\$4,560,736.15
Cass County		\$610,617.00
City of Grand Rapids		\$1,955,786.56
Cities of Wyoming, Kentwo	od, Grandville, Walker	\$631,475.65
Ionia County		\$613,971.10
Kalamazoo County		\$5,632,666.82
Kent County		\$10,702,684.61
Montcalm County		\$1,163,142.35
Muskegon County		\$3,967,983.65
Ottawa County		\$4,628,783.17
St. Joseph County		\$885,752.20
	Total Approved by MIDC	\$47,027,066.36

## Total System Costs by Region

#### Lapeer, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair County

Projection of the second se	
Charter Township of Shelby	\$285,050.00
Charter Township of Waterford	\$273,051.94
City of Birmingham	\$514,700.00
City of Eastpointe	\$562,612.76
City of Farmington	\$452,600.00
City of Ferndale	\$555,777.00
City of Hazel Park	\$795,484.54
City of Madison Heights	\$495,197.33
City of Oak Park	\$449,650.00
City of Pontiac	\$612,793.81
City of Roseville	\$757,353.48
City of Royal Oak	\$612,900.00
City of Southfield	\$591,900.00
City of St Clair Shores	\$426,986.26
City of Sterling Heights	\$511,825.00
City of Warren	\$964,145.63
Clinton Township	\$523,375.00
Lapeer County	\$742,595.00
Macomb County	\$10,225,656.20
Oakland County	\$16,622,771.12
St. Clair County	\$3,305,735.09
Total Approved by MID	\$40,282,160.16

#### Wayne County

Canton Township	\$350,003.12
City of Allen Park	\$210,765.00
City of Dearborn	\$932,922.58
City of Dearborn Heights	\$192,989.00
City of Detroit	\$3,537,809.90
City of Garden City	\$132,394.77
City of Grosse Pointe	\$15,300.00
City of Grosse Pointe Farms	\$69,500.00
City of Grosse Pointe Park	\$36,250.00
City of Grosse Pointe Woods	\$55,920.00
City of Hamtramck	\$106,320.00
City of Harper Woods	\$187,366.38
City of Highland Park	\$80,029.30
City of Inkster	\$65,000.00
City of Lincoln Park	\$305,435.08
City of Livonia	\$456,199.00
City of Romulus	\$220,751.12
City of Southgate	\$172,500.00
City of Taylor	\$277,908.21
City of Wayne	\$138,329.32
City of Westland	\$536,435.00
City of Wyandotte	\$182,851.12
Grosse Ile Township	\$264,600.00
Township of Redford	\$240,000.00
Wayne County	\$38,720,922.37
Total Approved by MIDC	\$47,488,501.27

#### Conclusion

This year, the MIDC secured approval of the final standards proposed by the MIDC to better ensure that Michigan citizens receive the Constitutional right to a fair trial. The Commission's work is far from done, and the MIDC continues to envision:

- A sustainable, well-resourced public defense system that honors the dignity of all persons that it serves;
- Improved trust in the legal process through the provision of quality public defense services; and
- A just and equitable criminal legal system.

In support of this vision, the MIDC will:

- Secure adequate funding for compliance plans and operational expenses;
- Seek funding for implementation of the MIDC's recently approved standards covering caseloads and qualification and review of assigned counsel; and
- Work with stakeholders to expand the MIDC's role as amendments to the MIDC Act are made.

Formal approval of MIDC Standards 6 and 7 October 24, 2023 Lansing, Michigan

Standing from left to right: MIDC Executive Director Kristen Staley, Vice Chair Tracey Brame, Chair Chirstine Green, LARA Deputy Director Adam Sandoval, Judge Thomas Boyd

Seated: LARA Acting Director Marlon Brown

