



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 14, 2025

DATE: Thursday, October 09, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Cadence Matijevich, Government Affairs Liaison, Office of the County Manager cmatijevich@washoecounty.gov 775-328-2077

THROUGH: Kate Thomas, Interim County Manager

SUBJECT: Recommendation of Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas as the Washoe County Commission's nominee to be sent to the Governor for subsequent appointment to serve on the Board of Indigent Defense Services for a new three-year term retroactive to September 1, 2025. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts) FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas has been serving as a board member for the Nevada Department of Indigent Defense Services since being appointed by the governor in September of 2019. The mission of the Nevada Department of Indigent Defense Services is to assist Nevada counties in developing quality, equitable, and sustainable indigent defense systems that strengthen local communities and meet or exceed the state and federal constitutional guarantees that protect each of us.

Staff are recommending Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas continue to serve in this capacity and that the Board approve submission of Ms. Thomas as their official nominee to the Governor for reappointment to the Board of Indigent Defense Services.

Washoe County Strategic Initiative supported by this item: Vulnerable Populations

PREVIOUS ACTION

On September 13, 2022, the Board of County Commissioners recommended Ms. Thomas for a new three-year term beginning September 1, 2022, through August 31, 2025.

On September 24, 2019, Governor Sisolak appointed Kate Thomas to the Board for a term beginning September 1, 2019, and ending August 31, 2022.

On July 23, 2019, the Board of County Commissioners nominated Kate Thomas and Jamie Rodriguez for appointment to the Board of Indigent Defense Services for a term ending June 30, 2022.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

BACKGROUND

The Department of Indigent Defense and the Board of Indigent Defense Services were created by AB81 of the 80th Session of the Nevada Legislature (2019). The Board of Indigent Defense is required to review information concerning indigent defense services in the State and establish: (1) minimum standards for the delivery of indigent defense services; and (2) procedures for receiving and resolving complaints concerning the provision of indigent defense services. The Board of Indigent Defense is further required to establish standards for providing indigent defense services, which include continuing education requirements for attorneys who provide indigent defense services, uniform tracking of information by such attorneys and guidelines for maximum caseloads of such attorneys.

The recommended appointment to the Commission must have:

- (a) Significant experience providing legal representation to indigent persons who are charged with public offenses or to children who are alleged to be delinquent or in need of supervision;
- (b) A demonstrated commitment to providing effective legal representation to such indigent persons; or
- (c) Expertise or experience, as determined by the appointing authority, which qualifies the person to contribute to the purpose of the Board or to carrying out any of its functions.

The appointment to the Commission is not to be:

- (a) A judge, justice or judicial officer;
- (b) A Legislator or other state officer or employee;
- (c) A prosecuting attorney or an employee thereof;
- (d) A law enforcement officer or employee of a law enforcement agency;
- (e) An attorney who in his or her position may obtain any financial benefit from the policies adopted by the Board;
- (f) Currently employed within the Department of Indigent Defense Services;
- (g) Currently employed by a public defender; or
- (h) Currently employed by any other attorney who provides indigent defense services to a contract with a county.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with Washoe County's making nominations to or participating on the Board of Indigent Defense Services.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve the reappointment of Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas as the Washoe County Commission's nominee to the Governor for continued service on the Board of Indigent Defense Services for a new three-year term beginning September 1, 2025, in recognition of her qualifications, experience, and ongoing contributions to the mission of the Board of

Indigent Defense Services.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board of County Commissioners agree to the recommendation, a possible motion would be: *“Move to submit Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas as the Washoe County Commission’s nominee to the Governor for reappointment to serve on the Board of Indigent Defense Services for a three-year term beginning September 1, 2025.”*