

# Indigent Legal Services

## Budget Hearing

FISCAL YEAR 2027

**Dean Neil Fulton**

Chair

Commission on Indigent Legal Services

**Chris Miles**

Chief Defender

Office of Indigent Legal Services



# Caseload Information

The SD Office of Indigent Legal Services began taking appellate cases from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuits in February 2025 and began taking statewide appellate cases in July 2025.

96

Appellate Appointments



22

Abuse and Neglect Appeals



4

Homicide Appeals



Appeals from Brown, Clay, Hughes, Lawrence, Lincoln, Minnehaha, Pennington, Roberts, Union, Walworth, and Yankton counties



# Caseload Status

40

Cases in pre-briefing phase

18

Cases with briefing deadlines set

11

Cases in post-briefing phase

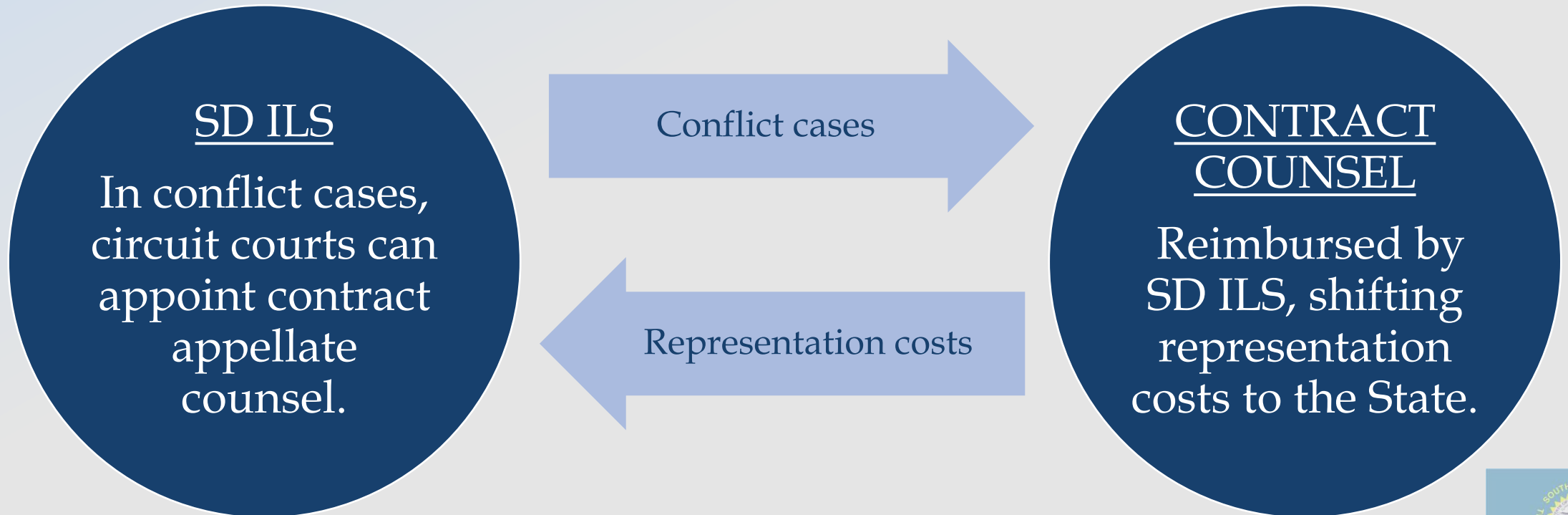
27

Cases closed

At the UJS court-appointed rate of \$115 per hour, the average cost per closed case is \$2,562.90, with individual cases ranging from \$345 to \$14,458.95.

# Contracts for Appellate Conflict Counsel

The Office of Indigent Legal Services has contracted with three attorneys to provide representation when the Office has a conflict of interest.



# Staffing Updates

## Attorney positions filled:

- Matthew Mirabella (January 13, 2025)
- Derek Friese (February 18, 2025)
- Beau Blouin (July 9, 2025)
- Justine Avtjoglou (October 15, 2025)

## Paralegal position filled:

- Eileen Henze (May 5, 2025)

## Internship/Externship participation with USD Knudson School of Law:

- Summer Intern (May - August 2025)
- Spring Semester Extern (January - May 2026)

# Efficiencies



Centralized management South Dakota's indigent appellate caseload.



County public defender offices and court-appointed trial attorneys can dedicate their resources to trial level services.



Standardized procedures, fiscal oversight, data collection.

# FY26 Funding Level

FY27 ILS Request = \$1,454,402

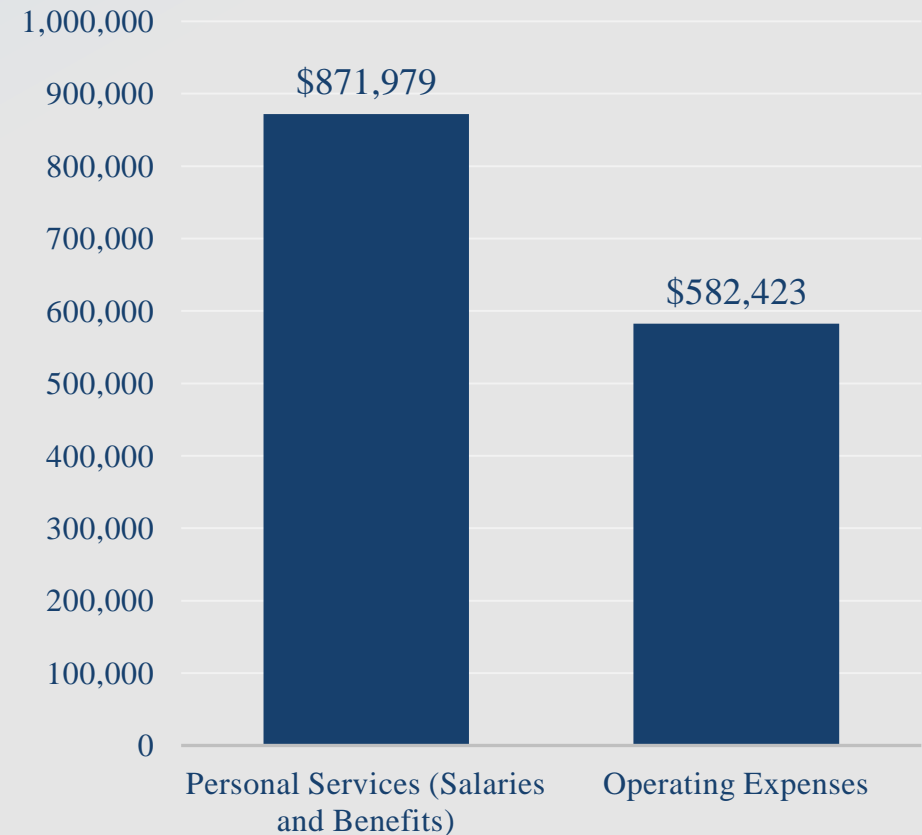
FY27 Gov Recommended = \$1,454,402

ILS Requested Increase = \$0.00

## Expenditures in FY26 include:

- Salaries and Benefits
- Rent
- Office Furniture and Supplies
- Legal Research Subscriptions
- Case Management Software
- Technology and Telephone Services
- Computer Equipment

FY26 Budget = \$1,454,402



# Future Expenses in FY26



Website Development



Payments to Contract Attorneys



Training Seminar Expenditures



# Trial Level Expansion

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## South Dakota Office of Indigent Legal Services

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