



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2022- 2023

Office of Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel Second District Court of Appeal

***Ita M. Neymotin, Esq., LL.M., M.P.A., LSS Black Belt
Regional Counsel, Second District Court of Appeal***

Regional Counsels provide legal representation for indigent people with substantial cost savings. The Justice Administrative Commission has estimated that to date, the Regional Counsels have saved the State of Florida close to \$349,000,000 compared to private registry counsel.

- 1- COVID-19 backlog workload**
- 2- A Cross Jurisdictional Death Penalty Program Budget Proposal - providing death penalty litigation across the State of Florida at reduced costs, as compared with private registry counsel**
- 3- Secure swipe card access**

1- Regional Counsel 2 is requesting 5 criminal attorney positions, 5 dependency attorney positions, and 3 forensic social worker positions to clear the caseload backlog of more than 1000 cases which have accumulated since March 2020; and continue to accumulate. The courts were slowed due to the pandemic response, with hearings and cases being delayed. This request is for funds to hire staff to process and handle to completion these cases.

2- Regional Counsel 2 is proposing a Cross Jurisdictional Death Penalty Program to take cases in central (Ocala/Orlando) and north (Tallahassee) Florida Judicial Circuits 2, 5, and 9 to show how it will provide death penalty litigation at reduced costs, when compared with private registry counsel; while still ensuring client representation is adequate and is not diminished in effectiveness.

3- Regional Counsel 2 has an obligation to keep employees and clients safe, to secure our premises and to safeguard information. All of our buildings are privately leased and do not have county provided security as the Public Defender and State Attorney offices do in county provided buildings. Swipe card access is superior to standard metallic key access for ease of use and access control. This is a request for the swipe card access upgrade.