

# Office of Defense Services (ODS)

FY25 JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING

FEBRUARY 15, 2024



# Zealous Advocacy for the People



Protecting fundamental rights, liberty, and dignity of the clients entrusted to us through collaborative defense.



# Thank You!

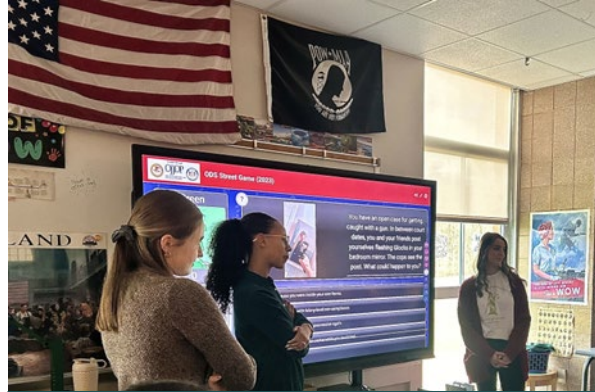
- ▶ Recruitment and Retention
  - ▶ Public Attorney Student Loan Repayment
- ▶ Partners for Justice
  - ▶ PFJ Advocate Program support in Kent and Sussex
- ▶ Interpretation Services
  - ▶ Interpreter FTE
- ▶ Post Disposition Unit
  - ▶ Expungements, pardons, commutations and second chance clinics
- ▶ Community Education
  - ▶ Know Your Rights Trainings



# ODS in the Community



Howard High School Legal  
Administrative Assisting  
Program



Juvenile Justice Jeopardy



Delaware Center for Justice  
Community Resource Fair



Second Chance Record  
Clearance & Employment Fair



Hicks Anderson - "Know your  
Systems" Training



Clean Slate Delaware  
Expungement Clinic



# Violent Crime in Delaware

- ▶ Violent crime is down nationally – it has been on the decline since 1990
  - ▶ The “why” is unclear
- ▶ Correlation does not imply causation
- ▶ Over-policing, over-charging and over-sentencing doesn't reduce crime
  - ▶ Locking people up should always be the last resort
- ▶ The question we address at ODS is, when people become justice-involved, how do we help them get out and stay out of the criminal justice system

# What Works?

- ▶ Listening to the people who need our help
- ▶ Identifying and addressing issues that may have caused the person to become justice-involved
- ▶ Identifying and addressing the collateral consequences of being justice-involved
- ▶ Helping those who were once justice-involved with second chances



# FY25 Governor's Recommended Budget

	FTE	\$'000
<b>FY25 Recommended Enhancements:</b>		
<b>eStar Implementation</b>		
Cost for annual licenses		5.8
<b>Contractual Escalators</b>		
Annual lease inflator & subscription escalators		5.1
<b>Client Services</b>		
Client Services Program Coordinator FTE	1.0	66.7
<b>OCC Contractual Position to FTE</b>		
Convert Forensic Social Specialist*	1.0	
<b>Interpretation Services</b>		
Annualization FTE awarded in FY24		22.7
<b>FY25 Governor's Recommended Budget:</b>	<b>184.0</b>	<b>33,201.4</b>

*\*Net impact of increased personnel costs and reduced contractual expenses*

# What's Coming Next?

- ▶ National Public Defense Workload Study
- ▶ Addressing employee burnout and secondary trauma
  - ▶ More than just adding resources
  - ▶ Decriminalizing conduct and diverting criminal cases
- ▶ Probation and sentencing reform
- ▶ Compassionate release reform



# Thank You

- ▶ Thank you for helping us to recruit and retain the next generation of public servants.
- ▶ Thank you for partnering with our office to make policy changes that ensure that our justice system treats people fairly.
- ▶ Thank you for helping ODS to get out of the courtroom and into the community to listen to the public that we serve.
- ▶ Thank you for listening to us and for providing us with the resources to help our clients and the people of Delaware.

