



# Wisconsin State Public Defender

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## Statement from Wisconsin State Public Defender Kelli Thompson:

**We see the devastating role mental health issues play in the lives of our clients. Too often, individuals with mental illness end up in the criminal justice system when access to effective treatment would better serve the interests of both the communities and the individuals. Additional resources and services to those challenged by mental health are much needed, and we applaud the Governor's commitment of resources in the upcoming budget.**

**The Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Mental Health will focus additional attention on these important issues. This agency looks forward to providing information to the Task Force on the effect of mental health issues in the criminal justice and civil commitment systems.**

*The Wisconsin State Public Defender provides legal representation to the indigent in criminal cases as well as in some civil matters, including emergency detention cases and mental health commitment cases.*

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