SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC DEFENDER

Greater than one.

Presentation to SF Board of Supervisors

by Angela Chan
Assistant Chief Attorney, SF Public Defender's Office

May 14, 2024

Overview of the San Francisco Public Defender's Office

What We Do

The San Francisco Public Defender protects and defends the rights of indigent adults and youth accused of crimes, and immigrants facing deportation.

We aspire to provide the highest level of legal advocacy, and to be the state and nationwide model for holistic public defense services.

Who We Are

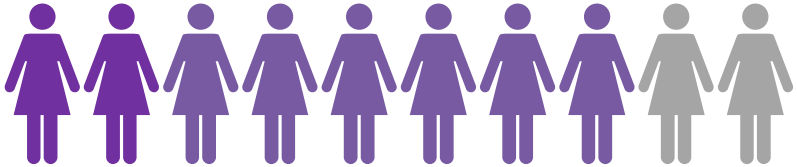
Led by Mano Raju, California's only elected Public Defender, our team of 120 attorneys and 120 advocacy team members provide zealous, compassionate, and creative legal representation to over 20,000 people annually.

Who We Defend

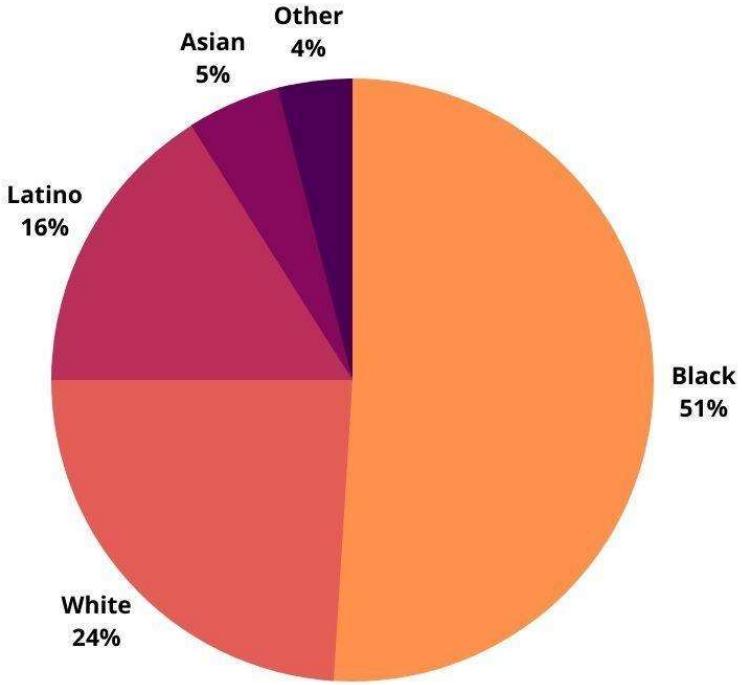
Our Community's Most Vulnerable and Disenfranchised

10% Immigrants or non-English speakers

75% Suffer from mental illness or substance use issues



100% Low-income; many live in poverty or suffer from homelessness



Jail Conditions

- Challenges with legal visits
  - Zoom visits
  - In Person visits
- Transportation to Court
- Challenges with family visits and limited programming
- Lack of sunlight & outdoor time

Challenges: War on Drugs

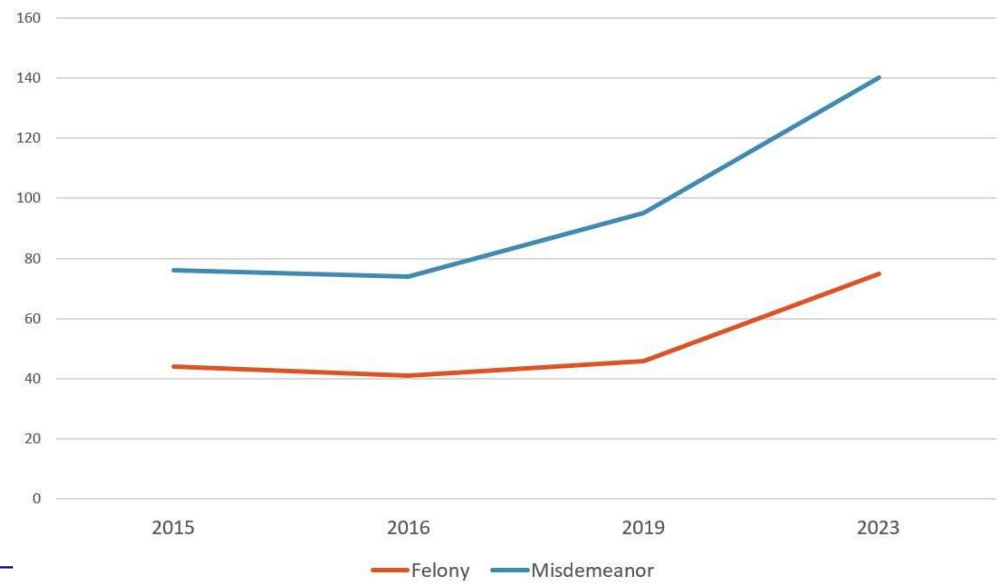
No More Drug War Press Briefing
Oct. 2022

Available here:

SCAN ME

Challenges:
Growing Workloads & Caseloads

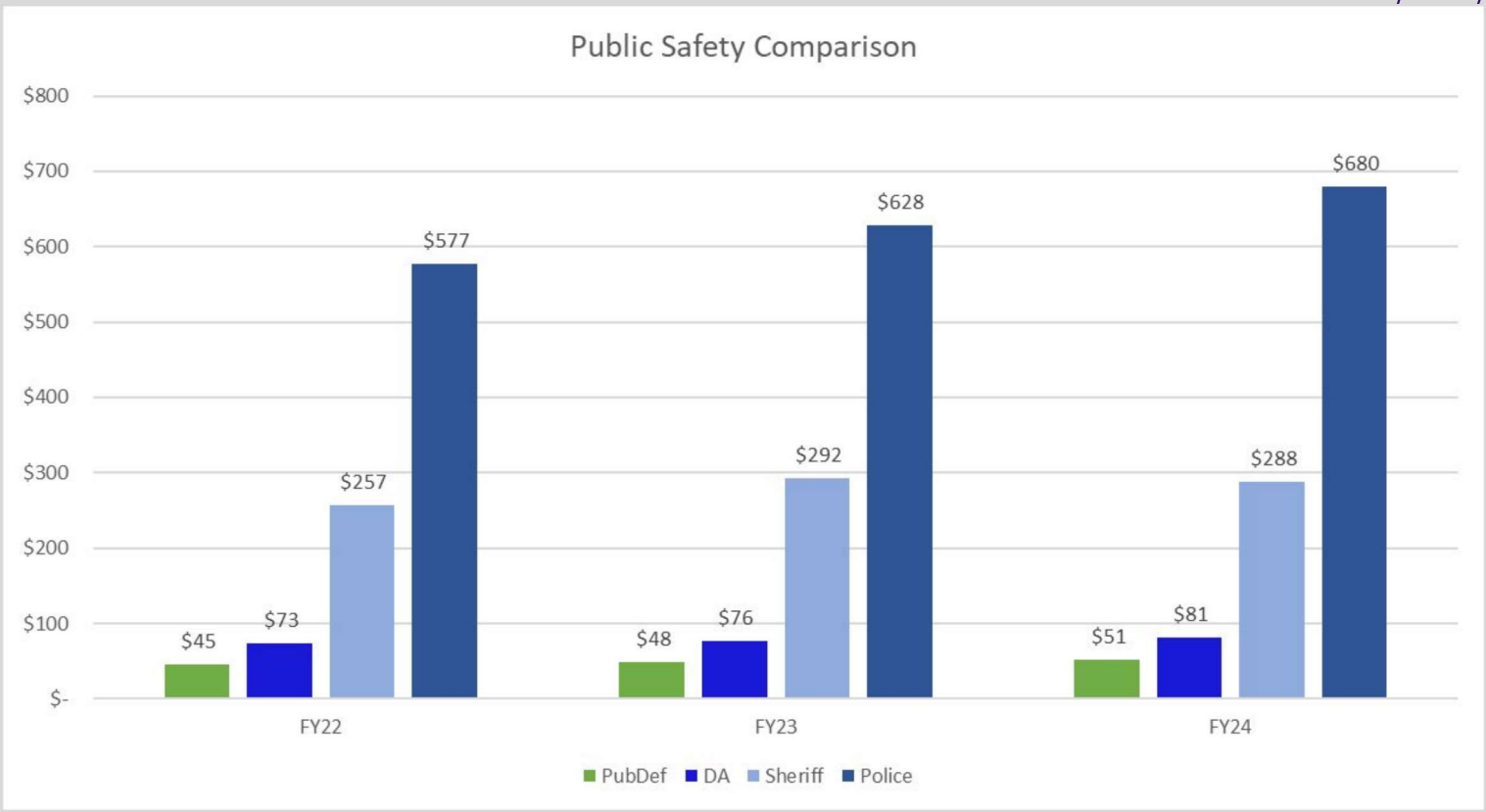
Average Caseloads for Attorneys



Causes:

1. Trial Delays
2. Increase in DA filings
3. Decrease in DA referrals to diversion programs and specialty courts
4. Increased workloads due to changes in state law (e.g., Racial Justice Act and Mental Health Diversion) and body worn camera, video surveillance footage, and cell phone technology

Challenges: Funding Disparities



Questions and Contact Information

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SF Public Defender's Office:
www.sfpublicdefender.org