

Clean Slate Program Crankstart Funding Plan Narrative

The San Francisco Public Defender's Office is steadfastly committed to fiercely defending our indigent clients at the highest level, confronting state-sponsored violence, and advocating for community power. To that end, the Office provides zealous, compassionate, and family-centered legal representation to indigent adults and youth charged with crimes, who are disproportionately Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). In addition to defending individual clients and meeting our constitutional mandate, the Office continues to be uniquely positioned to partner with the communities we serve to advocate for systemic changes that benefit the City's most disenfranchised and disempowered while removing barriers to employment, education, and housing and thereby ending continued criminalization.

Clean Slate Impact for Safer Communities (\$250,000 FY24-25)

Prior to the Crankstart Foundation funding, the Public Defender did not have a full-time attorney dedicated to the program. The Clean Slate Unit now includes two full-time 8177 attorneys (both of which are supported by grant funding), one full-time and one part-time 8173 Legal Assistant, one full-time 8106 Legal Process Clerk, one part-time 8108 Senior Legal Process Clerk, and one full-time 8452 Criminal Justice Specialist II. Some of the staff are former Clean Slate clients themselves. These staff apply their experience to connect with clients in meaningful ways creating the best possible outcomes for clients. Having staff exclusively assigned to Clean Slate has allowed the Public Defender to handle a much higher volume of eligible applicants, to be present in the community, to partner with organizations that improve and promote expungement law changes, and to maintain attorneys and staff who are experts in the field of expungement.

For now, the Clean Slate Unit conducts four monthly clinics in the community: at the Mission Food Hub where we have Spanish-speaking staff available, the Anti-Bully Hero Initiative event, which rotates between the Bayview and Visitation Valley and the A. Philip Randolph Institute's information sessions in India Basin. With the current staffing, Clean Slate also provides presentations and holds additional clinics at the request of other community organizations throughout the City.

Additionally, the Clean Slate Unit provides a clinic at the Public Defender's main office once per week. Clients can sit down with an attorney to discuss their eligibility, begin to draft any needed declarations or proof of rehabilitation and discuss the next steps. The Public Defender clinic remains in high demand, and has recently expanded its hours to accommodate the needs of clients. The Public Defender continues to monitor need to meet client demand for clinic appointments.

More importantly, this is a critical moment for Clean Slate services: eight million people are living with a criminal record in California. Since 2014, the California Legislature has steadily passed laws expanding access to expungement relief allowing more and more people with criminal records to become eligible, including an estimated 25,000 people in San Francisco

alone. These changes to the law have renewed people's interest in cleaning up their records; giving them the confidence to dream big.

Therefore, the SF Public Defender's Office seeks to continue to provide and expand crucial Clean Slate services to indigent community members by using Crankstart funding to support our Managing attorney for the Unit.