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September 1, 2026

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

**AUTHORIZE THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER
TO EMPLOY ONE RETIRED COUNTY EMPLOYEE ON A TEMPORARY BASIS
AND GRANT AN EXCEPTION TO THE
180-DAY WAITING PERIOD REQUIRED UNDER THE
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' PENSION REFORM ACT**

**(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS)
(3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

The Los Angeles County Public Defender requests the Board's approval to grant an exception to the 180-day waiting period required under the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) of 2013 before reemploying retired County employees as 120-day rehired retirees. The Department affirms that the retiree is highly skilled and that the work he will be performing is critical.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Waive the 180-day break in service requirement and reemploy retired County employee, Stacie Linka, to a 120-day temporary assignment as a Deputy Public Defender II in the Department's Van Nuys Branch Office.

2. Approve the request for Stacie Linka to receive compensation at the rate of \$75.37 per hour and work no more than 960 work hours within a fiscal year, upon the Board's approval of her temporary reemployment as a Deputy Public Defender II.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Public Defender's request to waive the 180-day break-in-service requirement is intended to provide additional staffing support and ensure operational continuity in light of higher-than-average attorney attrition and recent staffing reductions, while the Department continues efforts to recruit, hire, and train permanent attorney staff.

The Department has implemented multiple mitigation measures to address challenges related to attorney recruitment, attrition, and workload. These efforts include streamlining recruitment and hiring processes to more efficiently backfill vacant attorney positions and utilizing Civil Service Rule 13.04 (Emergency Appointments) to further expedite hiring. In addition, the Department continues to leverage its attorney law clerk program, which has proven to be an effective pipeline for recruiting and hiring entry-level attorneys.

The Department intends to assign Ms. Linka, a former Deputy Alternate Public Defender employee, to the Van Nuys Branch Office to support the arraignment courts in Departments 100 and 101. These high-volume arraignment courts require immediate staffing due to current staffing shortages. As an arraignment court attorney, Ms. Linka will meet newly assigned clients, review their charges, and advise them on the status and nature of their cases, and explain the legal process, potential defenses, and available options. She will also handle initial court appearances, address bail and custody issues, and negotiate early dispositions when appropriate, ensuring clients receive timely and accurate representation at this critical stage of their cases.

Ms. Linka retired from the Alternate Public Defender as a highly skilled and experienced attorney, and her expertise is essential in stabilizing operations. She will be replacing a 120-day rehired attorney who did not renew his contract, leaving a significant gap. The courts continue to experience severe staffing shortages. Each courtroom requires at least two full-time attorneys for adequate coverage; however, current staffing levels only allow for two attorneys in Department 100, which is responsible for felony and misdemeanor arraignments and Rapid Diversion Program (RDP). Department 101 remains without sufficient coverage, further underscoring the urgency of this assignment.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Approval of the recommended actions is consistent with the County's Strategic Plan North Star 1, Make Investments that Transform Lives and North Star 2, Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities, and aligned with the Board's *Care First, Jails Last*, and Homeless Initiative priorities.

FISCAL IMPACT / FINANCING

The Department will utilize an ordinance-only item, and Ms. Linka's salary will be funded by salary savings.

FACTS AND PROVISION/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The recommended action is consistent with the California Public Employee's Pension Reform Act of 2013, which allows a person who retired from County service to serve without reinstatement from retirement or loss or interruption of benefits provided by the retirement system before a period of 180 days following the date of retirement if the Board certifies the position is critically needed and the retiree possesses the critical skills to perform the work in limited duration.

On February 3, 2026, the Board of Supervisors approved a hard hiring freeze and freeze on non-essential services, supplies, and equipment. Although the 120-day retiree appointments were not exempted, the Board authorized exception for positions included on the Exempt Positions List, which includes the Deputy Public Defender II classification.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The recommended actions will provide the Department with additional staffing support to help address operational gaps resulting from higher-than-average attorney attrition and vacancies.

Respectfully submitted,



RICARDO D. GARCÍA
Public Defender

RDG:DB:BD

Enclosures

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller
Human Resources
Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association