

**MORROW COUNTY, OREGON
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
PUBLIC DEFENSE ATTORNEY SERVICES
Morrow County Justice Court**

Issued by	Morrow County Justice Court
RFP contact	Judge Glen Diehl gdiehl@morrowcountyor.gov
Mailing address	P.O. Box 1125, Heppner, OR 97836
Issue date	August 20, 2026
First review date	September 4, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time
Closing	Open until filled; proposals received by the first review date receive initial consideration

1. Purpose

Morrow County seeks proposals from qualified attorneys or law firms to provide contracted public defense services for financially eligible defendants appearing in Morrow County Justice Court. The County's objective is to secure competent, timely, conflict-free, and responsive representation consistent with applicable law, the Oregon Rules of Professional Conduct, and generally accepted public defense standards.

Morrow County Justice Court is not a court of record. Court-provided Spanish-language interpreter services are currently available when required. The selected contractor must work effectively with court-provided interpreters and other legally required accommodations.

2. Scope of Services

The selected attorney or firm will represent court-appointed defendants in misdemeanor matters within the jurisdiction of Morrow County Justice Court. Services include, as applicable:

- Promptly reviewing appointments, completing conflict checks, and communicating acceptance or any conflict to the Court.
- Representing clients through all stages of the case, including arraignment, pretrial proceedings, plea negotiations, motions, trial, sentencing, and other proceedings within the scope of the appointment.
- Conducting confidential client interviews and appropriate witness interviews and investigation.
- Performing legal research; preparing pleadings, motions, and other filings; and maintaining complete case files.
- Negotiating professionally with the Morrow County District Attorney's Office while exercising independent professional judgment for each client.
- Appearing prepared and on time for all scheduled hearings and promptly advising the Court of scheduling concerns.
- Maintaining timely, confidential, and accessible communication with clients, including clients in custody.

- Tracking caseload and providing invoices and nonprivileged administrative reports reasonably required by the County.
- Complying with applicable statutes, court rules, ethical duties, confidentiality requirements, and continuing legal education obligations.

Services will primarily be performed at Morrow County Justice Court in Irrigon, Oregon. The anticipated volume is approximately 10 to 20 new misdemeanor appointments per month. This estimate is provided for planning only and is not a guaranteed minimum or maximum. Court sessions currently average two per month and are typically held on Wednesday afternoons. The Court will coordinate its docket schedule with the selected contractor.

The contractor will control the professional manner and means of providing legal services and will act as an independent contractor. No case may be reassigned or subcontracted without prior notice to and approval by the Court, except for temporary coverage approved by the Court and consistent with the attorney's ethical obligations.

3. Minimum Qualifications

- Each attorney providing services must be an active member in good standing of the Oregon State Bar and legally authorized to practice in Oregon.
- Demonstrated competence in Oregon criminal defense practice, including misdemeanor proceedings, or comparable experience and training sufficient for the assignments accepted.
- Ability to accept appointments, perform prompt conflict checks, manage the anticipated caseload, meet court deadlines, and attend scheduled Justice Court sessions.
- Professional liability coverage through the Oregon State Bar Professional Liability Fund or other coverage applicable to the attorney's practice, maintained throughout the contract term.
- No current conflict, suspension, restriction, or disciplinary condition that would materially impair performance of the services. Proposers must disclose any matter reasonably relevant to the County's evaluation of responsibility.

4. Contract Term and Compensation

The County anticipates entering into a written personal services agreement. The start date, initial term, renewal options, invoicing requirements, termination rights, and maximum compensation will be established in the final agreement. Continuation and renewal are subject to satisfactory performance, continued need, and appropriation of funds.

The current compensation rate is \$425 per appointed case. The County will consider proposals using a per-case, hourly, monthly, or blended structure. Proposers should clearly identify:

- The proposed rate or fee structure and what services are included.
- Any services, expenses, or case events billed separately, including trials, expert or investigator costs, travel, mileage, extraordinary motions, or appeals.
- Any assumptions, minimums, caps, escalation provisions, or limits on case volume.

The contractor will not be eligible for County employee benefits, PERS participation, paid leave, or medical benefits.

5. Proposal Requirements

Submit a concise proposal containing the following:

1. **Letter of interest:** Identify the attorney or firm, primary contact, office location, and reasons for interest.
2. **Qualifications and experience:** Describe relevant criminal defense and trial experience, years of practice, and the attorneys who would perform the work. Include Oregon State Bar numbers.
3. **Service approach and availability:** Explain appointment intake, conflict checks, client communication, hearing coverage, case continuity, use of investigators or experts, and availability for the Court's anticipated schedule.
4. **Caseload management:** Describe current public defense or other obligations and how the proposer will maintain sufficient capacity and quality for this contract.
5. **Compensation proposal:** Provide the requested pricing details described in Section 4.
6. **References:** Provide contact information for two professional references familiar with the proposer's criminal defense work or comparable legal services.
7. **Disclosures:** Identify actual or potential organizational conflicts and any relevant disciplinary history, pending investigation, or contract termination for cause within the past five years; if none, state none.

6. Questions and Submission

Questions and proposals must be directed to:

Judge Glen Diehl

Email: gdiehl@morrowcountyor.gov

Mail: P.O. Box 1125, Heppner, OR 97836

Submit one electronic copy by email or one hard copy by mail. The proposer is responsible for confirming timely receipt. The email subject line or sealed envelope should state: Public Defense Attorney Services Proposal. Proposals may be withdrawn or revised before evaluation by written notice to the RFP contact.

7. County Reservations and General Conditions

- The County may reject any or all proposals, cancel or suspend this solicitation, waive minor informalities, amend the solicitation, request additional information, or negotiate changes when determined to be in the County's best interest.
- The County is not responsible for costs incurred in preparing a proposal, participating in interviews, negotiating, or performing work before a contract is fully executed.
- Submission does not create a contractual right or obligation. No work is authorized until a written agreement is fully executed.
- Proposals become County records and may be subject to disclosure under Oregon public records law. A proposer requesting protection for information claimed to be exempt must clearly identify the specific material and legal basis; the County will determine disclosure obligations under applicable law.
- The selected contractor must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and County contract requirements, including nondiscrimination, confidentiality, records retention, tax, licensing, insurance, and independent-contractor provisions.
- The County may verify Oregon State Bar status, professional references, disciplinary information, and other responsibility criteria before award and during the contract term.