

Illinois Supreme Court Seeks Applicants for Illinois State Public Defender Commission

Illinois Supreme Court Appointment Opportunity

The Illinois Supreme Court invites applications from individuals interested in serving as a member of the Illinois State Public Defender Commission. This Commission plays a vital role in overseeing and supporting the Office of the State Public Defender, ensuring the delivery of quality legal representation to those in need throughout Illinois.

Public Act 104-0300, also known as the Funded Advocacy and Independent Representation or “FAIR” Act was signed into law in August 2025, creating a new statewide oversight structure for the delivery of indigent defense services. The FAIR Act was developed following a 2021 report from the Sixth Amendment Center, which evaluated Illinois’ approach to public defense and concluded that the current system fails to meet its constitutional obligations due to overwhelming caseloads, insufficient funding and resources, and lack of statewide oversight and independence.

The FAIR Act establishes an independent State Public Defender Commission on July 1, 2026 to oversee the Office of State Public Defender, which becomes effective on January 1, 2027.

Together, the Office and Commission will:

- set standards for attorney workload, training, and resources, free of judicial and political influence;
- appoint Chief Public Defenders;
- assess each counties’ need for additional resources;
- distribute supplemental state funds to counties’ public defense offices; and
- gather, analyze and release data.

The Commission will be comprised of 11 members, with 3 members appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court. Persons appointed to the Commission must have significant experience defending indigent clients in criminal or juvenile proceedings, and must also demonstrate a commitment to public service, a strong understanding of the legal system, and a willingness to contribute to the ongoing improvement of public defense in the state. If you are interested in being considered for a Supreme Court appointment to these important positions, please submit a resume, letter of interest and supporting materials to Kahalah Clay (kclay@ilosps.gov).

More information about the FAIR Act and the State Public Defender Commission can be found [here](#).