



Supreme Court of Illinois

May 27, 2026

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT SEEKS APPLICANTS FOR STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION

The Illinois Supreme Court invites applications from individuals interested in serving as an appointed member of the Illinois State Public Defender Commission (Commission). The Commission plays a vital role in overseeing and supporting the Office of the State Public Defender (OSPD), 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. The Commission will be comprised of 11 members, with three members appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court, four members appointed by the Governor, and four members appointed by the Legislature.

Together, the OSPD and the 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.

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 at kclav@ilosps.gov by 5 p.m. on June 30, 2026.**

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

(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: James Brunner, Public Information Officer of the Illinois Supreme Court at 217.208.3354 or jbrunner@illinoiscourts.gov)