



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## AGENDA ITEM

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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**DATE:** December 9, 2025

**18**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

### SUBJECT

**GENERAL SERVICES – APPROVE FIRST AMENDMENT TO LEASE AGREEMENT FOR THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER’S CENTRAL BRANCH, 451 A STREET, SAN DIEGO AND NOTICE OF EXEMPTION (DISTRICT: 1)**

### OVERVIEW

The San Diego County Public Defender (PD) has operated its Central Branch, located at 451 A Street, San Diego, since 2010. The existing lease for approximately 92,303 square feet of office space was approved by the Board of Supervisors (Board) on March 23, 2010 (14) and expires on September 30, 2026. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, PD added 90 positions, increasing staffing in all branches with a large allocation of new staff assigned to the Central Branch. The current lease premises does not accommodate the additional staff. The Department of General Services (DGS) conducted a space validation study that supports the need for 106,776 square feet of space for Central Branch operations.

Staff from DGS have negotiated a first amendment to the lease agreement that will extend the term by seven years and five months, with two consecutive options of five years each. The proposed amendment includes an expansion of 14,473 square feet and five months of rent abatement in the first year of the amendment term. Today’s request is for Board approval of the first amendment to the lease agreement.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Find the proposed lease for the Public Defender is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.
2. Approve and authorize the Director, Department of General Services, to execute the proposed lease amendment for the premises located at 451 A Street, San Diego.

### EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The Public Defender’s Central Branch supports the community in its current location. Extending the term of the lease would benefit the community by continuing to provide resources to a

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traditionally underserved community. A larger facility increases the availability of adequate programs and resources ensuring the community has equitable access to legal resources.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Implementing effective sustainability objectives is crucial to ensuring safe and healthy communities and contributing to the overall success of the region. The approval of this lease amendment supports the County’s Strategic Initiative of Sustainability to ensure the capability to respond to immediate needs for individuals, families, and the region.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for the existing lease through the end of the term in September 2026 are already budgeted for the San Diego County Public Defender (PD). Funds for this request will be included in the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Operational Plan for PD. If approved, this request will result in estimated costs and revenue of approximately \$1,259,957 to include five months of rent abatement. FY 2027-28 costs are estimated at \$3,866,359, which includes a 3% rent adjustment to go into effect October 1, 2027. Funds for the remaining contract term and for each option year (if exercised) will be included in future years’ operational plans for PD. The funding source is General Purpose Revenue and there will be no additional staff years.

#### **BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

#### **ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

#### **BACKGROUND**

The San Diego County Public Defender (PD) has operated its Central Branch at 451 A Street, San Diego, since 2010. The Central Branch houses all four branches of PD’s operations including the Primary Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Multiple Conflicts Office, and Office of Assigned Counsel. The existing lease for approximately 92,303 square feet of office space expires on September 30, 2026. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, PD added 90 positions, increasing staffing in all branches with a large allocation of new staff assigned to the Central Branch. The current leased premises at 451 A Street cannot accommodate the additional staff. The Department of General Services (DGS) conducted a space validation study that supports the need for 106,776 square feet of space to support Central Branch operations.

Staff from DGS have negotiated a first amendment to the lease agreement for PDs’ Central Branch that will expand the premises by 14,473 square feet to meet current staffing needs. The proposed amendment extends the term of the lease for an additional seven years and five months and includes two consecutive five-year options to further extend the term. The amendment also includes a \$4,805,685 tenant improvement allowance and five months of rent abatement.

Details of the proposed first amendment to the lease are as follows:

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LEASE PROVISION	EXISTING LEASE	PROPOSED LEASE AMENDMENT
LESSOR	Wilson HCF Wisconsin 8 REPO, LLC	Wilson HCF Wisconsin 8 REPO, LLC
PREMISES	Approximately 92,303 square feet	106,776 square feet (includes building remeasurement and expansion space)
TERM	7 years, 3 months	7 years, 5 months
OPTIONS TO EXTEND	none	Two (2), Five (5) year options
RENT ADJUSTMENTS	3% Annually	3% Annually
EARLY TERMINATION BY COUNTY	N/A	N/A
UTILITIES	Lessor pays	Lessor pays
MAINTENANCE	Lessor pays	Lessor pays
CUSTODIAL	Lessor pays	Lessor pays
MONTHLY OCCUPANCY COST		
Rent	\$291,234.91 (\$3.16/sq. ft.)	\$314,986.25 (\$2.95/sq. ft.)
Utilities	\$0	\$0
Maintenance	\$0	\$0
Custodial	\$0	\$0
TOTAL OCCUPANCY COST PER MONTH	\$ 291,234.91 (\$3.16/sq. ft.)	\$ 314,986.25 (\$2.95/sq. ft.)

#### ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

The proposed lease amendment is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines because it involves amending an existing lease for use of an existing building, involving negligible or no expansion of the existing use. The project is not subject to any of the exceptions to the Categorical Exemptions listed in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines. See Attachment A for Notice of Exemption.

#### LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today’s proposed action to approve the lease amendment for the Office of the Public Defender supports the Community Initiative in the County of San Diego’s 2025-2030 Strategic Plan by providing programs that promote engagement and enhance the quality of life throughout the community.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Shelton', is positioned above the printed name.

EBONY N. SHELTON  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT(S)**  
Attachment A: Notice of Exemption