

MEMORANDUM

TO: Michelle Morgan, Chairperson Carroll County Board of Commissioners  
FROM: Maryellen Simmons, Circuit Public Defender, Carroll County Public Defender Office  
RE: Request For Budget Amendment  
DATE: December 20, 2019

Madam Chairman:

On behalf of the Carroll County Public Defender Office, I am requesting a budget amendment to our FY20 county budget for a \$6,500.00 increase to our operating budget. The purpose of the amendment is to increase our telephone line item by \$2,500.00, to a total of \$15,500, and our office supplies and expenses budget by \$4000.00, to a total of \$27,000.00.

To date we have incurred expenses of \$7,693.50 in telephone expenses. Our total current telephone budget is \$13,000. Through the first six (6) months of the year we have expended 59% of our telephone budget. If we remain on the same track, as expected, we will incur approximately \$15,500.00 in telephone expenses. We utilize CSII for our telephone services. We do request that they determine the lowest cost provider on a regular basis. We also have service with Verizon for our investigators, the CPD and the chief administrative assistant. These persons require a cell phone for work purposes. All other employees are required to use their personal cell phones for work purposes and do not get reimbursed any cost. We do regularly review our bill for any decreases we can find.

Our office supply and office expense budget includes not only the necessary paper, pens, toner and other general items needed for day to day operations, but it also includes IT services. Of the approximate \$9,800.00 expended from this account to date, approximately \$6,500.00 of this has been for IT services. These services are for routine monthly maintenance, upgrading storage to our server, and resolving issues with our attorneys not being able to play videos provided in discovery. The issues with the videos are that different agencies and different stores tend to use different video player systems. We attempted to find a video player system to play all formats, but this was unsuccessful. Therefore, when our office receives videos on formats other than what we currently have installed, we must call IT to assist us. We do not allow persons to upload various things to their computers, because this has routinely caused our computers to have viruses or to crash, which results in more IT cost. The county has not provided IT services to our office, because the IT department has several departments they must assist. Additionally, the need we have for video player assistance is usually very time-sensitive and cannot wait. Therefore, it has been agreed with past boards that our office would contract with a person to provide our services. The State is required to furnish computers to our offices, but it is not required to provide IT services for them; this has always been the responsibility of the counties. In the four other counties in our circuit, the county IT provides services and we are on the county server. Since we are not on the county server here, we must continue to upgrade our server system to accommodate saving the discovery and work product in all our cases. We are requesting an increase of \$4000.00 to our office supplies and expense budget to cover our ongoing expenses.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

