

**DESCRIPTION:**

The Public Defender is a Constitutional Officer charged with the duties outlined in Chapter 27, Florida Statutes. The Public Defender must exercise the responsibility of representing, without additional compensation, any person who is: 1) determined to be insolvent and is under arrest for a felony or misdemeanor; 2) alleged to be a delinquent child; or 3) sought by petition to be involuntarily hospitalized as mentally ill or mentally retarded. The County is prescribed by State Statute to provide the Public Defender with operational costs such as office space, communications, utilities, and custodial services.

**COMMENTS:**

*Operating Expenses* – The FY 99-00 budget was reduced by 15.8% and increased by 5.4% for FY 00-01. Reductions in FY 99-00 were generally across many line items such as, out of county travel, software licenses, and maintenance of equipment. The increase in FY 00-01 is due primarily to costs associated with witnesses for testimony and court reporting expenses. It should be noted that funding for employee parking was moved from the budget of the Real Estate Management Division to the Public Defender's Office.

*Capital Outlay* – Funding is provided for the replacement of computers and the purchase of additional printers for both fiscal years.