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# MEMORANDUM

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Date: June 25, 2015

To: The Honorable Chair and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator 

Re: **Appointment of Interim Legal Defender**

As you know, Legal Defender Isabel Garcia notified us of her plan to retire from her position on July 3, 2015 after serving as Legal Defender for more than 20 years.

I have directed that both the Legal Defender and Public Defender positions be advertised; and I have asked Lori Lefferts, Director of Public Defense Services, to lead the hiring panel. Ms. Lefferts expects to begin reviewing resumes and conducting interviews within the next few weeks.

I am appointing Joy Athena, currently the Chief Deputy Legal Defender, as Interim Legal Defender effective July 6, 2015. Ms. Athena has served as Chief Deputy since 2012 and has been an attorney with the Pima County Legal Defender's Office since 1997. Ms. Athena's resume is attached for your information.

CHH/mjk

Attachment

c: Ellen Wheeler, Assistant County Administrator  
Lori Lefferts, Director, Public Defense Services  
Joy Athena, Chief Deputy Legal Defender

**CURRENT POSITION:** Chief Deputy, Pima County Legal Defender's Office, July 2012 to present.

- Manage felony trial section: set strategic goals, create attorney performance plans and appraisals, assign and evaluate caseloads.
- Oversee all other personnel: monitor and optimize clerk, secretary, paralegal, mitigation specialist, law clerk, investigator, and felony and appellate attorney duties and resolve issues.
- Formulate office policies to increase efficiency and reduce waste.
- Review expert fee requests and determine their necessity, scope, and value.
- Handle lawyer and support staff disciplinary matters.
- Represent clients: 300 fugitive-warrant clients annually, co-counsel in ongoing first-degree murder case, other clients in various felony criminal and post-conviction matters, and litigate in Superior Court, Court of Appeals, and Arizona Supreme Court.
- Participate in meetings and committees that are critical to address common issues in indigent defense, including Business Enterprise Mapping and the MacArthur Foundation Grant.

**PREVIOUS ATTORNEY POSITIONS:**

- Assistant Legal Defender, Appeals, 1997 to July 2012. Handled high caseload of Rule 32 post-conviction relief and direct appeals cases.
- Attorney in criminal defense firm; Attorney in civil law firm specializing in corporate, tax, and State Land matters; Attorney for general civil law firm, 1994 to 1997.

**PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT:** Intelligence Officer, United States Air Force, 1983 to 1988.

- Pentagon: The Air Force Intelligence Watch Officer position required working all shift schedules to insure that the chain of command was timely informed of situations affecting the use of air power and Air Force personnel.
- Bolling Air Force Base: The Soviet Awareness Briefing Team position required the preparation and presentation of multi-media classified and unclassified briefings across the nation and oversees to United States Air Force and foreign armed services personnel and civilians.
- Junior Officer of the Quarter Award, Air Force Commendation Medal.

**EDUCATION:** Juris Doctor, University of Arizona College of Law, 1993.

- Magna Cum Laude, Order of the Coif.
- Jessup International Law Moot Court Southwest Regional Champions, 1992.
- Bachelor of Arts, University of Arizona, General Studies (political science, Russian language, speech communications), With High Distinction, Phi Beta Kappa, 1983.

**AWARDS:** 2005 Outstanding Public Defender Award, Arizona Public Defender Association.

**OTHER LAW-RELATED ACTIVITIES:**

- Adjunct Professor, College of Law: Legal Writing (2 classes) and Indigent Defense Systems (2012) (co-instructor, Mr. Robert Hirsh).
- Prepared and presented various criminal defense CLEs (continuing legal education seminars).