

Council Agenda Bill

AB Number

AB25-123

Agenda Bill Information

Title*

Indigent Defense Contract with Valley Defenders, PLLC.

Action*

Motion

Council Agenda Section

Committee Report

Council Meeting Date*

12/08/2025

Staff Member

Gary Horejsi

Department*

Police

Committee

Public Safety

Committee Date

12/01/2025

Exhibits

Packet Attachments - if any

Exhibit A - Order 25700-A-1644.pdf	262.85KB
Contract SNQ - INDIGENT DEFENSE SERVICES.docx	35.23KB
Res 1741 Contract with Valley Defenders PLLC.docx	22.16KB

Summary

Introduction*

Brief summary.

Both the United States and Washington State constitutions require fair legal representation for indigent individuals. There is a constitutional right to court-appointed counsel for indigent defendants. Under RCW 39.34.180, each city is responsible for its own criminal justice responsibilities, including the prosecution of misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor offenses.

The City of Snoqualmie has contracted with Valley Defenders, PLLC since January 13, 2013, providing indigent defense services in criminal cases. Due to a judicial standards change for public defense the fees associated with these services are increasing.

Proposed Motion

Move to approve Resolution 1741 approving the contract with Valley Defenders, PLLC.

Background/Overview*

What was done (legislative history, previous actions, ability to hyperlink)

The City of Snoqualmie has contracted with Valley Defenders, PLLC since January 13, 2013, for indigent defense services to individuals who have been certified for representation in criminal charges. Due to a Washington State Supreme Court order, the change for public defense fees associated with these services are increasing. The Washington State Supreme Court announced new substantial reductions in the caseload limits of public defenders. This case ruling was decided in the matter of the standards for indigent defense implementation of CrR 3.1, CrRLJ 3.1, AND JuCR 9.2, Order No. 25700-A-1644. The new limits take effect on January 1, 2026, reducing the caseload of public defenders over a ten-year period to 47 felony case credits and 120 misdemeanor case credits. Case credits are applied to account for complex cases versus the number of cases to account for the time spent by each public defender working through a case. Valley Defenders, PLLC provided a new Interlocal Agreement reflecting the new cost of services under the new standards.

Compensation - The City shall pay to the Valley Defenders PLLC One Hundred and Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$160,000) per year in the monthly installments per Table 1 in the contract. (Contract Attached to this document). This amount assumes a 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE) attorney at a case load of 225 cases maximum per FTE for 2026. In the event case loads increase or decrease more or less than 15%, both parties agree to re-negotiate the contract amount.

There are additional costs that may occur depending on case needs; for example: \$1,000 flat rate for an appeal; medical or psychiatric evaluation costs; expert witness fees, interpreter fees; or, investigation expenses.

The contract term is for one year, ending December 31, 2026. There is an option to extend and amend for one more additional year, which would make that end date December 31, 2027.

The attached contract from Valley Defenders PLLC., ensures we continue providing services for indigent defense and helps keep the City of Snoqualmie within the standards set forth by the Washington State Supreme Court.

Analysis*

The City of Snoqualmie is entering into a new contract with Valley Defenders PLLC., due to the new indigent defense standards set by the Washington State Supreme Court which reduces the caseload of public defenders and increases the cost of services starting January 1, 2026.

Budgetary Status*

This is an extra-budget expenditure.

Budget Summary

The City incorporated \$1,868,432 in Non-Departmental (#001) expenditures within the 2025-26 Biennial Budget. Currently, \$868,242 has been spent for purchases within this functional classification, with no contracts outstanding. After incorporating the proposed \$160,000 Valley Defenders PLLC contract for public defense expenses, \$840,190 remains for other purchases (please see the table below or on the next page).

While it appears that the Non-Departmental (#001) classification has sufficient appropriation to fund the contract, this contract is \$57,930 higher than the public defender costs estimated within the 2025-26 Biennial Budget. Administration has requested a budgetary amendment for this expenditure as part of the Mid-Biennium Amendment, as shown within AB25-107 Amendment #8, with an expected Council vote on November 24, 2025.

Fiscal Impact

Amount of Expenditure	Amount Budgeted	Appropriation Requested
\$160,000.00	\$1,868,432.00	\$57,930.00

Fiscal Impact Screenshot

Non-Departmental (#001)

2025-2026 Biennial Budget		Combined
Beginning Budget	\$	1,868,432
Expenditures	\$	(868,242)
Outstanding Contract Value	\$	-
Current Available Budget	\$	1,000,190
Value of this Contract (AB25-122)	\$	(160,000)
Available Budget after Contract	\$	840,190