



PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

1001 4th Street Eureka, Ca. 95501

Phone: 707-445-7634

Fax: 707-445-7320

April 10, 2017


To the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors:


We, the undersigned, are reporting a violation of statute as Mr. David Marcus is unqualified under relevant statutes to lead our office as Public Defender. We do this with grave concerns for our jobs and pray that we are protected under the whistle blower statute.


The loss of Kevin Robinson as Public Defender was a tremendous blow to our office. Though his leadership and vast legal knowledge were greatly missed, the office continued to function smoothly under Greg Elvine-Kreis and Luke Brownfield. All staff and every attorney pulled together to continue to serve our clients and this community in the manner in which they deserve. Conversely, the appointment of Mr. Marcus has crippled our office. It is our belief that he directly puts office staff in a position of not being able to respond with adequate and factual information to the questions of our clients. He lacks even basic current criminal law knowledge and literally attempts to have non lawyer support staff provide him with answers to legal questions. We are not confident that anything we relay to our clients from him is correct, and in fact, some of us have seen clear instances when his advice and statements to clients were completely inaccurate and not in accordance with current statutes that we have been trained on. We therefore feel that we cannot go to Mr. Marcus for answers to questions that we have or that our clients have and then pass that information on to our clients.

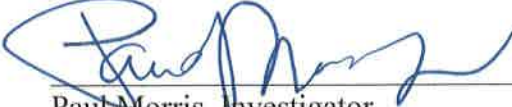
Additionally, Mr. Marcus lacks leadership skills, further burdening our staff. We no longer have a boss that we can rely upon for support. Instead, Mr. Marcus actually relies on all of us to explain most details to him, even in the most basic of criminal defense procedures.


The tremendous amount of stress he has put on staff is especially egregious, as we are the people who relay information to the clients in many cases. Because Mr. Marcus is failing to comply with local court rules and violating the rights of clients of the Public Defender's Office to effective representation of counsel, coupled with his lack of knowledge and experience, Mr. Marcus has created an unreasonable burden on employees. Working under Mr. Marcus is putting all employees at risk of lawsuits by clients, who have been complaining about his services. Most recently he wanted to call Semper Virens on one of our past clients who came into the office for help. That would have effectively locked our client up, which is the exact opposite role of a Public Defender. Mr. Marcus has created an unsafe working environment.



Anne Curtis, Supervising Legal Secretary
(35 years of service for the County)


Georgette Trump, Sr. Legal Secretary
(20 years of service for the County)


Lyndze Reynolds, Legal Secretary II
(9 years of service for the County)


Paul Morris, Investigator
(5 years of service to the County)


Desiree Noel, Legal Secretary II
(4 years of service to the County)


Desirae Hadley, Investigator
(4 years of service to the County)


M.E. Hadley, Investigator
(2 years of service to the County)


Andrea McClure, Legal Office Assistant II
(1 year of service to the County)