

Thomas "Bud" Woodrum Appointed as Chief Public Defender for the 6th Judicial District



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Chief Public Defender Jennifer Harjo will retire effective April 1, 2025

RALEIGH — After more than 16 years of dedicated service, Chief Public Defender Jennifer Harjo will retire effective April 1, 2025. Ms. Harjo has led one of the most well-run, efficient, and effective offices for indigent defense in North Carolina, ensuring quality legal representation for those in need.

Following a vote of the District Bar, consultation with a committee of local attorneys, and input from both the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Indigent Defense Services Director, Thomas "Bud" Woodrum has been appointed as the new Chief Public Defender for the 6th Judicial District.

Mr. Woodrum brings extensive experience in criminal defense across New Hanover and Pender counties. He has earned a strong reputation for his advocacy skills, integrity, and ability to collaborate across all sectors of the court system to promote the fair and efficient administration of justice. He has also played a key role in the administrative operations of the Public Defender's Office, including the successful establishment of the Pender County office when state funding allowed for its expansion.

With a deep commitment to public service, Mr. Woodrum is well-positioned to lead the office and continue its mission of providing high-quality legal representation to those in need. His leadership will ensure that the citizens of New Hanover and Pender counties receive fair and effective legal defense.

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About North Carolina Judicial Branch

The [North Carolina Judicial Branch](#) is an equal and distinctively separate branch and core function of government. The 7,600 Judicial Branch employees statewide administer justice in courthouses in North Carolina's 100 counties. The [Judicial Branch budget for FY 2023–24](#) was \$750.7M, 90.9% of which is used to pay salaries and 9.1% is used for operations. The Judicial Branch receives 2.53% of the overall State budget.

About North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts

The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) is the administrative agency for the [North Carolina Judicial Branch](#), providing administrative services to help the North Carolina court system operate more efficiently and effectively, taking into account each courthouse's diverse needs, caseloads, and available resources.

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