

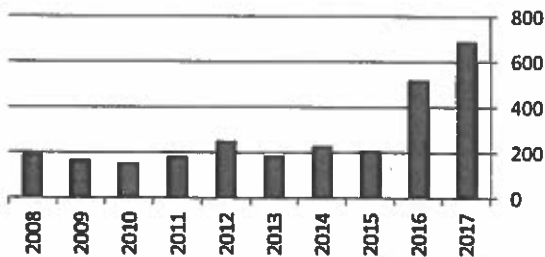


### SADO Overview

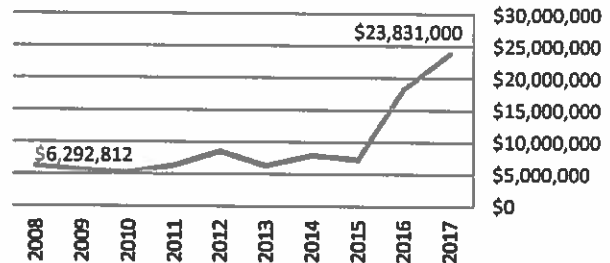
The State Appellate Defender Office (SADO) works to meet the statutory and constitutional requirement to represent poor people appealing their criminal convictions. SADO's budget of approximately \$7.6 million funds a staff of 49, including attorneys, administrators, and investigation and mitigation professionals.

- SADO's post-conviction investigation and litigation has helped exonerate at least 19 wrongfully imprisoned clients.
- SADO's work obtaining sentencing relief and correcting trial errors historically has reduced statewide prison costs by over \$5 million each year, about \$300,000 per staff attorney.
- SADO attorneys saved the state approximately \$23,831,000 in prison costs for 2017 alone, \$17,261,000 from reduced sentences in juvenile lifer cases, and \$6,570,000 from sentencing error corrections in SADO's regular appeals.

Total Years Reduced from Minimum Prison Sentence Terms



Estimated Savings to State of Michigan through Prison Sentence Reductions



### MAACS Overview

The remainder of the state's criminal appeals are assigned to locally-funded private attorneys overseen by the Michigan Assigned Appellate Counsel System (MAACS), the assigned counsel unit of SADO. MAACS merged with SADO in 2014.

In 2015, after decades of operating under an inefficient assignment model and inadequate resources, MAACS implemented an innovative pilot project in 32 trial courts. The project utilizes a more efficient regional assignment process as a means to encourage the trial courts' voluntary adoption of a reasonable and standardized attorney fee policy. In November 2017, the Supreme Court approved these reforms permanently, and MAACS continues to grow the new regional assignment lists and standard fee participation to the shared benefit of trial courts, appointed appellate counsel, and indigent criminal defendants.

### CDRC Overview

An essential part of SADO's mission as Michigan's only state-funded public defender office is to provide resources through support services and training to assigned criminal defense attorneys throughout the state. For forty years, SADO's Criminal Defense Resource Center (CDRC) has served that function for the criminal defense bar. CDRC also provides services and resources to judges, prosecutors, probation agents, county jails, and state prisons.

CDRC produces a wealth of resources for criminal justice professionals, all of which are accessible on SADO's website. Some of the most popular resources include: defender books and manuals, appellate summaries, a brief bank, the Criminal Defense Newsletter, an online criminal defense attorney forum, databases containing expert witness transcripts, law enforcement misconducts, and reentry service providers, and self-help resources covering child support, expungement, collateral consequences, pro per manuals, sample pleadings, and more.



State Appellate Defender Office  
www.sado.org

### FY 2019 Request

For FY 2019, SADO requests the *continued* appropriation of \$700,000 to support representation of clients serving Life Without Parole sentences for offenses committed as youth. These clients require new sentencing hearings because they are now serving mandatory life sentences in violation of the constitutional prohibition against cruel and unusual punishments.

- A 2016 United States Supreme Court decision required new sentencing hearings for all individuals serving unconstitutional mandatory sentences of Life Without Parole. SADO represents 193 of Michigan's 364 juvenile lifers and 66 of these clients have now received new sentences.
- SADO first received a supplemental \$300,000 appropriation (FY 2016), then appropriations of \$700,000 (FY 2017), and \$700,000 (FY 2018) to dedicate staff to represent these clients. SADO spent two years building an operational Juvenile Lifer Unit with attorneys and mitigation specialists. Should funding end in FY 2019, in the middle of the project, this unit would be disbanded.

In the last two years, 66 clients received new sentences with an average length of 29.9 years. 25 clients have been approved for parole and 22 clients released on parole. 126 clients await new sentencing hearings.

**Cost to the state:** For cases that proceed to hearings, an adequately-funded defense saves significant money for the State of Michigan:

- Estimated cumulative number of reduced sentences for 66 clients no longer serving life sentences: 848 years
- Estimated savings in incarceration costs for the 2.5 years of Juvenile Lifer Unit operations: \$29,311,941
- **Return on Investment:** 16:1 (1624%)

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