

****Ms. Russell's written comments were received past the deadline for the August 2025 meeting, but within two days of the conclusion of the meeting. Included in the September public comment packet.**

Angela Russell
Parent Child Representation Program Case Manager
angierussell.casemanager@gmail.com
August 18th, 2025

Oregon Public Defense Commission
Subject: Requesting to include PCRCP Case Managers in the **6.8% inflation increase with rate adjustment to \$60 an hour.**

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to respectfully request a rate adjustment to **\$60 per hour** for all PCRCP Case Managers in the proposed 2025-2027 contract.

At the bare minimum we must be included in the **6.8% inflation increase**. With the rising costs to live this is essential to keep up with the pace of living, the fuel cost, the maintenance on our vehicles for multi-county travel and we can ensure providing the best care and service for our clients.

PCRCP Case Managers are highly sought out among our attorneys. We provide client centered advocacy and we address the complex challenges like housing instability, medical, employment, substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, immigration concerns, language barriers, and the overall health and well being of our clients.

This work is very demanding at all hours of the day and night. This is not an entry level career.

We not only support families today, we are helping build a long lasting environment of healthy families. This is essentially saving Oregon money with cases resolving quickly and families staying out of the court system.

*The proposed rate increase to \$60 an hour reflects the costs that is necessary to sustain this work at the highest level:

The rising costs of living, fuel, vehicle maintenance, health insurance, insurance requirements and professional requirements make current rates unsustainable.

*Being an independent contractor all costs are on the contractor, taxes, retirement insurance requirements, health insurance.

I respectfully urge the commissioners to act in a timely manner and approve the inclusion of the PCRCP Case Managers in the 6.8% inflation increase and adjust the hourly rate to \$60 per hour. These changes are vital to sustaining the long term viability of the program and sustaining the highest level of contractors.

Thank you for your time and consideration and continued commitment to high quality, client centered legal representation.

Angela Russell
Parent Child Representation Program Case Manager

****Ms. Avery's letters were received past the deadline for the August 2025 meeting, but within two days of the conclusion of the meeting. Included in the September public comment packet.**

From: [Mikayla Avery](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Letter of support
Date: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 8:56:53 AM
Attachments: [2025.08.05 Letter of Support.pdf](#)
[Letter in Support of PCRP case managers.pdf](#)
[PCRP support letter.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from mikaylaavery@pcrpcm.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good Morning, Please see attached letters from Attorneys in support of advocacy for PCRP case managers to have reasonable caseloads and increased pay for our services.

Best,

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Mikayla Avery, LCSW
503-405-5549

Contractor with *Oregon Public Defense Commission*

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This e-mail may contain information that is privileged, confidential, or otherwise exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the addressee or it appears from the context or otherwise that you have received this e-mail in error, please advise me immediately by reply e-mail, keep the contents confidential, and immediately delete the message and any attachments from your system. Thank you.

ERIN CASINI

ATTORNEY AT LAW

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Erin Casini and I practice juvenile dependency and delinquency in Polk County. I am writing to you to strongly encourage you to consider the reduction of caseloads for case managers. In my practice, case managers play an incredibly important role. They provide support and advocacy to clients who typically do not have a lot of people in their corner. As an attorney, I find that utilizing effective case managers can completely turn a case around. Due to my own caseload, I am unable to assist my clients with certain tasks like finding resources or signing up for classes. However, these are the exact tasks that are required of parents in order for ODHS to consider approving additional visitation or return the child to their home. Case managers fill those gaps and make magic happen. It is also not uncommon that case managers will do some of the work that should be done or ideally would be done by the assigned caseworker. Without appropriate caseloads, case managers are unable to dedicate the necessary time to be effective in their role. By overworking case managers, it decreases the amount of time they can spend with each client which can significantly disadvantage parents. It is important to understand that while parents can and should work with their assigned ODHS caseworker, that is a very complicated relationship. Not only are there lingering feelings of hurt and betrayal as a result of the removal of their child, but every move they make is being scrutinized and recorded. By having case managers, parents feel safe expressing themselves and practicing their new skills because there is a lack of judgment. The parent knows that they can call their case manager after they have relapsed and that they will be met with a listening ear, not repercussions for their actions. Caseworkers have helped furnish apartments, find housing, bring clients to inpatient treatment, and find that one parenting class that fits into the parent's already crowded schedule. I cannot overstate how crucial caseworkers are to dependency cases. That is why it is essential for case managers to have appropriate caseloads. If they are unable to perform their duties and are stretched too thin, everyone feels the negative ripple effect. It is also imperative to provide case managers with appropriate caseload in order for them to have longevity in their positions. In juvenile dependency, there are many parties and we all play a different and important role. In my opinion, case managers are equally as important in these cases as attorneys and case managers. I strongly encourage you to reduce the caseload for case managers in order to have them continue to positively affect the lives of the parents in the juvenile dependency system and the outcomes of their cases.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dated: 08/06/2025



Erin Casini, OSB# 245382
Attorney At Law



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Portland, OR 97213
rucklelaw@gmail.com

Cathryn A. Ruckle
Attorney at Law

August 5, 2025

To Whom it May Concern:

Re: PCRCP case managers

I am an attorney practicing in Multnomah County Juvenile Court (Dependencies/Terminations). I began practicing juvenile law in 1991 and have spent the majority of my career in this area. I have seen many changes over the years, but one of the **best by far is the implementation of the PCRCP case manager program**. The effectiveness of this program cannot be overstated, as it offers clients (people in the system) much additional help in resolving the issues that brought the case to the attention of the court.

Many of my clients are not well educated. Being directed to go here, fill out that, send it there, get a Social Security Card, track down a birth certificate, get a photo identification, get a HOP pass, and so on, often feels overwhelming for them. When clients are unable to complete these myriad tasks they can be seen as uncooperative, with a DHS caseworker feeling that simple instructions were given, without an understanding how daunting pages of forms can be to a person, especially one without strong reading skills.

I have seen case managers spend hours with clients, patiently helping them to fill out forms, get the forms where they need to go, and generally help them navigate a system that was not designed for them.

Case managers have been able to assist in obtaining the services clients need to sustain a home, obtain day care, make medical appointments, travel on Tri-Met, and so on. These things may seem commonplace to people who work middle class jobs, have their own transportation, and generally don't have to rely on public services to feed their families or find housing, and, importantly, have reliable phone service, but these tasks are often overwhelming to the population we serve.

I have had a number of cases in which my client qualified for Disability Services as well as financial support. This process is difficult and requires a tremendous amount of tenacity, which most of my clients who qualify don't possess. I can name several cases in which the case manager worked through the labyrinth and was able to acquire services and financial support, resulting in life-altering success for my client and the family.

Another way in which they assist clients in finding suitable drug treatment programs. I have had clients swear to me that they don't use drugs/alcohol, but then develop a relationship with a case

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Another way in which they assist clients in finding suitable drug treatment programs. I have had clients swear to me that they don't use drugs/alcohol, but then develop a relationship with a case manager and finally find the strength to be open about use with the case manager. Case managers often know of programs which with I am not familiar. They also have the time to devote to spend time with our clients, meeting them where they live, and reassuring clients that it is a judgment-free relationship. Clients will often be more forthcoming with a trusted case manager than with me or DHS. Please note, this is not a criticism of DHS case workers; they have their own work to do for many families and cannot devote the time to clients that a case manager can.

Case managers often attend DHS meetings and court hearings with clients. My assistant and I do as well, but clients are often comforted by the case manager, who has more time to spend with the client than either I or my assistant can. It would be nice if I had that much time to get together with my clients, going to their homes, assisting with treatment, and obtaining services to which they are entitled, but I simply cannot. I don't have the ability to keep up with my court schedule, the preparation for hearings (reports for which are often in the neighborhood of 100 pages), researching issues that come up in cases, reading case law to keep up with the decisions by the appellate courts, talking/negotiating with other parties, talking to providers, etc.

Finally, one of the best and most important facets of having case managers is that they are part of the defense team. They can't testify in court about what a client has or hasn't done, or said, or anything else that comes under umbrella of attorney-client privilege. This is one way in which a PCR case manager differs from a Parent Mentor through the Morrison Center. Parent Mentors are also a wonderful resource, and I have a great deal of appreciation them as well, but their encounters are not confidential. They play an important role, and I am grateful for their work, but they don't take the place of case managers.

Having a case manager on a case will often make the difference between a successful and timely reunification, and a long, drawn-out process which benefits no one.

Please feel free to contact me if I can provide any further information or answer questions. I appreciate your time in reading this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cathryn Ruckle', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cathryn Ruckle



METROPOLITAN PUBLIC DEFENDER PARENT|CHILD ADVOCACY DIVISION

August 18, 2025

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to express my utmost support for increasing capacity, support and funding for the invaluable Parent Child Representation Project case managers.

I am attorney at Metropolitan Public Defender's Parent Child Advocacy Division in Portland, Oregon. Over the past 2.5 years, I have represented more than 100 parents and children in Multnomah County's juvenile court. I have interacted with many PCRCP case managers on cases and around the courthouse. I have had the distinct pleasure of hiring a few external case managers to work on my cases when my office's in-house case managers are off referral. I cannot imagine doing my job without their support.

I will use on client's story as an example – I will call them "F." F is a non-binary parent with complicated mental health diagnoses. This client is impacted by an intellectual disability as well. Losing their two-year-old child to the same foster care system they were raised in was devastating for F, and caused F to spiral into a deep depression. They lost the ability to function, care for themselves, and keep up with bills. I hired an external case manager (Mikayla Avery). Mikayla's expertise navigating the IDD system helped F tremendously. In fact, in the five months since Mikayla has been on the case, she has managed to: 1) help F avoid evictions numerous times, 2) present F's home as a viable resource to ODHS after Mikayla helped clean it and helped to coach our client through a walk through, 3) locate new mental health care when F's mental health provider suddenly dropped them, 4) locate new resources to support with rent and utility bills, 5) locate new food boxes for F, 6) help F obtain a full time therapist, which was pivotal in the dependency case, and so many more victories in this case. In preparing this client and case for trial in June, I spent 50+ hours on F's case, solely on matters of motions, litigation and testimony preparation. I would not have had any capacity to work on the lifechanging areas Mikayla took charge of. F is staying afloat financially and mentally and working their way towards a return plan truly thanks to Mikayla. We use PCRCP's for our most complex cases for a reason. I know for a fact that Mikayla is underbilling for their work with F. Imagine if Mikayla could be compensated for the work she did to keep this parent housed, fed, and mentally well.

I cannot imagine practicing law without the support of PCRCP case managers. Writing a letter of support feels insufficient compared to the daily magnitude of their work. I would ask OPDC to consider increasing their allowable billable hours on every case, due to the complexities of working with these clients. The type of outcomes the legislature endeavored to support when implementing PCRCP in certain jurisdictions is only possible when our case managers are cared for in the same way they care for our clients.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your consideration of this letter advocacy for our PCRCP case managers.

Sincerely,

Eliza Silverman
Attorney at Law
7931 NE Halsey St, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97213
Office: 503.225.9100
Cell: 503.414.5408

****Mr. Betz's written comments were received past the deadline for the August 2025 meeting, but within two days of the conclusion of the meeting. Included in the September public comment packet.**

From: [Thaddeus Betz](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: payment for travel time
Date: Friday, August 22, 2025 2:47:54 PM

You don't often get email from thad@bendcriminallaw.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Any proposal other than paying a provider their regular rate for travel is pretty insulting. If a cop has to drive to interview a witness, they don't get paid less. If a DOJ attorney has to travel to work on a case, their pay isn't reduced. Why should it be any different for a provider of public defense? If you want to say "we don't value your time", just say you don't value someone's time.

In the past, I had taken out of county cases on an appointment essentially as charity. The pay was already bad, but I was called by a mission to serve. Paying a lesser rate for travel would remove any incentive to take a case in a rural county—where they are often starved for counsel. It also will reduce the quality of the defense provided to the client. Will an attorney have to think if they can really afford to interview that key witness in person? Will they have to think if they can really financially justify attending their client's GEI evaluation at the state hospital in person (as they should)? Or will they have to stay in their office, and bill other work, to keep the lights on.

Regards,

Thaddeus Betz

Law Office of Thaddeus Betz, LLC
155 NW Hawthorne
Bend, OR 97703
971-205-6650

View results

Respondent

89

Anonymous

12:00

Time to complete

1. Full Name *

Glenda Rae Harter

2. Organization/Entity Name *

Glenda R. Harter, PC

3. Email *

glenda.harter@harterlegal.com

4. Phone Number *

541-650-9350

5. Public Comments must be directly related to agenda items for this meeting. Please specify which agenda topic your comments will relate to below. *

Travel Time

6. What type of public comment are you submitting? *

☒

Written

☐

Verbal - Virtually Via Zoom

☐

Verbal- In-Person

7. Written Public Comment

If you'd like to submit attachments, please send them to info@opdc.state.or.us in addition to filling out this form

I have been representing clients whose cases have been placed on the unrepresented lists, primarily in Benton, Douglas, and Jackson counties. My office is in Lane County, which always has very few cases on the unrepresented list. It will be difficult for me to justify traveling to other counties to handle cases from the unrepresented lists, if I am to be paid less than my normal hourly rate for travel. I already limit my travel time to that which is necessary to competently represent my clients. The increased THIP rates have just been reduced. If attorney travel time rates are also reduced from the recently decreased hourly rate, it will be hard to sustain a practice that includes taking many cases from the long lists of unrepresented clients in Douglas and Jackson counties.

8. Additional Notes