

**STATEMENT ON CLIENT INVOLVEMENT AND SATISFACTION,  
QUALITY REPRESENTATION AND VIGOROUS ADVOCACY**

New York needs a public defense system that is exclusively focused on providing committed and competent representation to people who cannot afford legal counsel. Public defense providers should seek the advice and continued assistance of the client community in assessing and insisting upon a system providing for such representation.

The system for providing public defense services should have a client advisory board that assists administrators in planning and helps in the design, maintenance and administration of the system. Client satisfaction should be a primary component of defender professionalism as well as an important measure of defender performance. Tools for the assessment of client satisfaction should be developed and methodically used by defender offices.

Quality of representation should not be exclusively measured by outcome, but also by the strength and measured value of the client-attorney relationship.

In providing quality representation, a defender or defender administrator must be free to advocate for the rights of clients even to the disadvantage of court apparatus, prosecutors or government treasuries.

**ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
NEW YORK STATE DEFENDERS ASSOCIATION.**

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