



PARTNER OFFICE PROFILE

MINNEHAHA COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

SIOUX FALLS, SD

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What makes practicing in your jurisdiction uniquely challenging?

Due to the significant population growth and low housing options, those with felony records have a hard time finding suitable housing. Possession by ingestion is felony and the maximum penalty is 10 years in prison. People can travel to Colorado to legal purchase marijuana and other items containing THC but Delta-9 in SD is a Class 4 felony. I-90 and I-29 traps many unwary citizens of the consequences of traveling with such items.

Are resources, such as availability of experts and investigative support, accessible to staff attorneys?

Yes.

Popular attractions for attorneys to visit while in the city:

Sioux Falls is the largest city in South Dakota and was recently said to be the 47th quickest developing city in the country. Probably the best known attraction is Falls Park, established around the city's namesake, which are the waterfalls on the Big Sioux River, just north of downtown. Sioux Falls also has a large variety of attractions from the Great Plains Zoo, Sertoma Butterfly House & Marine Cove, as well as a variety of breweries and places to dine in the downtown area.

Is there anything that distinguishes the clients in your jurisdiction?

The racial blend is 86.8% White, 3% Native American, 2% Asian and 3% from no less than two races. The average age in the city is 33.6 years.

Does your public defender office have any formal community partnerships or special projects? If so, please describe the partnership, program, or project.

We have an alternative sentencing worker partnership with southeastern behavioral healthcare, a local non-profit that assists individuals in need of mental health services.

What are the different units in your public defender office?

Juvenile, Appeals, Abuse and Neglect, Investigators, Non-Violent Felonies and Misdemeanors.



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