



# THE DEFENDER

*Newsletter of the  
New Mexico Law Offices of the Public Defender*

## The new LOPD logo is here



Feedback from across the state about the proposed new logo made it clear that this change isn't an easy one for many of us. Most of you loved the proposed options. Others really didn't. So why get a new logo? And why this one?

The old logo, with the Lady of Justice, was designed by the state's printing office. Its format doesn't translate to the new LOPD website -- which should be up and running in July -- nor does it scale up or down for recruiting materials, t-shirts, banners, and printed documents. Plus, nothing in the logo associates with New Mexico.

The new logo is sleeker and more modern and it associates us with New Mexico. It is also much more versatile in its use. The designers incorporated a flame representing the fight for justice atop a base evoking part of a column. Together they make a torch which we as LOPD carry. It sits within an image of New Mexico to make the logo identifiable with our state.

Yes, it is simple. Graphic design principles say simple is best. Too many images and small lines in one design make it less practical and powerful.

The logo will phase with the new website, and new department letterhead and business cards will be made available then, too.

## Message from the Chief



Happy Juneteenth! And welcome to the new edition of The Defender. New look, new logo, soon to be new website, and on the way later this year even more new things: our first Strategic Plan created with office-wide input, our first ever ABA Workload Study, and digital archiving, to name just a few. Change is good – hard sometimes, but inevitable – so when we know that change will come, we can decide to not only “go with it,” but decide where it should go and try to influence or even guide it.

Continued ↓

# Archive overhaul

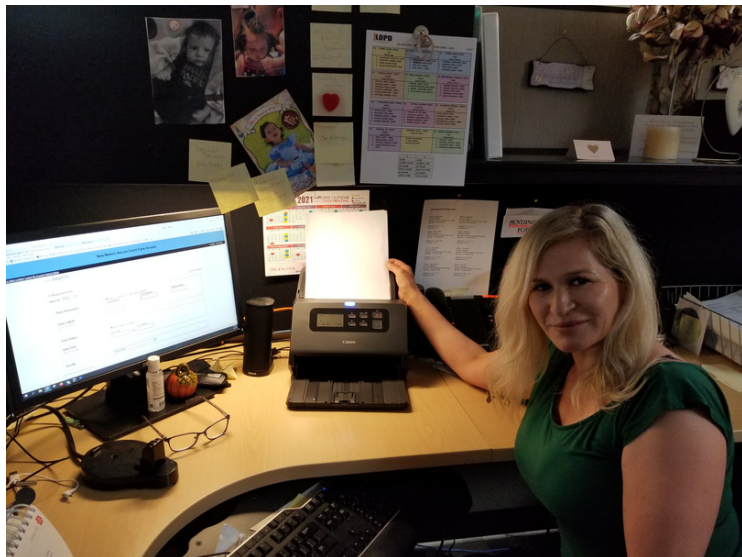
This week, offices across the state got their first taste of the department's new case file archiving system. The system will eventually replace all of the case file boxes lining the hallways in each of our offices.

"So much planning over a long period of time has gone into this project, but that's just a fraction of the time digital archiving will save us in the future," Chief Ben Baur said.

The entire transition to digital archiving will likely take about two years, but training for it started this week. The sessions were recorded for future use.

Maribel Ortega, senior secretary for the Felony Division in Albuquerque, said she will be saving time for more important tasks with digital archiving.

"I'm very excited to start working and learning about the process of this new system. Having to box all the files and put them away, it literally takes a lot of your time space and energy. Then when we have to find the file to reopen or to look for some information, it takes again time away from other important tasks. With this new system it will be very easier, faster, and efficient," she said.



Maribel Ortega, senior secretary for the Felony Division in Albuquerque, works with her small scanner at her desk.



IT's Ron Day works a large archive scanner in the Albuquerque office.

# Aware for Pride Month

"Happy Pride!"

Pride Month aims to bring wider awareness and celebration of LGBTQ+ people and communities. So, here's a bit of awareness about arrest and incarceration stats from Gideon's Promise, a public defender organization working to transform the criminal justice system for marginalized communities.



## LGBTQ+ MORE LIKELY TO BE ARRESTED

In 2019, gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals (with an arrest rate of 3,620 per 100,000) were 2.25 times as likely to be arrested in the past twelve months than straight individuals (with an arrest rate of 1,610 per 100,000).<sup>2</sup>

## SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

Zero-tolerance policies in schools, designed to keep students safe, often fail to do so for [LGBTQ+] students, resulting instead in arrest or exclusionary discipline when [LGBTQ+] students attempt to defend themselves from harassment.<sup>6</sup>

## ON THE INSIDE

1,118 LGBTQ incarcerated people, a staggering 85% of respondents reported that they had been held in solitary confinement at some point during their sentence.<sup>1</sup>

## WHY SOLITARY CONFINEMENT?

This is often done in the name of "protecting" [LGBTQ+] individuals behind bars, despite the well documented, long-lasting harms of solitary confinement.<sup>4</sup>



## Chief's message continued

And we at LOPD are committed to that – to making things different, to being the difference. This is possible, for those of you who weren't around at the time, only because a community worked for years to pass legislation that amended the New Mexico constitution and created our independent Public Defender Commission, which enables and encourages us to be at the forefront of criminal justice reform in our state. Change and reform (actually re-forming something) isn't easy, isn't always obvious, doesn't always come from where you think it will, and usually doesn't come quickly enough.

But change is happening, and you all bring it about for individual clients, in your courtrooms and communities, and in our office. Today, and tomorrow, let's celebrate Juneteenth, and the hard work and the joy of change. And I hope we remember all of those before us who have battled and sacrificed through so much more so that we can, in this moment, take the opportunity and responsibility to move forward.

- Ben

# Juneteenth

Tomorrow is Juneteenth, a holiday that marks the day when word finally reached people in Galveston, Texas in 1865 that slavery was indeed over – more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. The day commemorates the end of slavery and celebrates the history and resiliency of Black communities.

To acknowledge this day, LOPD will be closing offices today, Friday, June 18, at 3 p.m., and will be hosting an optional department-wide Zoom to discuss racial justice progress in the department and our communities.

Check your local area for events.

**Chief Public Defender will join newly elected U.S. Rep. Melanie Stansbury and State Senator Harold Pope Jr., the first African-American state senator, at the New Mexico Black Voters Collaborative booth at the New Mexico Juneteenth celebration in Albuquerque's Civic Plaza Saturday evening to share what legislators and the LOPD can do for the community.**

## Hi HR baby!

Lawrence Montoya, born 2/17/21, is a "happy, easy baby," mama Cassandra Montoya says. Cassandra works in Business Operations in HR.



# Masks to stay - for now

Following the lead of the CDC, last month the Governor and NMDOH provided updated guidance on mask requirements for fully vaccinated New Mexicans, easing many requirements. However, these changes do not influence LOPD's mask policy.

- Masks will continue to be required in all LOPD offices.
- All employees and visitors will be required to wear a face mask in public areas.
- Employees shall follow more restrictive policies issued by local courts, jails, counties and other criminal justice partners.



# Welcome summer interns

Fifteen interns will be joining LOPD this summer. They will be located across the state with individual mentors who will introduce them to the life of public defense.

## Albuquerque

Claudia Benz Duke  
 Claire Cooley UNM  
 William Dunn UNM  
 Michael Eide Northwestern  
 Clyde Engle Harvard  
 Joseph Trojan Syracuse  
 Justin French UNM  
 Jamshed Jehangir UNM  
 Stuart Lee UNM  
 Kai Mayer NYU  
 Lauren Miller Michigan  
 Kylie Rosabal UNM  
 Leah Roemer Berkeley  
 Ryan Sanchez UNM  
 Rushi Shah Harvard/ Princeton

## Gallup

Tiffany Farr Arizona State  
 Ryan Maxey ASU  
 Stephanie Monroe Arizona

## Alamogordo

Luke Freedman Texas

## Ruidoso

Luke Jobe UNM  
 Rachel Johnson BYU

## Santa Fe

Paige Lehman Washington St. Louis

MCU

Zachary Manning UNM

# LOPD Anniversaries

Celebrating 1, 5, 10,  
15, 20+ years

## 20 Years



Kathleen Baldrige (who does not like her picture taken but provided her kindergarten pic)  
Appellate attorney



Sydney West  
Attorney, Santa Fe

\*\*Thank you to the HR team for compiling these lists.\*\* If your name was somehow left off a list, please know it was not on purpose. Just let Maggie Shepard know and she'll make it right in the next newsletter.

## Farewell!

Farewell to these retirees!

AmyJo English

Edward Medina

## Welcome to the LOPD team!

Margie Rutledge  
Whitney Trujillo  
America Morales  
Caitlin Pozernick  
Mitchell Mender  
Monica Gautreaux