



JANUARY 15, 2026



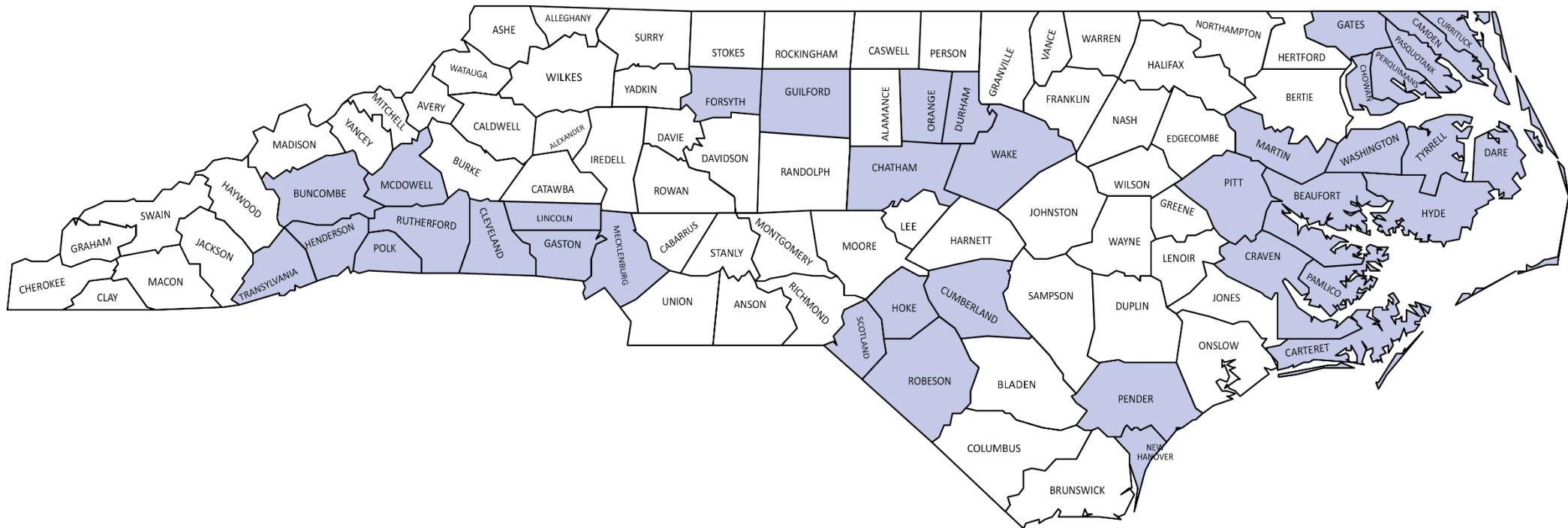
**PRESENTATION TO THE NCGA
JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
ON JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

PD EXPANSION STATUS

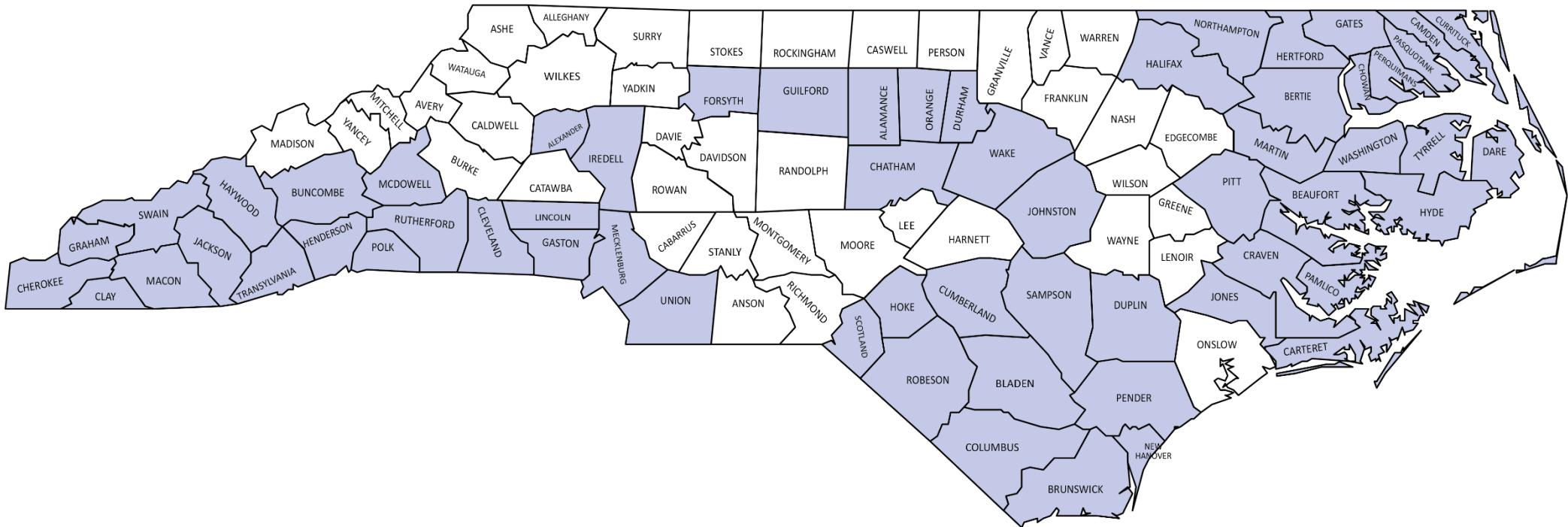


ALAMANCE COUNTY

PRE-EXPANSION COVERAGE



CURRENT PD OFFICE COVERAGE



NEW PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICES

New Defender District	Coverage
5	Duplin, Jones, Sampson
7	Bertie, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton
13	Johnston
15	Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus
17	Alamance
30	Union
32	Alexander, Iredell
43	Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain

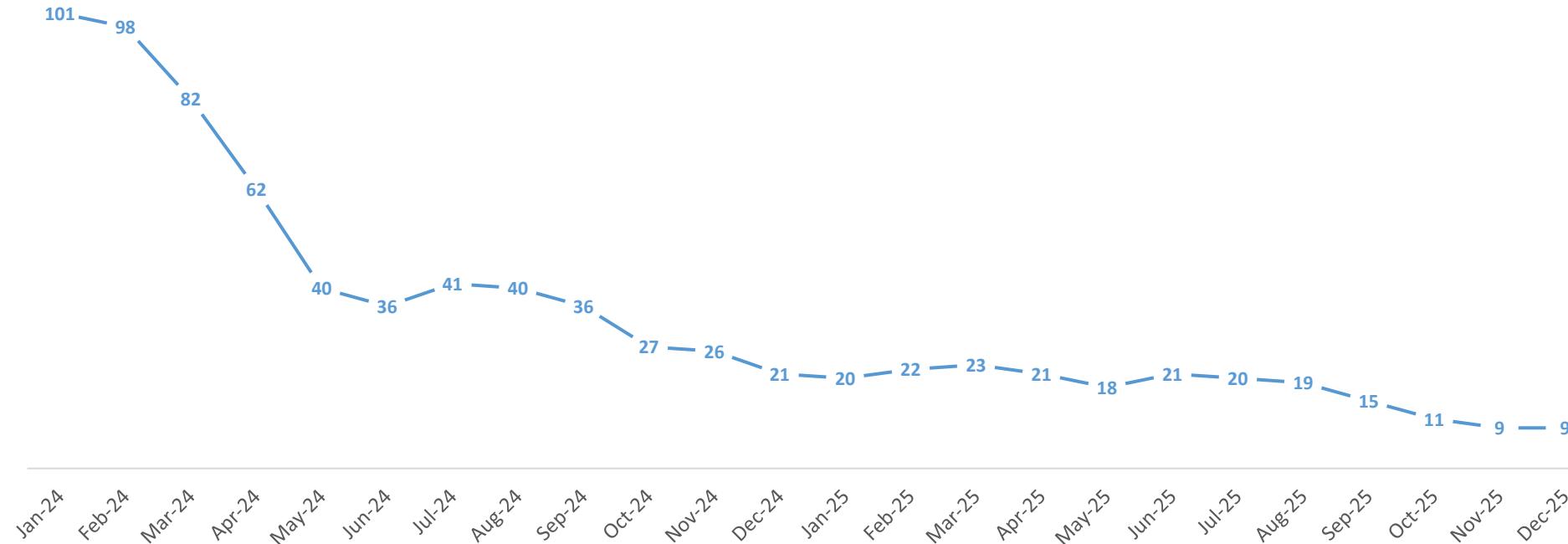
ONBOARDING FOR NEW CHIEFS



TRAINING FOR NEW PD OFFICE LEADERS



NUMBER OF VACANT POSITIONS IN NEW PD OFFICES



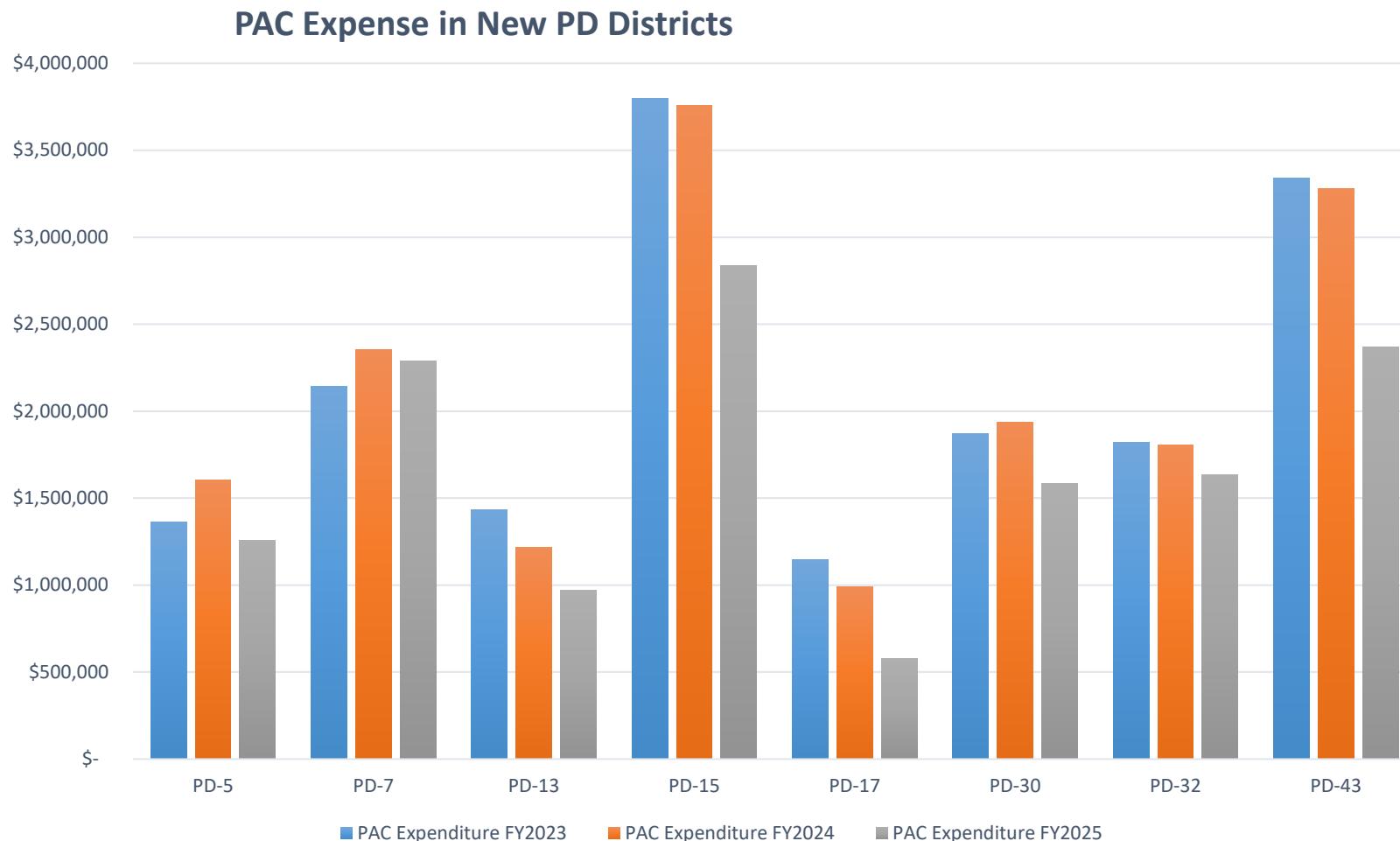
DISTRICT 7 SWEARING-IN CEREMONY



BRUNSWICK COUNTY STAFF



EFFECTS ON PAC SPENDING



CHALLENGES

1. Staffing in Rural Districts

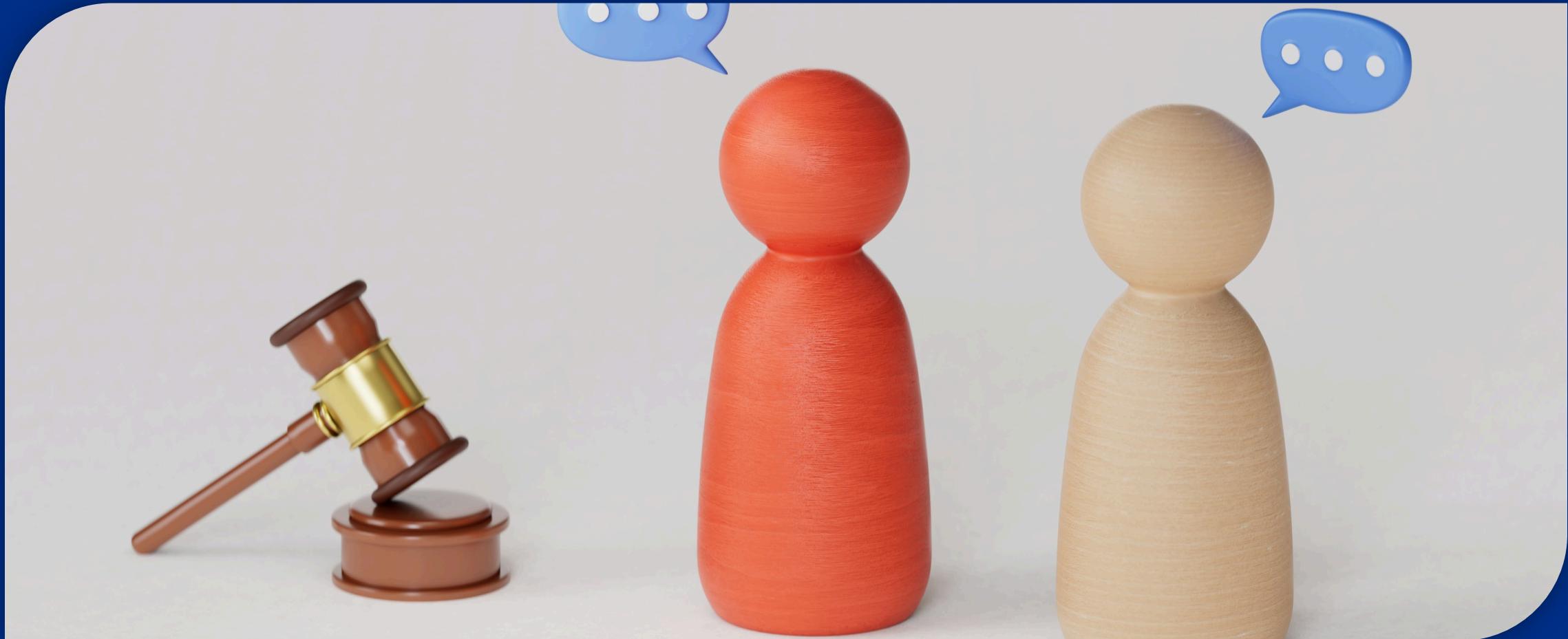
CHALLENGES

1. Staffing in Rural Districts
2. Conflict Coverage in Lawyer Deserts

CHALLENGES

1. Staffing in Rural Districts
2. Conflict Coverage in Lawyer Deserts
3. Costly Technology and Explosion in Digital Discovery

CONFLICT CASES



Ethical Obligations & Constitutional Foundation

Three Categories of Reported Conflicts

Ethical Conflicts

Cannot represent due to RPC
Example: Co-defendants with adverse interests; current vs. former client conflicts

Workload Conflicts

Caseload exceeds capacity for competent representation
Also an ethical issue per

- RPC 1.1 (Competence) and
- RPC 1.3 (Diligence)

Strategic Assignments

Efficiency-based reassessments
Defendant already has PAC on related matters; specialized expertise needed

6th Amendment Foundation

The right to effective assistance of counsel requires conflict-free representation. Conflicts that adversely affect counsel's performance constitute constitutional violations.

Inter-Office Assignments

Geographical Impediments

Most effective in geographically clustered districts.

Resource Challenges

- Staffing
- Calendaring
- Partitioning

Outside the Box Ideas:

Proposed change to RPC 1.10

DATA CHALLENGES



WHY DO WE NEED ACCURATE DATA?

Goal 1:

Accurately determine percentage of indigent caseload being handled by public defender offices in their judicial districts so that we can assess office efficiency and appropriate staffing levels.

COMMISSION ON INDIGENT DEFENSE SERVICES
REPORT ON PUBLIC DEFENDER CONFLICTS
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

SUBMITTED TO THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PURSUANT TO S.L. 2013-360, SECTION 18A.6.(B)

The Office of Indigent Defense Services shall report to the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety by October 1, 2013, and by October 1 of each year thereafter, on (i) the number of conflicts of interest that arose in public defender offices during the prior fiscal year and the cost to the State in private assigned counsel funds to resolve them and (ii) beginning with the report on October 1, 2014, the number of conflicts of interest resolved through the authorization in G.S. 7A-498.7(f1) during the prior fiscal year and the savings to the State in private assigned counsel funds as a result.

ATTORNEY STATUS ISSUE COUNTY WITH PD OFFICE

26CR000418-730

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA VS ALMONI LEWIS

Lead Attorney: ATTAWAY, VERA CARALYNE
Retained: 01/08/2026

Status	Pending
Filed	01/07/2026
Type	Criminal
Court	Pitt Superior Court
Judicial Officer	
<u>Financial Balance</u>	0.00

ATTORNEY STATUS ISSUE PRIVATE ASSIGNED COUNSEL

25CR487358-310



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA VS ANTHONY JEROME JACKSON

Lead Attorney: FLUDD, JESSICA SHA'RON
Retained: 01/03/2026

Status	Pending
Filed	12/16/2025
Type	Criminal
Court	Durham District Court
Judicial Officer	
Financial Balance	0.00

WHY DO WE NEED ACCURATE DATA?

Goal 2:

Accurately determine number of indigent cases with appointed counsel so that we can project the needs for private assigned counsel and PAC funding.

WHY DO WE NEED ACCURATE DATA?

Goal 3:

Accurately identify people ordered to repay attorneys' fees to maximize recoupment revenue.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

- Verification of client information prior to data entry into court files

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- Verification of client information prior to data entry into court files
 - Develop an Electronic Indigency Affidavit

WHY DO WE NEED ACCURATE DATA?

Goal 4:

Accurately assess the number of parent defense cases involving children in foster care to maximize federal funding available to defray state expenditures on attorneys' fees in these cases.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services NC FAST





QUESTIONS?

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www.ncids.org



Thank You