



ORLEANS PUBLIC DEFENDERS

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January 13, 2014

Eva McGann
Bureau of Justice Assistance
National Training and Technical Assistance Center
810 7th Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531

Dear Ms. McGann:

The New Orleans Racial Justice Improvement Project Task Force¹ has been working together to develop a prostitution diversion program in New Orleans Municipal Court. Currently, women and men charged with misdemeanor prostitution do not receive any diversionary programming in Municipal Court. Recognizing this great gap in services, the Task Force has been consulting with prostitution diversion programs in different cities across the country to learn about the different prostitution diversion programs.

The Task Force has spoken to program directors of the Prostitute Diversion Initiative in Dallas, Texas, Project Fresh Start in Detroit, Michigan, and the Prostitution Diversion Program in New York City. In evaluating the different programs' character and strengths, the Task Force is most interested in learning more about the Prostitution Diversion Program in New York City through a site visit. During a site visit, Task Force members can meet face-to-face with the director of the program, case managers who directly work with diversion participants, community partners who provide health, educational, employment and counseling services, prosecutors and public defenders who support the program through referrals, and judges who oversee the participants' compliance. When compared to other programs, the Task Force believes the New York Prostitution Diversion Program would best meet the needs of the target population in New Orleans, and important features of the program can be effectively duplicated in New Orleans.

The Task Force would like to conduct a site visit to the Prostitution Diversion Program in New York City in March/April of 2014. The Task Force has already been in contact with Courtney Bryan, the director of the program, and she is looking forward to hosting the Task Force. In order to make this happen, the Task Force requests the following:

1. Plane fare for 8 members of the Task Force,

¹ The New Orleans Racial Justice Task Force is composed of the following seven members: Chief Judge Desiree Charbonnet, New Orleans Municipal Court; Sgt. Henry Dean, New Orleans Police Department; Assistant District Attorney Mark Burton, New Orleans District Attorney's Office; Chief Deputy City Attorney Charlene Larch-Mason, City of New Orleans; Deon Haywood, Executive Director, Women With A Vision; Jee Park, Special Litigation Counsel, Orleans Public Defenders; and Jacob McCarty, Assistant Facilitator.

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2. One night of hotel stay for 8 members of the Task Force, and
3. Incidentals such as cab fare to and from airports and food for the Task Force members.

The Task Force intends to stay two days and one night in New York to visit the program.

Please let me know if I can provide you with further information about the diversion program the Task Force is interested in visiting and the Task Force's goals and objectives in visiting this program. I can be reached at jpark@opdla.org and/or 504-224-0963. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jee Park

Jee Park
Special Litigation Counsel, Orleans Public Defenders
Facilitator, New Orleans Racial Justice Improvement Project