

1330 Lady Street, Suite 401
Post Office Box 11433
Columbia, South Carolina 29211-1433
Telephone: (803) 734-1343
Facsimile: (803) 734-1345
E-Mail: executive@sccid.sc.gov

Hugh Ryan, Executive Director
Hervey Young, Deputy Director and General Counsel
Lori Frost, Assistant Director

MEMORANDUM TO:

The Honorable Henry McMaster, Governor of South Carolina
The Honorable Harvey S. Peeler, Jr, Chm. Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Bruce W. Bannister, Chm. House Ways and Means Committee

FROM: South Carolina Commission on Indigent Defense

DATE: 15 January 2026

RE: Proviso 117.161

The Commission on Indigent Defense provided an initial report on 29 July 2025 outlining the information required in accordance with Proviso 117.161 of the FY 25-26 General Appropriations Act (H 4025).

The proviso further requires that “after the initial report is submitted, the Commission on Prosecution Coordination and the Commission on Indigent Defense shall provide semiannual progress updates” on current number of warrants pending.

The warrants pending as of January 1, 2026, are as follows:

1. Warrants pending/disposed as of 7/1/2024, 7/1/2025 and as of 1/1/2026 by Circuit/ County Public Defender Offices. (Exhibit 1)
2. Steps taken to retain employees. Attached Exhibit 2 reflects the substantial increases received by public defenders due to increased funding. Pay increases have been critical in hiring and retaining public defenders. (Exhibit 2)
3. Statewide recruitment and retention data reflecting Public Defender office hires and other personnel data. (Exhibit 3)
4. Exhibit 4 reflects the continued progress by public defenders in reducing the number of pending warrants from a Pandemic high of 123,124 to 99,267 and warrants over a year old from 64,983 to 44,482 (Exhibit 4).

Statewide Pending General Sessions Warrants as of January 1, 2026
Public Defender Data ¹
Pursuant to Proviso 117.161, 2025-2026 SC Appropriations Act, Part 1B

Circuit/County	FY 25 Pending Warrants July 1, 2024	FY 26 Pending Warrants July 1, 2025	FY 26 Pending Warrants as of January 1 , 2026				Warrants Disposed of FY 26 as of January 1, 2026
			FY 26 Pending Warrants	FY 26 Warrants Pending Aged 365 or Less	FY 26 Warrants Pending Aged 366-544 Days	FY 26 Warrants Pending Aged 545 Days or More	
1st Circuit							
Calhoun	236	211	173	125	21	27	172
Dorchester	1,611	1,541	1,495	855	246	394	1,046
Orangeburg	1,943	1,650	1,899	1,088	172	639	1,157
Circuit Totals	3,790	3,402	3,567	2,068	439	1,060	2,375
2nd Circuit							
Aiken	3,723	3,525	3,293	1,398	513	1,382	1,526
Bamberg	407	431	388	155	80	153	197
Barnwell	899	660	530	238	99	193	414
Circuit Totals	5,029	4,616	4,211	1,791	692	1,728	2,137
3rd Circuit							
Clarendon	442	476	367	193	76	98	260
Lee	283	361	397	169	45	183	65
Sumter	3,336	3,621	3,951	1,565	489	1,897	828
Williamsburg	530	707	700	259	128	313	232
Circuit Totals	4,591	5,165	5,415	2,186	738	2,491	1,385
4th Circuit							
Chesterfield	1,251	1,052	1,051	672	67	312	840
Darlington	1,888	1,705	1,603	858	169	576	1,201
Dillon	364	604	772	532	75	165	269
Marlboro	469	426	530	315	60	155	196
Circuit Totals	3,972	3,787	3,956	2,377	371	1,208	2,506
5th Circuit							
Kershaw	2,440	1,908	1,772	813	162	797	1,007
Richland	11,749	10,115	11,010	6,171	1,180	3,659	5,080
Circuit Totals	14,189	12,023	12,782	6,984	1,342	4,456	6,087

Exhibit 1

1) Data reflects warrants handled by Public Defender offices,
as compiled by SCCID Defender Data System (Case Management).

Statewide Pending General Sessions Warrants as of January 1, 2026
Public Defender Data ¹
Pursuant to Proviso 117.161, 2025-2026 SC Appropriations Act, Part 1B

Circuit/County	FY 25 Pending Warrants July 1, 2024	FY 26 Pending Warrants July 1, 2025	FY 26 Pending Warrants as of January 1, 2026				Warrants Disposed of FY 26 as of January 1, 2026
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6th Circuit							
Chester	820	712	842	460	102	280	360
Fairfield	431	448	340	157	34	149	304
Lancaster	4,226	4,244	3,647	1,170	454	2,023	1,794
Circuit Totals	5,477	5,404	4,829	1,787	590	2,452	2,458
7th Circuit							
Cherokee	1,547	1,187	1,183	785	123	275	1,087
Spartanburg	5,288	5,000	5,494	3,324	644	1,526	3,056
Circuit Totals	6,835	6,187	6,677	4,109	767	1,801	4,143
8th Circuit							
Abbeville	543	284	266	175	16	75	193
Greenwood	2,523	2,314	2,499	1,137	277	1,085	1,010
Laurens	2,793	2,362	2,238	900	278	1,060	1,071
Newberry	718	716	763	392	105	266	422
Circuit Totals	6,577	5,676	5,766	2,604	676	2,486	2,696
9th Circuit							
Berkeley	3,317	3,230	3,059	1,459	350	1,250	1,722
Charleston	7,973	8,405	8,335	4,183	1,163	2,989	3,469
Circuit Totals	11,290	11,635	11,394	5,642	1,513	4,239	5,191
10th Circuit							
Anderson	2,221	2,531	2,799	1,999	288	512	1,778
Oconee	1,667	1,486	1,737	1,108	222	407	1,119
Circuit Totals	3,888	4,017	4,536	3,107	510	919	2,897
11th Circuit							
Edgefield	374	261	258	184	18	56	207
Lexington	3,519	3,233	3,669	2,495	368	806	2,447
McCormick	112	122	84	50	17	17	117
Saluda	132	84	90	58	20	12	79
Circuit Totals	4,137	3,700	4,101	2,787	423	891	2,850

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			FY 26 Pending Warrants	FY 26 Warrants Pending Aged 365 or Less	FY 26 Warrants Pending Aged 366-544 Days	FY 26 Warrants Pending Aged 545 Days or More	
12th Circuit							
Florence	4,087	4,861	5,547	3,142	557	1,848	1,610
Marion	734	776	941	525	94	322	342
Circuit Totals	4,821	5,637	6,488	3,667	651	2,170	1,952
13th Circuit							
Greenville	9,652	10,052	9,715	6,299	1,335	2,081	6,933
Pickens	2,485	2,494	2,499	1,717	295	487	1,703
Circuit Totals	12,137	12,546	12,214	8,016	1,630	2,568	8,636
14th Circuit							
Allendale	151	71	40	26	7	7	103
Beaufort	3,877	2,835	2,538	810	149	1,579	1,202
Colleton	1,086	599	571	236	60	275	395
Hampton	552	317	245	161	40	44	364
Jasper	1,089	753	527	275	48	204	694
Circuit Totals	6,755	4,575	3,921	1,508	304	2,109	2,758
15th Circuit							
Georgetown	645	777	947	723	97	127	531
Horry	6,075	4,987	4,990	3,017	651	1,322	4,313
Circuit Totals	6,720	5,764	5,937	3,740	748	1,449	4,844
16th Circuit							
Union	925	972	901	444	120	337	545
York	3,475	2,642	2,572	1,968	341	263	2,877
Circuit Totals	4,400	3,614	3,473	2,412	461	600	3,422
Statewide Total	104,608	97,748	99,267	54,785	11,855	32,627	56,337

Exhibit 1

1) Data reflects warrants handled by Public Defender offices,
as compiled by SCCID Defender Data System (Case Management).



SCCID
SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION
ON INDIGENT DEFENSE

PUBLIC DEFENDER SALARY COMPARISON FY22-23 TO FY24-25 (AVERAGE AND MEDIAN SALARIES FTE ONLY)

FY 22-23		Experience			
Values	Less than 3 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	11+ Years	All Years
CURRENT STATEWIDE AVERAGE SALARY FOR EACH EXPERIENCE LEVEL	\$64,190.54	\$70,107.49	\$75,629.97	\$87,756.46	\$73,456.59
CURRENT STATEWIDE MEDIAN SALARY FOR EACH EXPERIENCE LEVEL	\$62,843.00	\$67,648.80	\$75,025.39	\$87,286.50	\$69,826.00
FY 24-25		Experience			
Values	Less than 3 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	11+ Years	All Years
CURRENT STATEWIDE AVERAGE SALARY FOR EACH EXPERIENCE LEVEL	\$77,785.50	\$85,032.36	\$98,777.45	\$115,408.15	\$93,675.33
<i>Difference from FY23</i>	<i>\$13,594.95</i>	<i>\$14,924.86</i>	<i>\$23,147.48</i>	<i>\$27,651.69</i>	<i>\$20,218.74</i>
CURRENT STATEWIDE MEDIAN SALARY FOR EACH EXPERIENCE LEVEL	\$76,315.20	\$84,905.50	\$98,750.00	\$119,883.73	\$90,750.40
<i>Difference from FY23</i>	<i>\$13,472.20</i>	<i>\$17,256.70</i>	<i>\$23,724.62</i>	<i>\$32,597.23</i>	<i>\$20,924.40</i>



PUBLIC DEFENDER TOTALS FY24 AND FY25

Public Defender Filled Positions	PD Totals as of June 30, 2024				PD Totals as of July 1, 2025			
	FTE	PTE	CONTRACT	Grand Totals	FTE	PTE	CONTRACT	Grand Totals
Grand Total	246	5	79	330	307	6	75	388
Total Filled Positions			330				388	

PD Turnover Rate Three Year Average

- FYs 19-22 41.3%
- FYs 23-25 13.59%

Public Defender Status Update as of 1/1/2026

Circuit	County	Position	PD Totals as of June 30, 2025				PD Totals as of January 1, 2026			
			FTE	PTE	CONTRACT	Grand Totals	FTE	PTE	CONTRACT	Grand Totals
1	Calhoun	Public Defender	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2
	Dorchester	Public Defender	8	0	2	10	8	0	2	10
	Orangeburg	Public Defender	5	1	4	9.5	5	1	4	9.5
		Totals	13	0.5	8	21.5	13	0.5	8	21.5
2	Aiken	Public Defender	12	0	4	16	12	0	4	16
	Bamberg	Public Defender	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
	Barnwell	Public Defender	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
		Totals	14	0	4	18	14	0	4	18
3	Clarendon	Public Defender	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	2
	Lee	Public Defender	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
	Sumter	Public Defender	7	0	2	9	8	0	0	8
	Williamsbur	Public Defender	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2
		Totals	9	0	5	14	11	0	2	13
4	Chesterfield	Public Defender	2	0	1	3	2	0	1	3
	Darlington	Public Defender	2	0	3	5	2	0	3	5
	Dillon	Public Defender	1	0	2	3	1	0	3	4
	Marlboro	Public Defender	2	0	2	4	2	0	2	4
		Totals	7	0	8	15	7	0	9	16
5	Kershaw	Public Defender	6	0	0	6	7	0	1	8
	Richland	Public Defender	38	1	7	45.5	40	0	9	49
		Totals	44	0.5	7	51.5	47	0	10	57
6	Chester	Public Defender	2	0	3	5	2	0	3	5
	Fairfield	Public Defender	1	0	4	5	1	0	3	4
	Lancaster	Public Defender	3	0	4	7	4	0	4	8
		Totals	6	0	11	17	7	0	10	17
7	Cherokee	Public Defender	4	0	2	6	3	0	2	5
	Spartanburg	Public Defender	15	5	1	18.5	11	5	1	14.5
		Totals	19	2.5	3	24.5	14	2.5	3	19.5
8	Abbeville	Public Defender	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Greenwood	Public Defender	3	0	2	5	4	0	1	5
	Laurens	Public Defender	3	0	1	4	3	0	1	4
	Newberry	Public Defender	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
		Totals	7	0	4	11	8	0	3	11
9	Berkeley	Public Defender	10	0	1	11	10	0	0	10
	Charleston	Public Defender	36	2	0	37	34	2	0	35
		Totals	46	1	1	48	44	1	0	45
10	Anderson	Public Defender	9	0	3	12	10	0	2	12
	Oconee	Public Defender	5	0	3	8	5	0	2	7
		Totals	14	0	6	20	15	0	4	19
11	Edgefield	Public Defender	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
	Lexington	Public Defender	19	0	0	19	17	0	0	17
	McCormick	Public Defender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Saluda	Public Defender	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
		Totals	21	0	0	21	19	0	0	19
12	Florence	Public Defender	10	3	0	11.5	10	3	0	11.5
	Marion	Public Defender	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
		Totals	11	1.5	0	12.5	11	1.5	0	12.5
13	Greenville	Public Defender	27	0	4	31	27	0	6	33
	Pickens	Public Defender	6	0	3	9	6	0	3	9
		Totals	33	0	7	40	33	0	9	42

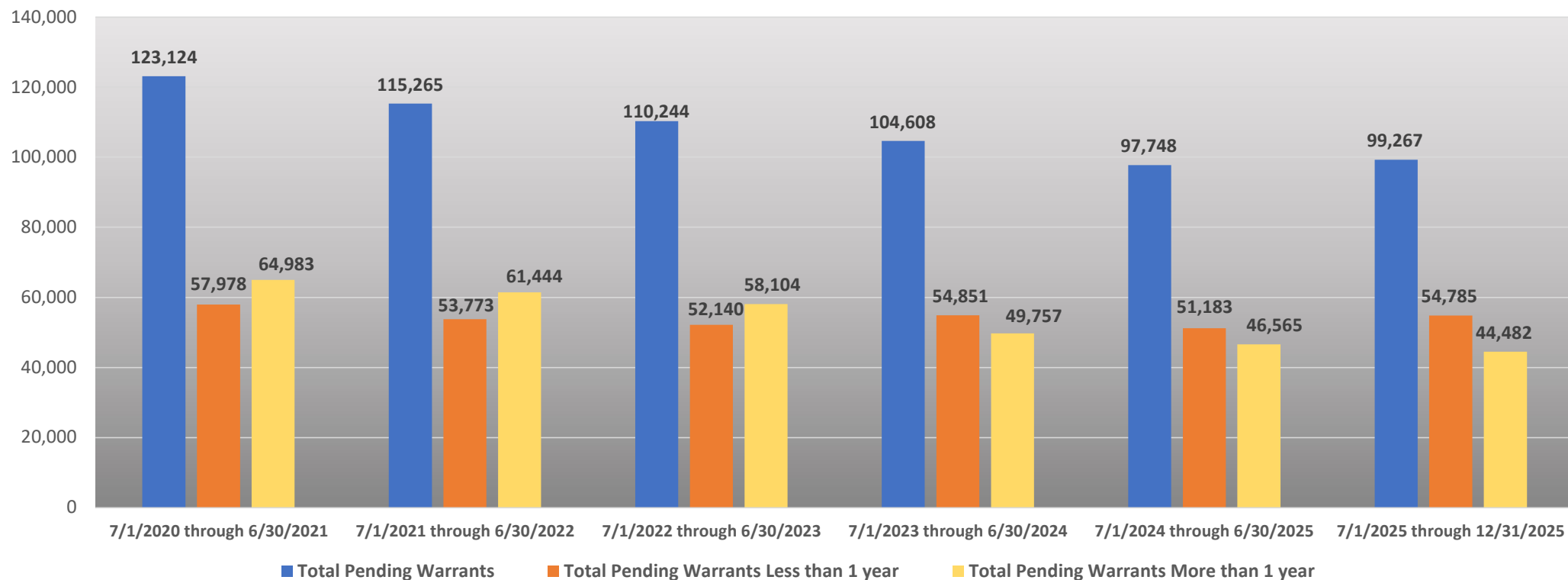
Public Defender Status Update as of 1/1/2026

Circuit	County	Position	PD Totals as of June 30, 2025				PD Totals as of January 1, 2026			
			FTE	PTE	CONTRACT	Grand Totals	FTE	PTE	CONTRACT	Grand Totals
14	Allendale	Public Defender	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
	Beaufort	Public Defender	13	0	4	17	13	0	1	14
	Colleton	Public Defender	4	0	2	6	4	0	2	6
	Hampton	Public Defender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jasper	Public Defender	5	0	1	6	6	0	0	6
		Totals	23	0	7	30	24	0	3	27
15	Georgetown	Public Defender	2	0	2	4	2	0	2	4
	Horry	Public Defender	13	0	2	15	12	0	4	16
		Totals	15	0	4	19	14	0	6	20
16	Union	Public Defender	3	0	0	3	3	0	0	3
	York	Public Defender	22	0	0	22	22	0	0	22
		Totals	25	0	0	25	25	0	0	25
Grand Total			FTE	PTE	CONTRACT		FTE	PTE	CONTRACT	
			307	6	75	388	306	5.5	71	382.5
Total Filled Positions					388				382.5	



SCCID PUBLIC DEFENDER GENERAL SESSIONS PENDING WARRANTS

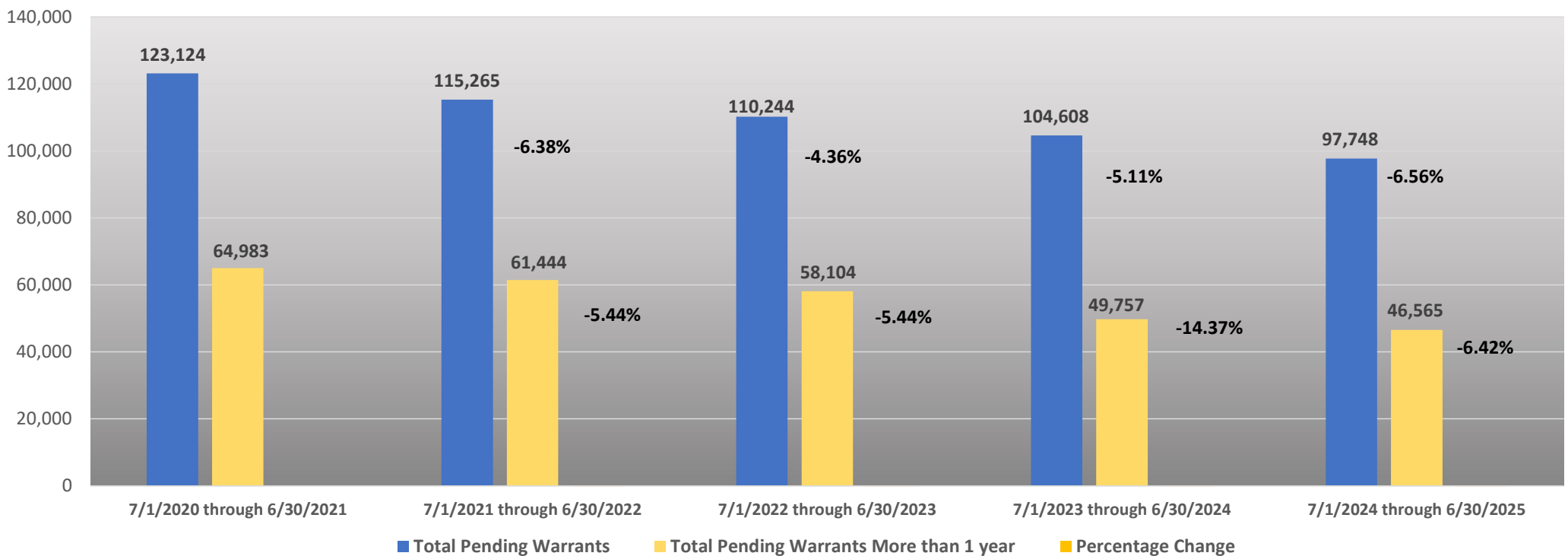
SCCID Pending Warrants for FY2021 (Full Pandemic); FY2022 (Post Pandemic); FY2023; FY2024; FY2025 and FY2026 (7/1/2025 to 12/31/2025)





PUBLIC DEFENDER GENERAL SESSIONS PENDING WARRANTS

SCCID Pending Warrants for FY2021 (Full Pandemic); FY2022 (Post Pandemic); FY2023; FY2024 and FY25



From the “pandemic years” to FY25, Public Defender Office’s have made substantial progress in reducing the docket backlog for those cases handled by PD Offices. Total Warrants pending in PD Offices have decreased by 20.61%. Warrants over a year old have decreased by 28.34%.