



THE JAC EXPRESS

COMMISSIONERS

State of Florida

Volume III, Issue I

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A Word From JAC's Executive Director

The next Justice Administrative Commission (JAC) meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2012. Included on the agenda will be the Executive Director's Report, as well as significant Legislative, Court-Appointed/Litigation, and Pay Plan updates.

JAC was pleased to conduct a special training for elected officials and administrative staff in Jacksonville for the Offices of Public Defenders on January 15, 2013 and for the Offices of State Attorneys in Orlando on February 25, 2013. The training was hosted by newly elected Jeff Ashton, State Attorney for the 9th Circuit at the courthouse. Interested parties were able to participate via conference call or in person.

BUDGET

The 2012-13 Amended Legislative Budget Requests (LBR) are being processed by JAC and we will continue to do so throughout Session, which starts on March 5th. Requests for budget transfers are also being routinely processed.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The JAC Pay Plan is currently being updated and a newly simplified evaluation instrument will soon be deployed. Because a serious illness can occur to anyone or within any family, JAC's Sick Leave Pool and Transfer policy is also being revised. There will be no requirement to transfer leave, but the opportunity will be made available to those who wish to do so.



Rip Colvin
JAC Executive Director

In the near future, onsite software training will be offered to JAC staff in Microsoft Office Suite 2007 and Outlook, PowerPoint, Word, Excel, and One-Note. Also, the first group of JAC participants in the nationally recognized Certified Public Manager Program (CPM), sponsored by Florida State University's Askew School of Public Administration, will complete Level 7 on February 28, 2013. Graduation ceremonies for this group have been scheduled for July 23-25, 2013 in Tallahassee and August 20—22 in Clearwater, Florida. Potential graduates, who must first complete all assignments, may opt for either date. This very vigorous training program has been extremely valuable and has already made a positive impact on advancing JAC's mission and strategic outcomes.

The second group of JAC participants completed Level 2 on February 15, 2013.

IT ACTIVITIES

JAC's website enhancements have generated increased traffic. Hopefully, the website will continue to be dynamic and user-friendly, as ongoing improvements are anticipated to engage and meet the needs of the agencies we administratively serve. In anticipation of Florida's Legislative Session, JAC has added a special Legislative [Update](#) Section to our website that has been provided by LobbyTools. JAC's IT Team greatly appreciates the positive feedback from our stakeholders who have taken the time to review the improved layout and features of our website.

Thankfully, all residual JAC emails have been imported from the Affiliated Computer Services, Inc. mailboxes (owned by Xerox) covering the February 18-August 23, 2012 timeframe. JAC's IT Team had to copy and uncompress this data on to our own network and prepare it for importing and indexing into our agency's journal archive. Because of the way this data was initially provided to us, members of JAC's staff were unable to search against the acquired data in their personal archives, as the data was only imported into the agency-wide journal archive used for public records retention purposes. Once we determine how we can manipulate the data, we may be able to re-populate it into individual mailbox archives in the future.

Other Recent Or Developing Issues — Sequester Looms

On February 19, 2013, both congressional chambers departed for a week-long recess without reaching an agreement to avert the sequester scheduled to take effect March 1. While Congress was out of town, Federal agencies continued preparations for implementing the sequester. Worth noting, the Senate Appropriations Committee posted on its website [analyses from various agencies](#) on how the sequester would impact them. Congress returned on February 25. *Source: FFIS*

A Word From JAC's General Counsel



Court Appointed Update: Online Submission of Court Appointed Case – Opening Documents

JAC's Court Appointed and Information Technology sections are proud to announce the creation and implementation of a new online feature for submission of court appointed case-opening documents.

When an attorney is appointed to represent an indigent defendant, they are required to submit to JAC specific case-opening documents within 30 days of the appointment. Created in house by JAC's own IT section, with the assistance of the Court Appointed, Help Desk, and Legal sections, this new feature provides a method for quick and easy submission of these documents which will facilitate the payment of court appointed attorneys and case-related vendors. This feature can be accessed by court appointed attorneys on their *My Access* login found on JAC's website. Although currently, the new feature is being used only for submission of Orders of Appointment and Charging Documents, we expect that this will bring us one step closer to online court appointed bill submission. Furthermore, this effort lead to an update of JAC's online contract submission feature which was introduced in 2011.

I want to thank all the sections – Contracts, Court Appointed, Help Desk, Information Technology, and Legal - that worked so diligently to create, test, and implement these two online features: especially, Mausumi Das, Michelle Dolce, Stephanie Hanks, Christian Lake, Connie Ramos, Lynn Santner, Christie Stanton, Susan Stubbs, Suzanne Tull, and Tanya Walker. You prove that together we can accomplish almost anything at JAC!

“This new feature provides a method for quick and easy submission of documents which will facilitate the payment of court appointed attorneys and case-related vendors.”

*Cris Martinez,
General Counsel*

2013 Florida Legislative Bills of Interest

House Bill 41 Update Relating to State Workers

House Bill 41 was introduced December 17, 2012 by Representative Dwayne Taylor of Daytona Beach and is cited as the “*State Employee Appreciation Act*.” The Act would provide a pay adjustment of 2% to each state employee’s base rate of pay effective July 1, 2013. As of February 19th, the bill is still in the Appropriations Committee. Upon successful passage, the bill also stipulates that the Legislature, “Shall appropriate the necessary funds.” An identical measure relating to state employee salaries, Senate Bill 0484, was referred to the Governmental Oversight and Accountability, rules, and Appropriations Committees on February 4th.

Source: Florida House

House Bill 23 Update Relating to Public Meetings

Introduced by Representative Wesley Rodrigues of Fort Myers, House Bill 23, “Requires that a member of the public be given reasonable opportunity to be heard before a board or commission takes official action” on issues taken up by the board, commission, state agency, or authorities of local government or political subdivisions. The measure also authorizes the courts to, “Assess reasonable attorney fees in actions filed against the board or commission” and issue injunctions that arise from this act. As of February 19th, this bill is still in the Government Operations Subcommittee. If signed into law, the bill will become effective July 1, 2013.

A similar bill, Senate Bill 0050 will be taken up by the Appropriations Committee on February 21st. *Source: Florida House*



These are bills of interest to watch during the 2013 Legislative Session. Additional bills are featured on JAC’s website under “What’s New”—Legislative Updates and News. You may [click here](#) to access this list.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Regarding the Florida Retirement System

House Bill 7011

The Florida House Subcommittee on Governmental Operations has proposed legislation that would bring substantive changes to the Florida Retirement System and impact newly hired state employees. This bill includes the following proposed changes:

- Effective January 1, 2014, the Pension Plan (a defined benefit) would be closed to all new members and all new enrollees would be required to participate in the Investment Plan (a defined contribution plan);
- Expands the options to Investment Plan members to include a self-directed brokerage account monitored and administered by the State Board of Administration.
- Closes the Senior Management Optional Annuity Program to all new members on or after January 1, 2014. However, current members could continue participation in this program;
- Prohibits Elected Officials from joining the Senior Management Service Class on or after January 1, 2014, and subsequently enrolling in the Senior Management Optional Annuity Program.
- Eliminates the option for new members who enroll on or after January 1, 2014, from applying for disability benefits.
- Unless otherwise expressly stated, this bill is effective July 1, 2013.

The Department of Management Services has been asked to conduct three actuarial studies to analyze the impact and the costs of this proposed legislation. These actuarial studies were to be completed by February 15, 2013. However, an updated study with corrections and comparative data is due on March 1, 2013. We will continue to keep you updated on the progress of this legislation and any amendments. It is anticipated that legislation regarding the FRS will continue to evolve throughout the Legislative Session.

*House Bill
7011 was
formerly
PCB
GVOPS
13-01.*

More Legislation of Interest

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Regarding State Contracting

Senate Bill 1150

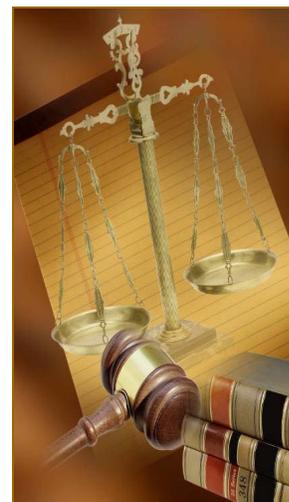
Introduced by Senators Lizbeth Benacquisto and Jeff Brandes, Senate Bill 1150 authorizes the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to audit and approve federal and state grant agreements prior to execution. It also requires the CFO to audit executed grant agreements and discuss those agreements with agency officials.

This bill also amends s. 215.985, F.S., revising provisions relating to the Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System by requiring state agencies to post certain information in the system, including:

1. The names of the contracting entities;
2. The procurement method;
3. The contract beginning and ending dates;
4. The nature or type of the commodities or services purchased;
5. Applicable contract unit prices and deliverables;
6. Total compensation to be paid or received under the contract;
7. All payments made to the contractor to date;
8. Applicable contract performance measures;
9. The justification for not using competitive solicitation to procure the contract, including citation to any statutory exemption or exception from competitive solicitation, if applicable;
10. Electronic copies of the contract and procurement documents that have been redacted to conceal exempt or confidential information; and
11. Any other information required by the Chief Financial Officer.

The bill also requires agencies to redact information that could be used to facilitate identity theft or fraud, such as signatures; compromise or reveal an agency investigation; reveal the identity of undercover personnel; or reveal any other record or information that the CFO believes may jeopardize the health, safety, or welfare of the public.

The bill would become effective July 1, 2013.



“This bill revises provisions relating to the Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System”

FLAIR Facts and Fiction by Vicki Nichols

Transaction Date & Prompt Payment Overview



“Prompt Payment” is the terminology used to describe the statutory requirement that state agencies pay obligations of the state within a period of 40 calendar days from the date the obligation is eligible for payment. (For health care providers the time-frame is 35 calendar days.) The Transaction Date (TRN-DT) is the FLAIR term for the start date (payment eligibility date) for the 35-40 day payment compliance period. If the payment is not issued to the vendor within the required time-frame (35 or 40 days), interest is owed to the vendor. The primary statute that mandates prompt payment is s. 215.422, F.S.

Determining Transaction Date (TRN-DT) for Goods and Services

The task for the agency is to correctly determine the TRN-DT on each obligation. Other than pre-payments in limited circumstances, in order for an obligation to be eligible for payment the agency must have:

- 1) an accurate invoice from the vendor;
- 2) received the goods or services;
- 3) inspected and approved the goods or services (not more than 5 days from receipt of goods and services); and
- 4) established that the vendor has a verified Substitute Form W-9** on file with the Department of Financial Services (DFS) (for most vendors).

**Note: A verified Substitute Form W-9 is the vendor’s electronic registration and verification of their taxpayer identification number (TIN) via the [DFS Vendor web-site](#).

The TRN-DT is the latter of the dates. The TRN-DT is manually entered into FLAIR as a required data element when processing the obligation/invoice in FLAIR. The TRN-DT entered in FLAIR starts the prompt payment compliance “clock.” If a vendor does not have the payment available to them within 40 days (35 for medical payments) based on the TRN-DT, the vendor may be owed interest. The FLAIR system automatically calculates interest penalties based on the TRN-DT entered on each transaction.

“The primary statute that mandates prompt payment is s. 215.422, F.S.”

The Family and Medical Leave Act — By Carolyn Horwich, J.D.

Changes to the Family and Medical Leave Act

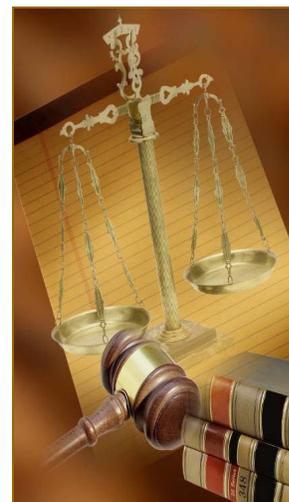
The U.S. Department of Labor issued its final rule on February 6, 2013, amending the *Family and Medical Leave Act* (FMLA). The changes are relatively minor. However, those we serve may want to review their Handbooks to determine if any changes are warranted. There is a new poster that is very informative you should print and post. The link to the poster is: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/posters/fmlaen.pdf>. You will find useful information about the amendments, including a side by side comparison of the changes, at <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/2013rule/>. You will find forms to use at this link, as well.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 850.488.2415, ext. 290, or at Carolyn.Horwich@justiceadmin.org.

Carolyn Horwich, J.D.

Director of Human Resources

Justice Administrative Commission



“Agencies we serve may want to review their Handbooks to determine if any changes are warranted.”

Carolyn Horwich, J.D.



Encryption – Part 1

By Wayne Meyer

In previous articles I have referenced the www.SecureFlorida.org website as a good resource and that remains true. But, this is not the only resource that is available to you. The World Wide Web (WWW) is full of information, much of which is reliable, accurate, and useful. Today, more than ever before, this tremendous volume of information is available at your fingertips almost anywhere you are. In this article I would like to discuss encryption which is an important part of accessing this information in a safer and more secure manner. Please understand that there is no guarantee (implied or written), that by following the hints or best practices I provide (or that you find on your own), you will never encounter problems or be the victim of an attack. These hints and best practices are designed to help you avoid being an easy target.

Like so many other topics in the realm of Information Technology, encryption is one that is subject to misunderstanding and confusion. One reason for this is that it is a complex topic full of mathematical equations and a bunch of acronyms. I am not an expert by any stretch of the imagination, so I will be referencing several sources (that will be cited) to try and give you a very basic overview of this topic. First, we need to look at a few definitions:

- 1) Cryptography – The use of mathematical operations to protect messages traveling between parties or stored on a computer (Panko, 2010);
 - 2) Plaintext - Text that has not been encrypted. Also called “cleartext,” plaintext is readable by any text editor such as Notepad and word processors that import ASCII text — almost all do (pcmag.com encyclopedia, 2012);
 - 3) Ciphertext – Plaintext that has been turned into a seemingly random stream of bits (Panko, 2010);
 - 4) Encryption – The reversible transformation of data from the original (the plaintext) to a difficult-to-interpret format (the ciphertext) as a mechanism for protecting its confidentiality, integrity, and sometimes its authenticity; Encryption uses an encryption algorithm and one or more encryption keys (pcmag.com encyclopedia, 2012);
 - 5) Decryption – The process of converting secretly coded data (encrypted data) back into its original form (pcmag.com encyclopedia, 2012);
 - 6) Cipher – A specific mathematical process used in encryption and decryption (Panko, 2010);
-

Encryption – Part 1 Continued

I do apologize for giving you so many definitions. But, if you don't know what the words mean, the rest of the information will not be very valuable.

At its most basic level, encryption uses cryptography to covert plaintext into a form that is not easily readable by outside parties or to those for whom the information is not intended. The main reason for encrypting information is to keep private or confidential information just that, private and confidential (Panko, 2010). The idea is this — there is a chance that information you send over the internet will be intercepted. If the information is encrypted correctly, the information will not do the person who intercepted it any good. The same thing applies to the information stored on your computer and the thousands of servers around the world that store different pieces of information about you. From your financial institution, to the place you purchased your food (if you used your debit/credit card), or to the online business you might have purchased gifts from — if the information is stored in plaintext, then a criminal only needs to gain access to the system to have access to all of the information that system has on you. We see news reports of this occurring all of the time. An example of this happened in Tallahassee not too many years ago. The wireless network of a local restaurant (that has since closed its doors) was hacked and the credit card information for numerous people in our local area was stolen. Another example happened in mid-January when hackers were able to steal personal information about several hundred employees and contractors from the US Department of Energy. One final example occurred on February 6 of this year when the U.S. Federal Reserve was hacked and details on more than 4,000 bank executives was stolen. As I have stated before, I don't bring these things up to make you afraid, but I do want you to be informed.

One of the essential elements for encryption and decryption is the key. It is important that the key be kept secret because if the key is known, the encryption is useless. Another important aspect of a key is its length. Attackers will always try and decrypt information they intercept. One way they do this is to try “all of the possible keys until he or she finds the correct one”(Panko, 2010). This is also known as brute force code breaking. The idea behind longer keys is to make the effort needed to try all of the possible key combinations impractical or impossible given the technology and tools that currently exist. For example, if the key is only 8 bits in length, there are only 256 possible keys. The average cryptographer will only need to try about half of the possible combinations to successfully gain access to the encrypted information or about 128 combinations in this example. By increasing the key length to 16 bits, it increases the possible combinations to 65,536. Each time you increase the key length by one bit, it “doubles the time it will take to crack the key” (Panko, 2010). An example of this is if you increase the key length from 56 to 112 bits, you increase the time it takes to crack the key by “72 quadrillion times” (Panko, 2010). The general rule of thumb today is that a key needs “to be at least 100 bits to be considered strong” (Panko, 2010). Another part to the key is the type of encryption system

Encryption – Part 1 Continued

that is employed. The most frequently used system is Symmetric Key Encryption because it does not require much processing power from computers or handheld devices (Panko, 2010).

There are many different ciphers (remember that a cipher is the mathematical process used for encryption and decryption) used by symmetric key encryption. Following is a list, from the text book I have been referencing, of the more common ciphers. However, we will focus on the most dominant cipher for further discussion: RC4 (pronounced as Ark Four); DES; 3DES (pronounced as Triple DES); and AES. The AES (Advance Encryption Standard) is the cipher that is most commonly used today and, because of its strength, for the foreseeable future (Panko, 2010). There are three different key lengths for AES, 128 bits, 192 bits and 256 bits. “Even the 128-bit key length is strong. A brute-force-code-breaking system that could defeat 56-bit DES in a second would take over 100 trillion years to crack 128-bit AES” (Panko, 2010). This is what I meant by being impractical or impossible with current tools and equipment. One example of a time when you might have the opportunity to make a choice on the type of encryption that is used is if you purchase password management software. When configuring the software, some software might give you the choice between several options. You would want to select the AES, 256 bit encryption if possible. The way most password management software packages work is by allowing you to capture the passwords you use to access different sites such as online banking, Amazon.com, your i-Tunes account, etc (and I know you are not using the same password for all of these, right) and storing them in an encrypted file either on your computer or even on the web. This encrypted file is protected by a very strong, super password that is known only to you. In the event that someone were to gain access to your computer and find the password file, it would not do them any good because they would not be able to obtain any useful data from the file without your super password. By the way, there are several password management applications available. Some of the titles include “*RoboForm Everywhere, Sticky Password, Kapersky Passwrod Manager, DataVault, and Handy Password Manager.*” Do your research to find the best option for you. Another time you might select between different levels of encryption is when you are configuring your home wireless network. I plan on covering this topic in more detail soon, but just in case you need to configure one before then, please do not select the WEP option. This encryption key “can be broken in two to three minutes” (Panko, 2010).

That is all we will cover in this article. In the next edition I will cover some things you can look for to make your web surfing and online purchasing more secure.

Citations:

How Encryption Works. (2012, December 07). Retrieved from How Stuff Works: <http://computer.howstuffworks.com/encryption1.htm>
Panko, R. R. (2010). *Corporate Computer and Network Security* (Second ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
pcmag.com encyclopedia. (2012, December 6). Retrieved from pcmag.com: http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia_term/0,1237,t=plaintext&i=49346,00.asp

Federal Tax Preparation

Do Your Federal Taxes for Free

Just a reminder that the IRS offers FREE Federal Tax filing for ANYONE who earns under **\$57,000.00** per year. There are no exceptions! Freefile started January 30th! It really is completely free!! The link is: <http://www.irs.gov/uac/Free-File%3A-Do-Your-Federal-Taxes-for-Free>.

Live Telephone Assistance

When calling, you may ask questions to help you prepare your tax return, or ask about a notice you have received. Please be aware that when you conclude your discussion, the IRS system will not permit you to return to your original responder.

Telephone Assistance for Individuals:

Toll-Free, 1-800-829-1040 Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. your local time (Alaska & Hawaii follow Pacific Time).

Telephone Assistance for Businesses:

Toll-Free, 1-800-829-4933 Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. your local time (Alaska & Hawaii follow Pacific Time).

Telephone Assistance for Exempt Organizations, Retirement Plan Administrators, and Government Entities:

Toll-Free, 1-877-829-5500 Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. your local time.

Telephone Assistance for Individuals who believe they may be a victim of Identity Theft: No Tax Administration Impact - Did not receive a notice from the IRS.

Toll-Free 1-800-908-4490 (Automated and live assistance); Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. your local time (Alaska & Hawaii follow Pacific Time). For additional information, refer to our [Identity Theft and Your Tax Records](#) page.

Face-to-Face Assistance

In certain areas, IRS also has [local offices](#) you may visit to receive assistance.

Complements of Robert Smith

Auditor - Hourly Rates

SAM.GOV FREE WEBINAR

If your organization was previously registered in the Federal **Central Contractor Registry (CCR)** and you have not yet made the migration to **SAM** you might want to review a special webinar training that will soon be posted online. It will cover essential activities for getting started on SAM. Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Create a new SAM user account;
- Migrate permissions from the legacy CCR system in to SAM; and
- Update/renew an existing registration.

The [webinar](#) content will be recorded and posted to **SAM.gov** after **March 7, 2013**.

SAM Resources:

SAM/Federal Service Desk (Help Desk), (toll-free) 1-866-606-8220. Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Online help, FAQs, and access to the Federal Service Desk are available anytime via FSD.gov.

[SAM User Guide Quick Start Guide for Entities Interested in Being Eligible for Grants](#)

[Quick Start Guide for Updating/Renewing Registrations that Were Previously in CCR and Are Now in SAM](#)

[Quick Start Guide for Migrating Roles](#)

[Browser Settings for Optimal use of the System for Award Management](#)

PLEASE call the Federal Government's helpdesk number (above) if you have any questions.

Complements of Florida Interagency Grants Consortium



As Part of the Birthday and Anniversary Celebration, Elaine Watson was Recognized by JAC Executive Director Rip Colvin for 25 Years of Dedicated Service to JAC.





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please contact:

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Or

Lydia.Mount@justiceadmin.org

BOARDING THE EDMS TRAIN

The Justice Administrative Commission (JAC) continues the phased implementation of an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS). The purpose of this project is to develop an EDMS that will provide the JAC with the ability to scan and index, or import and index, various documents, have quality control verification on the scanned images, have basic routing capabilities for workflow approval, as well as the ability to store the document images/contents and the associated metadata in a secure and easily searchable repository. This is an update.

IT staff met with the Revenue Accounting staff to determine how Revenue Accounting will utilize Laserfiche, and the group came to a consensus. Currently, Revenue Accounting does everything by paper. Therefore, one change being made to their process is the development of a database so they can keep track of their data electronically. The database will enable them to find information on individual checks quickly, instead of searching through transmittal forms stored in a book or in a filing cabinet. From this database, scan sheets will be generated. So, checks and deposits will be scanned into Laserfiche and Laserfiche will act as a filing cabinet for this section.

Revenue Accounting is making progress with these steps. As described above, IT is developing the database for Revenue Accounting to record their transactions. Following the completion and testing of the database, the development for Laserfiche will begin. Upon approval of the database and Laserfiche, users will be fully trained on how to use both. IT is working closely with Revenue Accounting staff to ensure that this is a user-friendly and successful system.

Courtesy of Michelle Dolce



The EDMS Mission

*"Excellent service
delivery enhanced by
an efficient
Electronic Document
Management
System, which meets
the requirements of
Florida law."*

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."

~Theodore Roosevelt~

JAC in Brief

The Justice Administrative Commission administratively serves the Offices of State Attorneys, Public Defenders, Capital Collateral Regional Councils, the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program, Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Councils, and the Clerks of Court Operations Corporation; and, provides compliance and financial review of court-appointed attorney fees and due process costs.

The membership of the Justice Administrative Commission consists of two State Attorneys, appointed by the President of the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association and two Public Defenders, appointed by the President of the Florida Public Defender Association. Although members may be reappointed, each term spans a period of two years (s. 43.16, F.S.).

Vision: *To be a model of exemplary state government and provide unparalleled services.*

Mission: *To be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars, while providing the highest quality service to the 49 judicial related entities, private court appointed counsel, and associated vendors we serve, by ensuring compliance with laws, rules, regulations, and best business practices.*

Values: *We take great pride in excellence in service, innovation, adaptability, collaboration, honesty, integrity, accountability, and diversity, as well as respectful and ethical conduct, and fiscal responsibility.*