



Law Office of the
PUBLIC DEFENDER
Seventeenth Judicial Circuit

Howard Finkelstein • Public Defender

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June 28, 2010

Dr. Brannon:

We are requesting that you refuse any future court appointed evaluations involving Public Defender clients. The relationship between you and this office has deteriorated to such an extent that we feel you are no longer competent to evaluate our clients.

The professional relationship began to crumble in February 25, 2009 when our office established a rotation of experts as a means to save state funds and more equitably appoint psychologists to our cases. This rotation system caused you to earn considerably less money from our office.

In July 2009, you testified in State v. Bernard Joseph. This was a first degree murder case. The Assistant Public Defender was George Reres. During the cross examination, Mr. Reres asked you if "you were no longer getting the same amount of work from our office". You stated that you had a concern about the amount of work you were receiving. You went on to inappropriately interject that you had concerns including how Mr. Reres was treated by the office. In front of the jury, you stated that Mr. Reres was demoted as the head of the homicide division. This statement made in a case where a man's life is at stake shows the depth of your bias against our office.

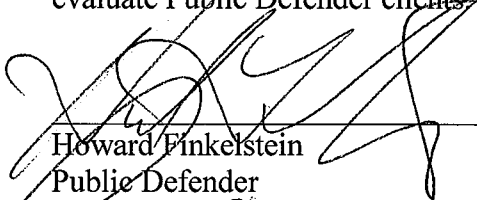
On July 28, 2009, we were forced to take you off our internal rotation. This action was a result of attorney complaints regarding your belligerent attitude toward them and our clients. Attorneys complained not only about the results of the evaluations but also about the lack of time you spent with their clients.

On December 24, 2009, you accosted Assistant Public Defender Lynn Desanti in the hallways of the Broward County Courthouse. During this altercation you accused Ms. Desanti and other public defenders of taking food out of your mouth. You were extremely irate and you aggressively pointed your finger in Ms. Desanti's face. Your actions caused Ms. Desanti to fear for her safety.

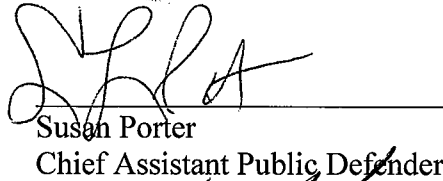
This altercation was witnessed by another Assistant Public Defender who corroborates what Ms. Desanti has stated and testified to in court. Later this same date you confronted Public Defender Howard Finkelstein in front of the Law Office of the Public Defender. Once again you were irate and belligerent. This confrontation was witnessed by the Assistant Public Defender who verifies your aggressive demeanor toward Mr. Finkelstein.

On May 14, 2010, you testified in a juvenile delinquency case, In The Interest of J.C., a Child. This hearing became so contentious that Circuit Court Judge Merrilee Ehrlich took judicial notice of the increasing pattern of animus between you and the Public Defender's Office. In this hearing you admitted that an evaluators feeling concerning the attorney could affect the evaluation.

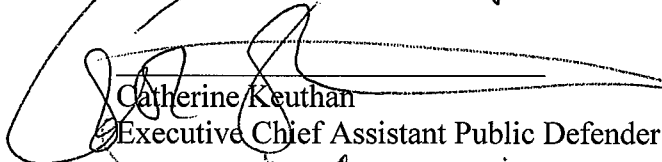
It is clear to us that your strong bias against this administration has made you incompetent to act as a mental health evaluator for our clients. We are therefore requesting that you immediately refuse court appointments to evaluate Public Defender clients. Please govern yourself accordingly.



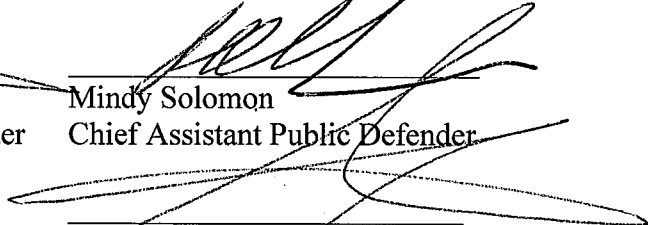
Howard Finkelstein
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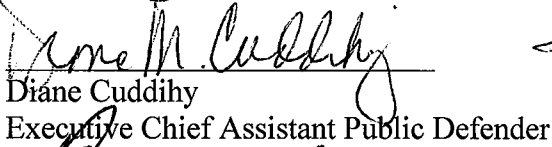
Susan Porter
Chief Assistant Public Defender



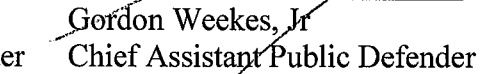
Catherine Keuthan
Executive Chief Assistant Public Defender



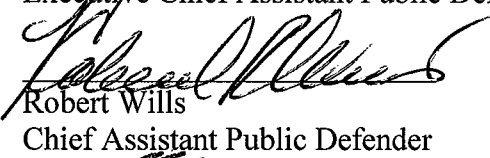
Mindy Solomon
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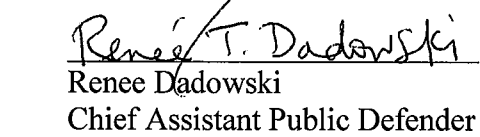
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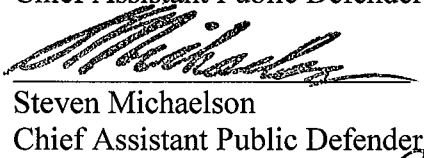
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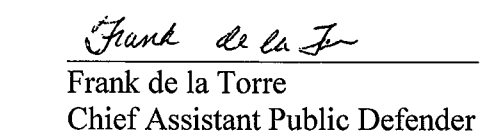
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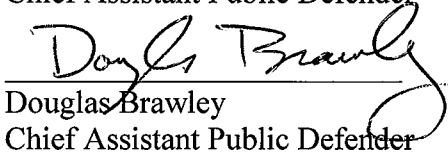
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