**Kent County Office of the Public Defender Independence Council**

**Charge**: The Kent County Office of the Public Defender Independence Council (“Independence Council”) shall receive and evaluate complaints or concerns of an attorney employed by the Office of the Public Defender that County Administration is violating the County’s policy on the Independence of the Office of the Public Defender and/or improperly or unduly influencing the individual assistant public defender’s ability to represent their client.

**Functions** of the Independence Council concerning the operation of the indigent defense system in Kent County shall include:

* Receipt and review of complaints or concerns, which should be directed to the chair of the Independence Council. The chair will then gather necessary information and convene a meeting of the Council to address the matter.
* Providing a briefing on the complaint and forwarding it to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners, as outlined in Standing Rule 6.1.
* If the complaint includes recommendations, those recommendations will be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners Executive Committee and County Administration.
* In cases where the complaint pertains to actions or oversights by the County Administrator, the findings and/or recommendations will be forwarded exclusively to the Executive Committee.
* The Executive Committee, County Administrator, and the Chief Public Defender will collectively review the findings and/or recommendations and undertake any necessary actions to ensure compliance with the required independence of the Indigent Defense System.

**Proposed Members\*** of the Independence Council be appointed by the Chair of the Board of Commissioners who will name the Chair of the Independence Council from the members that will include:

* 1 - Executive Director of the State Appellate Defender Office (SADO) or Executive Director of the Legal Assistance Center (LAC)
* 2 – Private practice criminal defense attorneys
* 1 – Officer of the Grand Rapids Bar Association
* 1 – Board Chair or their designee

\*Members cannot include any prosecutors, judges, current law enforcement personnel or public defense providers on the Kent County Indigent Defense appointed attorney roster nor within the Kent County Office of the Public Defender.