

CONTRACT PUBLIC DEFENDER CHALLENGES SURVEY



IDC Commission Meeting
November 20, 2025

SURVEY COMPONENTS

Top
Challenges

Interest in
Full-Time
Employment

Open
Comment

~300
PUBLIC DEFENDERS IN UTAH
(Employees and contractors)

114
CONTRACT ATTORNEYS
received the survey

41
SURVEY ANSWERS

DEFENDERS SURVEYED

COUNTIES

- Box Elder
- Cache
- Davis
- Grand
- Juab
- Millard
- Morgan
- Salt Lake
- Sanpete
- Sevier
- Tooele
- Uintah
- Utah
- Washington
- Weber

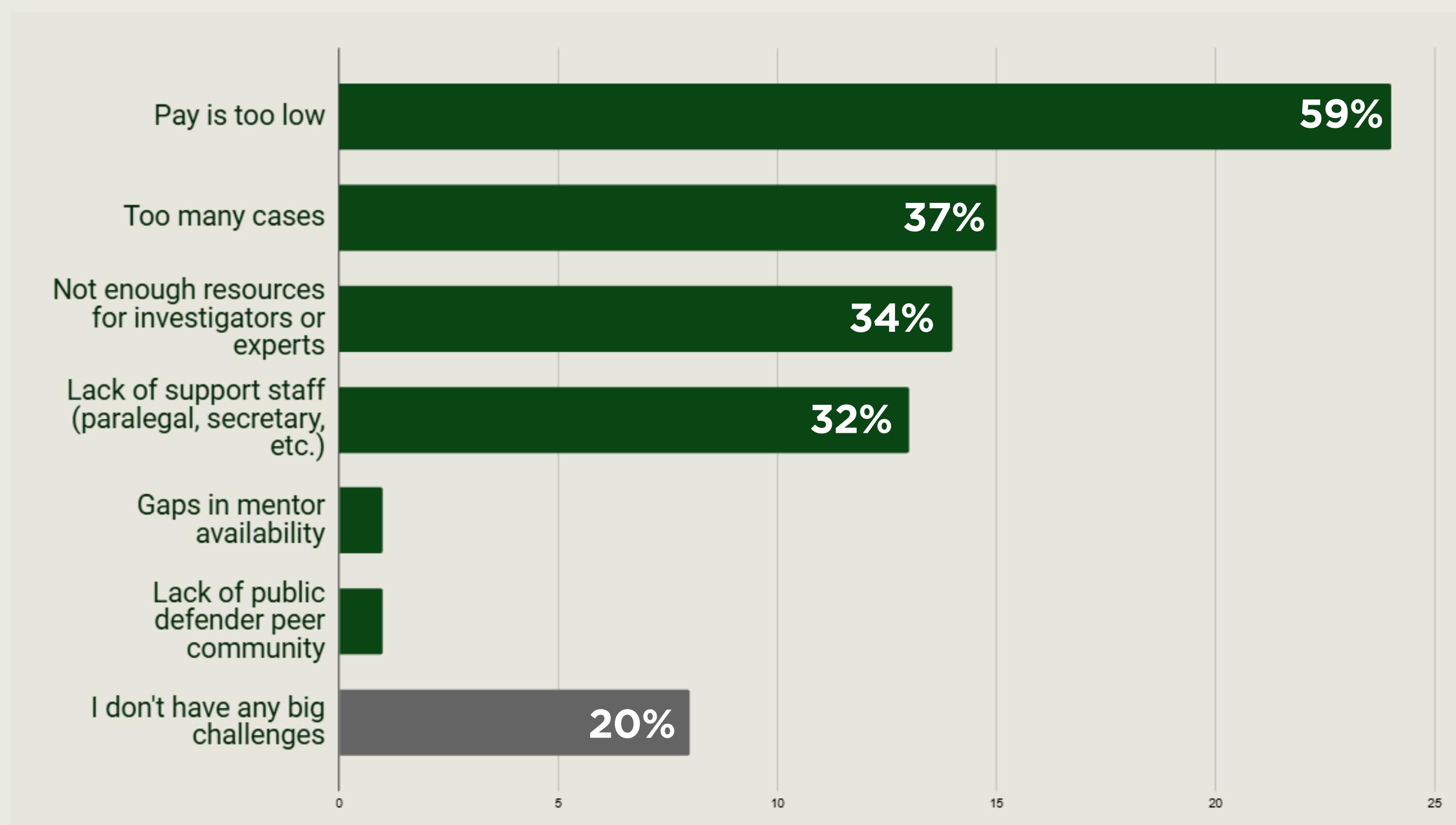
AREAS

- District Court
- Justice Court
- Juvenile
- Delinquency
- Child Welfare

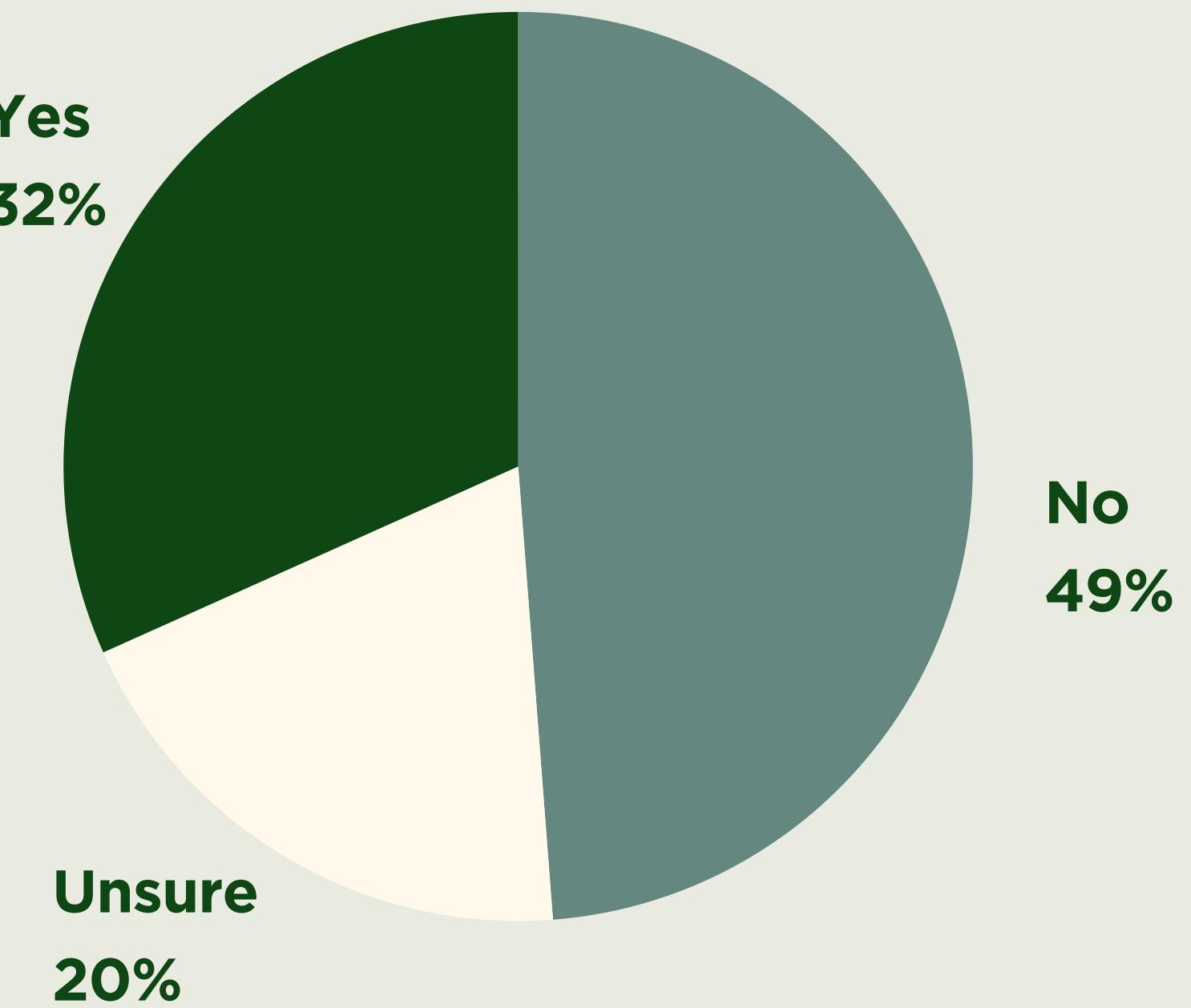
ANSWERS

*“Thank you, IDC, for all you do.
Conditions are much better since you
got involved.”*

CHALLENGES



INTEREST IN WORKING AS A FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE



OTHER COMMENTS

Appreciation for recent improvements

“Historically it has always been too many cases and low pay. The recent adjustments have helped significantly in those areas. ”

“Washington County has done well in providing better pay and other resources in recent years. I appreciate the progress that has been made.”

Gratitude for the work & for colleagues

“I love the work I do and have incredible colleagues which helps with the challenges of the work.”

Praise for Davis County’s system in particular

Appreciation of treatment courts

Concerns regarding court & criminal system processes

“I think it is too easy for the state to terminate the parental rights of parents, which is likely the worst punishment other than death.”

“It seems due process is sacrificed for efficiency.”

Difficulty of traveling to various courts

Issues with discovery:

- Difficulty dealing with large files
- Difficulty obtaining those files from law enforcement

Defense-specific concerns

Concerns about threats to cut funding in the near future

Concerns over actual availability of indigent defense resources when needed

Request to reduce caseload to meet ABA Standards

CONCLUSION

