



NEWS FROM:
Office of Public Defender
Matt Shirk, Fourth Circuit
www.MattShirkPublicDefender.com

Contact: Matt Bisbee
Public Information Officer
Tel: (904)630-7350
MPB@PD4.COJ.net

For Immediate Release

December 21, 2009

Taxpayers to Save Thousands Annually Thanks to New System in P.D. Office
Travel among offices, case-related trips, educational opportunities eased by videoconferencing

Jacksonville, FL: Competent and thorough representation of clients through fiscally conservative means defines the administrative philosophy of Fourth Circuit Public Defender Matt Shirk. Upon assuming office nearly one year ago, the 36-year old elected official who manages the criminal law needs of those deemed indigent in Clay, Duval and Nassau Counties prioritized upgrading the agency's technology to establish a more efficient workplace, utilize modern tools to best carry out his legal duties and ultimately achieve greater fiscal responsibility for Florida taxpayers. The latest technological upgrade Shirk has completed in his office is a brand new video-conferencing system that is free of the large price tag and multiple limitations of similar products. It's called Vidyo Inc.

"Implementing this affordable video-conferencing system is just one of many projects we are tackling to bring this office into this decade," said Mr. Shirk. "The return on this investment will be realized in no time; consider the many uses. We operate three offices in the Circuit and that requires both case-related and administrative travel. By minimizing that travel we can bypass the expenditure of resources for fuel and personnel time. Additionally, it makes distance learning opportunities for our staff more abundant and it even simplifies some interviewing in our casework that would otherwise involve long drives or even flights."

The technology behind Vidyo Inc. is vastly different from similar systems on the market. There is no obligation for the consumer to buy proprietary cameras and other equipment; Vidyo customers use existing computers - Macintosh as well as Microsoft Windows PCs - and regular consumer-grade Webcams. Teleconference participants download Vidyo software and use whatever wired or wireless connection they have.

"Video-conferencing is the latest technology upgrade for our office," continued Shirk. "It is worth noting that our Director of Information Technology Joe Frasier has a brilliant ability to locate, implement and apply such upgrades while all the while remaining a fiscal hawk when negotiating with the different vendors. We will continue making improvements to the P.D. office that will benefit both our clients and the taxpayers."

PAGE 2: PHOTOS, “Taxpayers Save...New System”



1. Chief Assistant Public Defender Refik Eler in his office with three remote parties on his monitor discussing the implementation of the new video-conferencing system.



2. Director of Information Technology Joe Frasier and Public Defender Matt Shirk in the course of a Wednesday video conference.



3. A staff writer and photographer from the Florida Times Union observe a video conference among staff at the Public Defender’s Office on 12/16/09. Three parties in remote locations (Connecticut, New Jersey and Indiana) appear on wall-mounted video screen.