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Indigent Legal Services OKs \$950K Budget Boost

Joel Stashenko, New York Law Journal

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The board of the state Office of Indigent Legal Services (ILS) formally approved a \$950,000 increase in its 2015-16 state budget request Friday to pay for new compliance duties resulting from the proposed settlement of *Hurrell-Harring v. State of New York*.

The additional money would allow the hiring of an eight-person unit within the ILS to monitor compliance with the settlement terms.

The agreement calls for improvements to the resources and standards for representing indigent criminal defendants in Suffolk, Washington, Ontario, Onondaga and Schuyler counties ([NYLJ, Oct. 22](#)). The New York Civil Liberties Union said it filed suit because New York's county-based public defense system fails to meet the state's constitutional obligations under the U.S. Supreme Court's *Gideon v. Wainwright* ruling.

ILS' overall budget request to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's budget director asks for \$118.5 million overall, including \$20 million in the first year of a proposed \$100 million infusion of funding over five years to aid overburdened legal services providers outside New York City ([NYLJ, Sept. 29](#)).

The next state fiscal year begins on April 1, 2015. Overall, ILS' current year budget is \$82.9 million.

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