

who shall possess the same qualifications as the Public Defender to be eligible for appointment, who shall assist the Public Defender in the performance of the duties of his office, and who shall, subject to the supervision of the Public Defender, be in charge of the public defender offices in the district for which he is appointed. Assistant public defenders may be appointed by the Public Defender, with the advice of the district public defenders, in such number as authorized by the budget. To be qualified for appointment as an assistant public defender, a person must be an attorney-at-law and admitted to practice law in the State of Maryland by the Court of Appeals of Maryland. The deputy public defender, district public defenders, and assistant public [defenders,] DEFENDERS shall serve at the pleasure of the Public Defender, shall not engage in the private practice of criminal law, and shall receive such salaries as provided in the budget.

4.

(c) This article applies only to representation in or with respect to the courts of this State. It does not prohibit the Public Defender's Office from representing an indigent person in a federal court of the United States at federal expense, if the matter arises out of, or is related to, an action pending or recently pending in a court of criminal jurisdiction of this State. Any compensation paid by the federal court to the Public Defender, his deputy, district public defenders, or assistant public [defenders,] DEFENDERS shall be remitted to the general funds of the State.

(d) Representation by the Office of the Public [Defender] DEFENDER, or by an attorney appointed by the Office of the Public Defender, shall extend to all stages in the proceedings, including custody, interrogation, preliminary hearing, arraignment, trial, and appeal, if any, and shall continue until the final disposition of the cause, or until the assigned attorney is relieved by the Public Defender or by order of the court in which the cause is pending.

5.

The Public [Defender] DEFENDER:

(a) Shall assume general responsibility for the operation of the Office of Public Defender and all district offices;

6.

(c) The primary duty of all panel attorneys appointed by the Office of the Public Defender shall be to the individual defendant, with like effect and to the same purpose as though privately engaged by the indigent person and without regard to the use of public funds to provide the service. This shall not preclude the designation or assignment of different individuals to perform various parts of the service from time to time. A