

**TITLE 5 – PUBLIC OFFICES AND AGENCIES
CHAPTER 3 - PUBLIC DEFENDER’S DEPARTMENT**



Republic of the Marshall Islands
Jepilpilin Ke Ejukaan

MARSHALL ISLANDS PUBLIC DEFENDER ACT 1979

Arrangement of Sections

Section	Page
§301. Short title.	3
§302. Creation of Department of Public Defender.....	3
§303. Duties and responsibilities of the Department.	3
§304. Chief Public Defender.....	4
§305. Independence of Public Defender.....	4
§306. Private practice prohibited.....	4
§307. Legal Assistance Regulations.	4
§308. Reports on the Activities of the Office.....	4

TITLE 5 – PUBLIC OFFICES AND AGENCIES
CHAPTER 3 - PUBLIC DEFENDER’S DEPARTMENT



Republic of the Marshall Islands
Jepilpilin Ke Ejukaan

MARSHALL ISLANDS PUBLIC DEFENDER ACT 1979

AN ACT to provide for the creation of the Department of Public Defender and to set out the duties and powers of the Public Defender.

Commencement: December 10, 1979
Source: M.I. Code (1975)
Amended By: P.L. 1979-13 P.L. 2003-94 P.L. 2005-42
P. L. 2013-25

§301. Short title.

This Act may be cited as the “Marshall Islands Public Defender Act 1979”.
[P.L.1979-13, §1.]

§302. Creation of Department of Public Defender.

There is hereby created the Department of the Public Defender of the Republic. [M.I. Code (1975), §2.501; P.L. 1979-13, §2.]

§303. Duties and responsibilities of the Department.

- (1) The primary duty and responsibility of the Department of the Public Defender shall be to provide, upon request, legal defense assistance and representation in criminal proceedings to all persons in the Republic who cannot afford to hire a private attorney.
- (2) The secondary duty and responsibility of the Public Defender shall be to provide, upon request, legal defense assistance and representation in civil actions to all persons in the Republic who cannot afford to

hire a private attorney. [M.I. Code (1975), §2.502; P.L. 1979-13, §2.][Amended by P.L.2013-25].

§304. Chief Public Defender.

The Department of the Public Defender shall be administered and supervised by a Chief Public Defender who shall be an attorney licensed to practice law in any jurisdiction whose legal system is based upon the common law of England. He shall be a member of the Public Service of the Republic. [M.I. Code (1975), §2.503; P.L. 1979-13, §2.]

§305. Independence of Public Defender.

In the ethical execution of the professional duties and responsibilities set out in Section 303 of this Act, neither the Chief Public Defender nor his staff shall receive any direction from the Cabinet, the Chief Secretary, or any other authority or person. They shall act independently. [M.I. Code (1975), §2.504; P.L. 1979-13, §2.]

§306. Private practice prohibited.

Neither the Chief Public Defender nor his staff shall engage in the private practice of law while so employed, whether for compensation or otherwise, during duty hours or outside duty hours, or while on leave of any kind. [M.I. Code (1975), §2.505; P.L. 1979-13, §2.]

§307. Legal Assistance Regulations.

The Chief Public Defender, with the approval of the Cabinet, may by regulation promulgate a “needs test” to determine if for purposes of Section 303 a person cannot afford to hire a private attorney. [new section 307 added by P.L. 2003-94][previous language repealed and replaced by P.L.2013-25].

§308. Reports on the Activities of the Office.

The Chief Public Defender shall, at the end of each financial year, submit to the Minister of Justice, a report on the activities and or programs carried out by the Office in that financial year. The Minister of Justice shall table such report before the Cabinet. [P.L. 2005-42]