



# ORLEANS PUBLIC DEFENDERS

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## **ORLEANS PUBLIC DEFENDERS STATEMENT ON ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ASHLEY CRAWFORD**

*New Orleans, LA* - The recent discovery of former Staff Attorney Ashley Crawford's apparent ineligibility to practice law in Louisiana prompted swift and decisive action to gain as much information as possible.

Ms. Crawford joined our office last October and all documentation we received upon her hiring indicated she was barred and in good standing. We check yearly to ensure our attorney staff remain in good standing and it was those administrative controls that revealed problems with her eligibility. We acted swiftly to make all necessary notifications in accordance with our ethical, professional, and legal obligations. As of Tuesday morning, Ms. Crawford's employment with OPD has been terminated.

We want to reassure our clients and our community we are committed to our mission: to fight for our clients by providing excellent client-centered representation, reforming the system and partnering with community.

We also remain committed to transparency and accountability. In the more than 50 year history of this organization, no such instance has ever occurred. This consistency should indicate the level of administrative controls in place throughout the organization. However going forward, we will evaluate our processes and make changes where necessary.

We absolutely hope this matter resolves in the best way possible for Ms. Crawford and her family. However, organizationally, OPD will continue to take actions which comport with our ethical, professional, and legal obligations.

*OPD's mission is to fight for our clients by providing excellent client-centered representation, reforming the system and partnering with the community. Our clients are citizens of New Orleans who come from rich and diverse communities that deserve advocacy with dignity, justice and hope.*

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