



**PRESS RELEASE**  
October 6, 2022

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**Maine Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights  
Announces Public Web Briefings on Indigent Legal Services**

The Maine Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is hosting a series of online, public panels to hear testimony concerning the civil rights implications of a lack of a public defender's office in the state. The Committee intends to provide the Commission with their findings and recommendations on the topic. The first three panels in this series will take place on:

**Panel I: Thursday, October 20, 2022, from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. ET**

Online registration (video and audio): <https://tinyurl.com/yруса9av>

Telephone access (audio only): (551) 285-1373; Meeting ID: 161 385 8073#

**Panel II: Tuesday, November 15, 2022, from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. ET**

Online registration (video and audio): <https://tinyurl.com/2vdbxb8h>

Telephone access (audio only): (551) 285-1373; Meeting ID: 160 968 6548#

**Panel III: Thursday, December 15, 2022, from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. ET**

Online registration (video and audio): <https://tinyurl.com/ymkdct4v>

Telephone access (audio only): (551) 285-1373; Meeting ID: 160 320 9879#

Members of the public will be invited to speak during an open comment period toward the end of each briefing. Members of the public are encouraged to share their experiences and perspectives regarding the right to legal defense in the state.

Closed captions will be provided. Individuals requiring additional accommodations should contact Liliana Schiller at least 10 business days prior to the meeting at [lschiller@usccr.gov](mailto:lschiller@usccr.gov). The Committee will also accept written comments related to this study. Please send written statements on this topic to [lschiller@usccr.gov](mailto:lschiller@usccr.gov) by January 15, 2023. Meeting materials will be publicly available in the [Maine Advisory Committee Public Folder](#).

Committee Chair Samantha Le said, "Maine and federal laws guarantee the right to effective legal counsel in criminal cases. Does the lack of a public defender system deprive indigent defendants' due justice? The Committee hopes to learn what has worked and what has not worked in the current court-appointed system."

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 56 Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).