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Contact: Jean Pasco  
(714) 834-7218  
jean.pasco@ocgov.com

## New Public Defender Sharon Petrosino Earns Final Board Approval

The Orange County Board of Supervisors has made official its selection of Sharon Petrosino as Orange County's new Public Defender.

Petrosino has served as Interim Public Defender since former Public Defender Frank Ospino stepped down in December to become a Superior Court judge. She was the chief deputy in the office and has been an attorney with the County since 1985.

"We are pleased to welcome Sharon in her new and essential role as a part of Orange County's criminal justice system," Board of Supervisors Chairwoman [Lisa Bartlett](#), Fifth District, said. "Sharon has shown true commitment and resolve on behalf of her clients and all of the residents of Orange County."

Petrosino will lead staff and contract attorneys who represent criminal defendants deemed by a court to be unable to afford legal representation on their own. As a deputy public defender, she represented indigent clients in a variety of cases, including charges of homicide and capital cases, as well as handled appeals. The office has 399 employees and a budget of \$74 million.

A total of 36 candidates were evaluated following a wide recruitment, with eight candidates selected for interviews with an internal subcommittee that included Supervisors Andrew Do and Todd Spitzer. On June 28, the Board of Supervisors unanimously appointed Petrosino pending approval of her employment contract.

The contract, approved Tuesday, calls for a base salary of \$216,362 – the same as that paid for the duties of District Attorney – with total annual compensation of \$337,050, including benefits.

Petrosino received her Juris Doctor degree from Southwestern School of Law and her undergraduate degree from Rutgers University. She is a member of the Orange County Bar Association, the California Public Defender's Association and California Attorneys for Criminal Justice.

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