



Chris Clayton serves as the Director of Nassau County for the Office of the Public Defender. She manages a staff of nine, including five Assistant Public Defenders, three support staff and one investigator. She oversees all Capital, Felony, Misdemeanor and Juvenile cases filed in Nassau County. Ms. Clayton elevated to Director in 2012 after serving the office for ten years as a senior attorney who handled many of the County's the most serious cases. Previously, she spent 15 years in the Duval County office where she had represented clients in all office divisions and served as a Felony Division Chief. Appointed APD in 1987 by the late Lou Frost, Ms. Clayton

has worked under three elected Public Defenders and completed more than 80 jury trials.

In addition to her present management duties in the Nassau County Office, Ms. Clayton has been a valued mentor to many younger attorneys appointed to serve the Public Defender over the years. She provides strategic consultation and sound judgment to less-experienced APD's who draw difficult case assignments. She regularly presents on legal topics for Continuing Legal Education (CLE) seminars offered to attorneys in the Fourth Judicial Circuit. She also manages and trains legal interns seeking experience in criminal defense in Northeast Florida. For several years, Ms. Clayton coached the competitive, Nassau County Teen Court team. The team consists of local high school students interested in the law and participates in High School Mock Trial competitions throughout the year. As coach, she introduced students to jury trial concepts, procedures and strategies; her teams would regularly practice and compete against different Florida schools.

A Florida native, Chris Clayton has spent her entire professional career in the Fourth Judicial Circuit PD Office. She is an active member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys, the Nassau County Bar Association and the Robert M. Foster Inn of Courts. An outdoors enthusiast and nature preservationist, Ms. Clayton was recognized by local media in 2010 for her initiative to protect the displaced Eastern Bluebird that lost its natural habitat in rural Yulee, FL when woodlands were cleared to build the present Justice Center. With encouragement from the Administrative Judge, she and volunteers built and mounted specially designed houses for this bird species.

Key Stats:

* J.D. University of Florida College of Law, B.A. Emory University (English)

* Coached Nassau County Teen Court Mock Trial Regionals, '11

* Appointed APD '87, elevated to Director, Nassau County, '12

Contact:

Email: cac@pd4.coj.net
Phone: (904) 548-4750
Media interviews scheduled through PIO, (904) 255-4604.