

John Mathews joined the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office as Chief of Staff in June 2024. In this role, John leads the strategic development and implementation of Public Defender priorities.

With over 15 years of diverse experience spanning government, nonprofit, and private sectors, John brings a wealth of experience on criminal legal system reform and a proven track record in transformational leadership. John comes to the LA County Public Defender's Office after serving as Senior Justice Deputy for Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, where he spearheaded crucial criminal justice reforms. Prior to joining Supervisor Mitchell's team, John led criminal justice reform advocacy campaigns as Director of Community Engagement and Senior Legal Counsel for the Justice Collaborative.

John's legal expertise is enriched by his experience as an Assistant United States Attorney in the District of Puerto Rico during the Obama Administration, and as a litigation associate at a Latham & Watkins LLP. John received a B.A. in Political Science from UCLA and his J.D. from Harvard Law School, where he served as President of the Harvard Black Law Students Association, editor for the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review, and a student attorney in the Criminal Justice Institute.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, John is deeply invested in community service and education, holding leadership positions in various organizations dedicated to empowering communities and fostering educational initiatives.