

PUBLIC DEFENDER

Definition

Under general ~~administrative policy~~ direction of the Board of Supervisors, plans, organizes, administers and directs a program of legal counseling and representation for persons accused of violations of criminal law, juveniles brought before the juvenile court, and persons undergoing involuntary commitment proceedings for mental illness, drug addiction, or alcoholism; and performs related duties as required by California Government Code Section ~~27906~~27706.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This is an executive management ~~single position~~ classification that serves as the department head of the Office of the Public Defender. ~~allocated to the office of the Public Defender.~~ The incumbent ~~serves as the department head, and~~ is responsible for the development, administration, and direction of the County's program for legal defense of indigent criminal defendants, and budget and personnel management for the department. All work is performed ~~using~~ ~~considerable~~ with a maximum amount of independent judgment and initiative within broad policy objectives established by ~~under the general administrative direction of~~ the Board of Supervisors and budget oversight of the County Administrator.

This job classification is considered unclassified pursuant to the County of Sonoma Civil Service Ordinance No. 305-A, Section 5, as amended. The incumbent of this position is ~~exempt from the Civil Service Ordinance of the County of Sonoma and appointed by~~ serves at the will of the Board of Supervisors, as provided for in California Government Code Section ~~27702~~27703, and ~~is required.~~ ~~The successful candidate will be required~~ to enter into an "at will" employment ~~service agreement~~contract.

Essential Duties

~~Plans, organizes, and d~~ Directs the development, planning, organization and implementation of ~~provision of~~ legal services to eligible persons accused of criminal offenses or subject to certain conservatorship proceedings; establishes and applies policies related to the public defense program.

Determines the operational philosophy and manages the day-to-day operations of the Office; delegates appropriate authority to management subordinates.

Interviews and selects ~~new employees~~ top management staff; establishes performance standards; and ~~and evaluates~~ the employee performance of subordinate managers, and all staff through the management team; ensures action on disciplinary matters; develops and ensures compliance with mandatory trainings and fosters appropriate professional development for staff and succession planning; and assesses organizational structure and takes actions to improve organizational structure and department efficiencies if needed ~~directs an in-service training program; initiates and approves personnel transactions and directs the assignment of personnel.~~

Consults with executive management staff ~~Chief Deputy~~ and ~~Senior~~ senior Attorneys ~~attorneys~~ regarding the assignment of individual attorneys to specific Superior, Municipal, and Juvenile Courts; personally reviews samplings of case files and transcripts of preliminary hearings in felony cases, and other materials related to incoming or continuing work load.

Consults with legal staff on the conduct of cases in progress, and gives advice and assistance as necessary; reviews selected outgoing correspondence, completed files on closed cases, reports of completed investigations, and other materials comprising finished work.

May personally appear in court as defense attorney during peak periods; reviews and evaluates summaries prepared by legal staff recommending that cases be contested in Superior Court; determines whether convictions should be appealed to higher courts.

Confers with ~~the Chief Deputy Public Defenders~~ executive management staff and subordinate ~~Senior~~ senior Trial Attorneys ~~attorneys~~ regarding policies, procedures and activities of the departmental ~~program~~, including the review of major cases in order to determine the effect of such cases on workload; discusses the public defense program with judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials and the public; keeps up to date on changes in statutory and decisional law, and directs the attention of the staff to changes.

Establishes and maintains effective communication and working relationships with the Board of Supervisors, County Administrator, other County department heads, subordinates, members of the court, and key officials of state, federal and local agencies;

Advises the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator of any changes in state laws or regulations that will have an impact on the delivery of services; provides the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator with specific plans, costs, and recommendations needed to meet legal requirements.

~~Prepares reports as requested or required for the County Administrator, Board of Supervisors and Auditor; establishes and maintains a system of office forms, procedures, record keeping and reporting systems, and initiates appropriate changes.~~

Directs the preparation of the departmental budget; determines departmental budget priorities; oversees and monitors revenue and reimbursement projections; prepares and justifies program and budget recommendations showing justification for requested appropriations and staffing; administers the approved budget and controls expenditures.

Represents and provides information regarding departmental programs, policies, and activities to the Board of Supervisors, County Administrator, other departments, elected officials, judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials, other agencies, and the public.

Coordinates preparation and release to the media of information related to the programs and services of the Office of the Public Defender with the County's communications team and/or Board of Supervisors and County Administrator; makes presentations to the public and media to

promote awareness of the department's services, as needed.

Knowledge and Abilities

Extensive knowledge of: modern personnel, financial and program management processes and procedures required to effectively plan, organize and direct the Office of the Public Defender; the duties, powers, limitations, and the authorities of the ~~office~~-Office of the Public Defender; principles of civil and criminal laws, including death penalty cases, and the principles of trial procedure and rules of evidence; legal research methods and judicial procedures.

Thorough knowledge of: ~~written and oral communication, including language mechanics, syntax and English composition.~~

Considerable knowledge of: ~~the development and administration of legal counseling and representation programs for persons qualifying for public defender services; the organization, structure, and administration of local government; principles of modern public personnel and finance administration, and~~ effective personnel management, training, and supervisory techniques; ~~written and oral communication, including language mechanics, syntax and English composition.~~

Ability to: plan, organize and direct the provision of legal services to eligible persons accused of criminal offenses, and establish and apply policies related to the public defense program; delegate and provide policy direction to management staff; ~~coordinate, assign and review the work of subordinate professional and supportive personnel;~~ select, orient, train, supervise and evaluate ~~subordinate~~ departmental personnel; administer and monitor the department budget; effectively maintain work productivity within the ~~office~~-Office of the Public Defender through the supervision of subordinate professional staff; direct the research, analysis and application of ~~y~~ legal principles, facts, evidence and precedence to complex legal problems; consistently prepare and present statements of law, fact and argument clearly, logically and persuasively in written and oral form, including the most complex legal matters; establish and maintain effective working relationships with subordinate staff members, departmental representatives, county officials, members of advisory and policy-making bodies; ~~the courts,~~ and the general public; understand and accept differences in human behavior, ~~and particularly those with diverse ethnic,~~ cultural, and socio-economic ~~ethnic~~ backgrounds; maintain effective media relations; work under pressure.

Minimum Qualifications

Education and Experience: Any combination of education, training, and experience which would provide an opportunity to acquire the knowledge and abilities listed. Normally, possession of a Juris Doctor degree or equivalent from a U.S. law school and ten years of extensive ~~responsible professional~~ legal experience with emphasis upon the preparation and trial of felony cases, including three years performing supervisory functions, would provide such

opportunity. ~~Three years of experience in the supervision of attorneys or equivalent experience is highly desirable.~~ Budgetary and administrative experience is highly ~~also~~ desirable.

License: Current active membership in the California State Bar Association. Possession of a valid driver's license at the appropriate level including special endorsements, as required by the State of California, may be required depending upon assignment to perform the essential job functions of the position.