

HIDALGO COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDERS

PUBLIC DEFENDER IV

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Provides advance legal representation as a court appointed attorney for defendants charged with criminal offenses and child welfare. Represents indigent clients accused of criminal violations in the phases of complex cases involving criminal defense; represents custodial parents in removal proceedings. Will assist in providing work direction to other attorneys, as assigned. Provides oversight to subordinate staff; will serve as a lead capacity, advising other attorneys while being assigned the more complex and difficult cases.

EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED

Assists in the planning, development, implementation and review of departmental policies and procedures and ensures activities are consistent with goals and objectives

Assists in the direction and oversight of subordinate staff within the department; makes recommendations regarding performance evaluations and/or disciplinary actions

Assists in providing work direction to other attorneys as assigned; lead other attorneys assigned to complex cases

Provides technical expertise and work direction to other attorneys as assigned; lead other attorneys assigned to complex and/or controversial cases

Conducts research and responds to inquiries regarding legal issues related to criminal law from other departments and/or other external agencies

Advises staff and the public on legal matters and the interpretation and application of County laws and regulations

Prepares legal opinions, briefs, contracts, proposals, and reports

Conducts or assists in conducting administrative, regulatory, evidentiary, and enforcement hearings

Negotiate settlements on behalf of assigned clients

Researches points of law involved in hearings to determine the validity and completeness of cases cited

Review cases to determine if pretrial motions must be filed

Assists in preparing cases for court trial and in representing the County in matters before court as appropriate

Gather evidence to formulate defense or to initiate legal actions, by such means as interviewing witnesses to ascertain the facts of a case

Represents clients in court for complex criminal cases

Serves as a liaison during community/business gatherings with other County departments, including external groups and organizations

Represents custodial parent in removal proceedings

Performs related work as assigned

GENERAL QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

Experience and Education

Five to six (5-6) years of experience practicing law with litigation including a minimum of one (1) year of supervisory experience

Graduation from an accredited law school with a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) or a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree

Member must be in good standing with the State Bar of Texas

Bilingual (Spanish and English) with ability to converse fluently in both languages

Certificates, Licenses & Registration

Must have a current valid Texas motor vehicle operator's license

Must be able to be insured by the County's insurance carrier

Must possess a license to practice law in the State of Texas

Knowledge, Skills, & Abilities

Knowledge of legal principles, practices, and proceedings; and of laws, regulations, and rules related to the County

Ability to comprehend and analyze complex legal issues and complicated factual details

Ability to work effectively with others as well as work independently, without close supervision

Ability to conduct hearings, to prepare opinions and briefs, to prepare cases for trial, to conduct research, to summarize findings, to interpret and apply laws, to use legal reference materials, and to communicate effectively

Employee may be assigned other duties in addition to those listed; duties may change according to the changing needs of the County

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to talk or hear. The employee frequently is required to stand. The employee is occasionally required to walk; sit; use hands to find, handle, or feel objects, tools or controls; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; stoop and kneel.

The employee must occasionally lift and/or move over 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounter while performing the essential functions of this job.

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:

Maintain physical conditions appropriate to the performance of assigned duties and responsibilities which may include the following:

- sitting for extended periods of time
- operating assigned equipment

Maintain mental capacity which permits:

- making sound decisions and using good judgment
- demonstrating intellectual capabilities

Effectively handle a work environment and conditions which involve:

- working closely with others
- working in a multi-task environment

Maintain effective audio-visual discrimination and perception needed for:

- making observations
- reading and writing
- operating assigned equipment
- communication with others
- required to follow the Hidalgo County Accident Prevention Plan and department's safety regulations

