

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE
CLASSIFICATION: NON-COMPETITIVE (CONFIDENTIAL/POLICY INFLUENCING) – NYSCSC
APPROVED 1/13/2021
APPROVED: AUGUST 27, 2020

CONFIDENTIAL ASSISTANT – PUBLIC DEFENDER

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This position involves assisting the Public Defender in a wide variety of legal, administrative and responsible clerical functions. The position involves the performance of a variety of tasks requiring the exercise of independent judgment and a general understanding of legal procedures and administrative policies. The work also involves responsibility for assisting Public Defenders with the preparation of legal papers and assisting others in obtaining legal reference material. The incumbent works under the general direction of the Public Defender who assigns and directs work. This position requires a very high degree of confidentiality between the incumbent and department personnel due to the sensitive nature of information and activities. Leeway is allowed for the exercise of independent judgment in planning and carrying out the details of the work. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

1. Assists in the preparation of appeals, pleadings, orders, petitions, motion papers, contracts, resolutions and other legal documents;
2. Obtains legal reference material when requested;
3. Maintains a database of defendants and crimes, assigned counsel, and the disposition of cases;
4. Reviews and processes the vouchers submitted by assigned counsel and brings discrepancies to the Public Defender's attention;
5. Inputs vouchers into a computerized accounts payable system and submits them to the Niagara County Audit Department for payment;
6. Performs routine office duties such as maintaining inventory, purchasing office supplies, processing payment vouchers, department payroll, office account-keeping, filing, maintaining personnel files, answering phones, distributing mail, etc.;
7. Assists with the compilation of the department's budget, monitors expenditures throughout the year, and processes necessary transfers of funds;
8. Prepares, compiles and types various lists, statistical reports, surveys and forms;
9. Submits all fiscal and budgetary documents to monitoring state and local fiscal authorities;
10. Types, processes, indexes, sorts, records, and maintains confidential and regular correspondence, including affidavits, subpoenas, legal briefs, etc. necessary for the operations of the Public Defender's Office;
11. Answers telephone, schedules appointments, receives callers and refers them to the proper persons, answers requests for various information from the general public, judges, court clerks, attorneys, etc., and gives out information using discretion as to what should and should not be released;
12. May act as liaison for the Public Defender among key individuals and agencies.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of general legal principles, terminology, practices, and procedures; thorough knowledge of office terminology, procedures and equipment; thorough knowledge of business arithmetic and English; good knowledge of organization and functions of the office; skill in maintaining activity control records and in preparing reports; skill in operating modern computer software including word processing, spreadsheets, and databases; ability to operate a computer keyboard or typewriter at an acceptable rate of speed and accuracy; ability to handle routine administrative details independently, including the composition of letters and memoranda; ability to understand and follow complex oral and written instructions; ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with the public and other governmental and private agencies; ability to perform close, detailed work involving considerable visual effort and strain; ability to get along well with others; clerical aptitude; a high degree of accuracy, industry and dependability; integrity; confidentiality; sound professional judgment; physical condition and maturity commensurate with the demands of the position.

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CONFIDENTIAL ASSISTANT – PUBLIC DEFENDER CONTINUED

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma and one of the following:

1. Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State board of Regents to grant degrees with a Bachelor's Degree and six (6) months of paid office clerical experience which involved using a personal computer; **OR**
2. Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State board of Regents to grant degrees with an Associate's Degree and two (2) years of paid office clerical experience which involved using a personal computer; **OR**
3. Four (4) years of paid office clerical experience which involved using a personal computer.

NOTE: Verifiable part-time experience will be pro-rated towards meeting the experience requirements.