

CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Appointed by and works at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners, this position plans, organizes and directs the activities and staff of the Public Defender Office. Uses considerable independent discretion at all times as the County Public Defender ensuring that constitutional guarantees are upheld, rights are protected and due process is implemented fairly, equally, equitably and consistently.

The Chief Public Defender is responsible for staffing, training, supervising, counseling and discipline for the office. The position ensures that Genesee County meets all constitutional and legislative requirements as they pertain to the representation of indigent adult offenders and provides a high level of indigent defense services. Directs, develops and implements policies and procedures for the Public Defender Office. Ensures that the Public Defender Office conforms to the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct. Directs and performs the department's administrative functions. Prepares the department's annual budget; implements the financial and regulatory requirements of the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC).

STATEMENT OF TASKS:

Develops necessary policies and procedures to attain and maintain standards of indigent criminal defense as they are proposed and adopted by the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC).

Develops and implements long and short term goals, objectives, and work standards for the office to include the establishment and direction of programs to maximize operational effectiveness and cost efficiencies; directs the preparation and administration of the departmental budget; makes budget and program presentations to the Board of Commissioners; monitors expenditures to ensure that they are within budget guidelines;

Plans, organizes, assigns, directs, reviews, and evaluates the work of public defender attorneys and support staff; selects staff personnel and provides for their training, professional development; counsels and disciplines as necessary; interprets laws and regulations and County policies for subordinates; confers with subordinate supervisors and other department staff to monitor activities; coordinates work effort and resolve problems and issues unique to the public defender office staff; provides professional assistance to staff;

Develops, implements and organizes the public defender office.

Reviews or supervises the review of criminal investigations to determine adequacy of evidence to justify searches, seizures and the authorization of charges by the prosecution; directs public defender attorneys in gathering and analyzing case evidence, preparing arguments, filing necessary documents, and presenting cases in court; assigns cases to attorneys, functions as the contract administrator for any contracts for the delivery of indigent criminal defense legal services; responsible for MIDC grant management and reporting or provides technical assistance and guidance relative to the submissions; directs the maintenance of accurate legal

materials, reports, correspondence and other written materials; substitutes for public defender attorneys as necessary and/or maintains a partial felony caseload; Approves pre-trial investigations, motions and expert witnesses while directing the defense of all criminal cases including, and in particular, those that are the most complex or sensitive criminal cases, to include appearance in court to substitute personally as needed;

Represents the County at meetings with local, state and federal officials; may speak before groups and the media on matters related to the Public Defender's Office; acts as media contact for Public Defender's Office;

Keeps informed of legal precedents and relevant legislation by reading professional journals, court rulings, attends meetings, conferences and CLE opportunities. Maintains conformity with the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct;

Performs other duties as assigned.

The statement of tasks above is intended to be sufficient to identify the class and be illustrative of the many duties that may be assigned. It should not be interpreted to describe all of the duties an employee assigned to this class may be required to perform.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Comprehensive knowledge of law and legal practices that pertain to constitutional guarantees and due process;

Thorough knowledge of administrative practices;

Ability to ensure the Public Defender Office conforms to the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct;

Ability to work with individuals in crisis who may suffer from mental or emotional illness, have violent tendencies or be unconcerned with their personal safety and hygiene;

Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing;

Ability to handle, as necessary, criminal cases of various kinds in various courts, including but not limited to felony jury trials'

Knowledge of HIPAA and other privacy requirements;

Strong ability to exercise mature judgment and initiative in analyzing problems and recommending solutions.

Strong oral and written skills, strong interpersonal and public relation skills.

Ability to develop good working relationships with the court staff and the public, including community and governmental agencies;

Working knowledge of computer applications and associated software.

Ability to work under stressful situations;

Ability to attend work regularly.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

Juris Doctorate degree with a Certificate of Admittance to the State Bar of Michigan.

-AND-

A minimum of ten (10) years of experience in the practice of criminal defense, including a minimum of five (5) years of experience in the administration of legal services.


Human Resources Director

Established: January 2021

