

**MENDOCINO COUNTY GOVERNMENT
CLASS SPECIFICATION**

CLASS TITLE: ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER
DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC DEFENDER
REPORTS TO: PUBLIC DEFENDER
CIVIL SERVICE: NO

CLASS CODE: 7069
FLSA STATUS: E
DATE: 11/07
BARGAINING UNIT: 303 MANAGEMENT

JOB SUMMARY AND DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

Under general direction of the Public Defender, the Assistant Public Defender is responsible for the overall day-to-day administration and management of all functions of the office of the Public Defender; supervises by direct observation or review the various sections of the office; acts, when so designated, for the Public Defender during periods of absence; may try the most complex legal cases; and performs duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This single position class has responsibility for assisting the Public Defender with departmental administrative matters, for acting as the day-to-day administrator of the department, and for acting as senior counsel in serious, controversial and high penalty cases. This position is distinguished from the Chief Deputy Public Defender by its responsibility to plan, organize and direct the activities and operations of the Department. This class is distinguished from Public Defender in that the latter is an appointed position with overall administrative responsibility for the operation of the department.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

Exercises technical and functional supervision over the Deputy Public Defender series, legal support staff and other staff.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS: (All responsibilities may not be performed by all incumbents.)

- Assist the Public Defender in the administration and operations of the department to ensure efficient organization and completion of work.
- Manage staff in accordance with policies, procedures and applicable laws including: interviewing, hiring and training and mentoring, planning, assigning and directing work; appraising performance, rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints and resolving problems.
- Establish and maintain schedules of case or court assignments.
- Plan and implement short-term or annual goals, objectives, and strategies for the department to ensure efficient organization and completion of work.
- Develop, communicate, and monitor policies, procedures, and standards for the department; recommend and implement improvement when necessary.
- Provide information, advice, feedback, or assistance to others within the department to refine work outputs or resolve problems.
- Ensure that quality standards and compliance with regulations are maintained.
- Assist the Public Defender in the development and administration of the department budget.
- Conduct legal research using independent judgment, discretion and initiative.
- Interpret and apply laws, court decisions and other legal authorities for use in the preparation of complex cases, opinions and briefs.
- Prepare reports, opinions, pleadings, briefs, appeals and/or other legal documents in connection with trials, hearings and other complex legal proceedings.
- Investigate, research, and prepare for trial and tries the most complex and difficult cases.
- Interview and advise clients in regard to complex and difficult cases; counsel clients concerning their rights and possible consequences of various actions.
- Discuss cases with associated parties, such as investigators, police officers, probation officers, mental health professionals, agencies providing services to clients, and other attorneys.
- Negotiate resolution of cases with deputy district attorneys.
- Prepare comprehensive investigative and/or other reports.
- Receive, investigate and respond to complaints.
- Maintain records and case files.
- Review and interpret current relevant legislation and litigation.
- Act as a liaison for the Public Defender's office.
- Develop and present formal and informal training programs for staff.
- Conduct regular staff meetings to review progress, accomplishments, strategies, and plans for the section.
- Act as Public Defender in his/her absence.
- Maintain and upgrade professional knowledge, skills, and development by attending seminars and training programs and reading trade and professional journals and publications.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT USED:

General Office Equipment
Computer
Vehicle

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

Education and Experience:

Current membership with the State Bar of California and five years of increasingly responsible experience as a practicing attorney to include at least one year performing managerial level supervisory and administrative duties; or any combination of education, training and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.

Licenses and Certifications:

Licensed to practice law in the State of California
Valid Drivers License

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of:

- Principles, procedures and practices regarding the practice of law in the State of California.
- Applicable state, federal and local ordinances, laws, rules and regulations.
- Record keeping, report preparation, filing methods and records management techniques.
- Methods and techniques of research, statistical analysis and report presentation.
- Ethical and professional standards of conduct.
- Computer applications and hardware related to performance of the essential functions of the job.
- Administrative principles and practices including goal setting and implementation.
- Administration of staff and activities, either directly or through subordinate supervision.
- Labor law and procedures used in handling personnel issues.
- Budgetary principles and practices.

Skill in:

- Preparing clear and concise reports, correspondence and other written materials.
- Using tact, discretion, initiative and independent judgment within established guidelines.
- Organizing work, setting priorities, meeting critical deadlines, and following up on assignments with a minimum of direction.
- Applying logical thinking to solve problems or accomplish tasks; to understand, interpret and communicate complicated policies, procedures and protocols.
- Communicating clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Motivating staff, supporting and providing for their training and professional development.
- Analyzing and resolving office administrative situations and problems.
- Selection, planning, organizing, assigning, directing, reviewing and evaluating the work of staff.

Mental and Physical Ability to:

- Analyze situations effectively, interpret and apply laws and regulations and recommend effective courses of action.
- Read, analyze and interpret professional periodicals and journals, technical procedures and government regulations.
- Write reports, motions, briefs and/or other legal documents.
- Speak effectively before groups and respond to questions.
- Argue clearly, logically and persuasively in written and oral form.
- Maintain confidentiality and objectivity.
- Understand and accept differences in human behavior, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with a variety of individuals.
- Prepare and present cases in court; negotiate settlements.
- Train and mentor less experienced attorneys.
- While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is regularly required to sit, use hands to finger, handle, or feel, reach with hands and arms, and speak and hear.
- While performing the essential functions of this job the employee is occasionally required to stand, walk and lift and/or move up to 40 pounds.

Working Conditions:

Work is performed in a normal office environment with little exposure to outdoor temperatures or dirt and dust. The incumbent's working conditions are typically moderately quiet.

This class specification should not be interpreted as all-inclusive. It is intended to identify the essential functions and requirements of this job. Incumbents may be requested to perform job-related responsibilities and tasks other than those stated in this specification. Any essential function or requirement of this class will be evaluated as necessary should an incumbent/applicant be unable to perform the function or requirement due to a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Reasonable accommodation for the specific disability will be made for the incumbent/applicant when possible.