

ASSISTANT INVESTIGATOR

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is a para-professional position incorporating the duties and responsibilities of the Intake Specialist while creating latitude for the position to assist the Investigators in their course of work. The incumbent will be responsible for interviewing individuals to determine their eligibility for the services of the department. When a defendant qualifies for services, the Intake Specialist takes detailed fact statements from the defendant, based on their side of the story. The intake interviews are performed in the Public Defender's Office, the Broome County Jail, local hospitals, local Courts, and other correctional institutions. This position is of a highly confidential nature. The incumbent assists the Investigators with assigned tasks. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Chief Investigator-Public Defender, with leeway allowed for the exercise of independent judgment in performing the duties and responsibilities of the position. The position also oversees in the training and supervision of the Intake Specialists. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Conducts intake interviews to determine an individual's eligibility by evaluating legal ethical issues relevant to each case, confirms income and resources to determine financial eligibility;
- Conducts in-depth factual interviews of a case consisting of the background of the case and names and addresses of witnesses; Answers questions concerning the department and related processes;
- May refer interviews to community agencies specializing in crisis situations, problem solving and drug and alcohol rehabilitation;
- Assists Investigators with assigned tasks such as locating defendants & relevant witnesses;
- Searches public and private documents in order to locate individuals, or may have to question others and follow leads in order to find an individual;
- Assists with the completion of Mitigation Records Requests; Obtains Releases of Information and filing associated records requests to obtain background information, medical, mental health, substance abuse treatment records;
- Processes case related FOIL requests;

Prepares written reports for each case assigned describing all actions steps taken & persons interviewed to complete assigned tasks;
Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonable within the scope of the position;
Assists in the supervision and training of Intake Specialists;
During staffing shortages may be required to answer phone calls, greet clients, and interview potential clients.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Good knowledge of interviewing procedures and practices;
Good knowledge of community social resources;
Working knowledge of the procedures used to locate people;
Working knowledge of Penal Law;
Working knowledge of criminal justice system terminology including penal law, and criminal procedure law;
Ability to coordinate and oversee the work of others;
Ability to communicate both orally and in writing;
Ability to record verbal and quantitative information with accuracy;
Ability to obtain facts in a structural interview setting;
Ability to re-direct non-constructive client behavior, parental behavior, or spousal behavior to the purpose of the interview;
Ability to learn criminal justice laws and procedures;
Ability to learn procedures related to document searches & records requests;
Ability to learn how to utilize various department programs such as NYS DMV Database & CHRS Criminal History Record Searches within the Unified Court System;
Ability to learn other aspects to assist Investigators with assigned tasks;
Patience; Initiative; Tact.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- A) Possession of an Associate's Degree in criminal justice, law, paralegal, or closely related field and one year of experience working with the public in a public or private agency performing social service, criminal, justice, and/or juvenile justice services; OR

B) Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma and three years of experience working with the public in a public or private agency performing social service, criminal justice, or juvenile services.

NOTE: Successful completion of coursework in criminal justice, sociology, psychology, social sciences, or closely related field at a regionally accredited college or university, or one accredited by New York State Board of Regents to grant degrees, may be substituted for the required experience with three semester credit hours being equivalent to three months of experience.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Possession of a valid license to operate a motor vehicle in the State of New York will be required at time of appointment and maintain same while in the title.

NOTE: Your degree must have been awarded by a regional, national, or specialized agency recognized as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Secretary of education. If your degree was awarded by an educational institution outside of the United States and its territories, you must provide independent verification of equivalency. A list of acceptable companies who provide this service can be found on the internet at <https://www.cs.ny.gov/jobseeker/degrees.cfm>. You must pay the required evaluation fee.