

Holistic Defense Advocate



Position Description

Status

Regular Full-Time

Compensation

B24

Bargaining Unit

Non-bargaining

Summary

Provides expertise in the area of social work and mitigation while operating as a liaison between the public defenders and our clients as well as service providers, stakeholders, and the general public. The Holistic Defense Advocate maintains a caseload of indigent clients for which they will serve as an advocate on the defense team by identifying clients' needs, coordinating referrals to community resources, providing case management and advocating through mitigation.

Essential Functions

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

1. Provides holistic defense social work and mitigation expertise to assigned defense counsel through relevant social work/mental health research and the application of that research to individual indigent defense cases.
2. Collaborates with team members to advocate for reduced sentences and/or alternatives to incarceration for clients through gathering factual mitigation through interviews and obtaining records, analyzing records, researching and recommending alternatives to incarceration, and writing pre-pleading memoranda to judges and prosecutors seeking reduced sentences and alternatives to incarceration.
3. Advocates in various ways on behalf of clients to social service agencies, judges, programs, and Assistant Prosecuting Attorney's.
4. Work closely with clients to make appropriate referrals to address clients' social service needs such as drug treatment, housing, and other benefits and also assist clients in navigating social service agencies.
5. Provides social work expertise relating to the Holistic Defense project and in support of the office's objectives as established by the Holistic Defense Coordinator, Deputy Chief Public Defender, and Chief Public Defender by collaborating with stakeholders, the private sector, local, state, and federal unites of government and various county departments as directed.

6. Shall perform any other tasks as assigned by the Holistic Defense Coordinator, Deputy Chief Public Defender, and Chief Public Defender.

Competencies

Competencies are listed below.

- Customer Focus
- Teamwork
- Employee Engagement
- Process Focus
- Financial Resources
- Goal/Results Oriented
- Communication
- Leadership & Influence
- Decision Making & Judgement
- Analysis & Problem Solving

Supervisory Responsibility

This position does not have direct supervisory responsibilities.

Work Environment

This job operates in a professional office environment. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers and filing cabinets.

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 express oneself and exchange information both verbally and in writing. The employee is frequently required to move about the office environment; operate a computer and other office machinery; and move or transport files or other items to meetings and other office spaces. This is largely a sedentary role; however, some filing is required. The ability to open filing cabinets and bend or stand on a stool as necessary is required.

Travel

Travel is required 25%-50%.

Required Education and Experience

1. Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Criminal Justice, Sociology, Psychology, Education, or other related human services degree.
2. Master's Degree in Social Work, Criminal Justice, Sociology, Psychology, Education, or other related human services degree with a non-social work Bachelor's degree is also qualified.
3. One (1) year of Social Work, Psychology, Sociology, Holistic Defense experience or other human services related experience in a legal setting is preferred.
4. Additional coursework in mental health, substance abuse, or criminal justice reform is highly desirable.

Other Duties

Ability to competently perform all the essential duties of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation, demonstrated commitment to effective customer service delivery, and the ability to work productively as a member of a team or work group are basic requirements of all positions at Allegan County.

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

Signature

Employee signature below constitutes employee's understanding of the requirements, essential functions and duties of the position.

Employee_____Date_____