

Iowa Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise
Job Classification Description

Public Defender 3

Definition

Assists a supervisor by performing professional legal work related to the representation of indigent clients and juveniles in cases where the local Public Defender has been appointed as counsel and provides training, guidance, and direction to staff assigned in local Public Defender offices; performs related work as required.

The work examples and competencies listed below are for illustrative purposes only and not intended to be the primary basis for position classification decisions.

Work Examples

Assists supervisor by performing such duties as instructing employees, answering questions, distributing and balancing the workload, and checking work; may make suggestions on selection, promotions, and reassignments.

Participates in the investigation and preparation of a defense for complex adult and juvenile offender cases to obtain facts in determining the merits of cases and appropriate courses of action.

Prepares drafts of pleadings, motions, interrogations, supporting affidavits, letters, opinions, and briefs.

Advocates the most complex cases at every stage of the criminal justice system through resolution in the pre-trial process, plea bargaining process, trial, verdict, and sentencing by: providing legal counsel and advice; interviewing and selecting appropriate witnesses, preparing them to give testimony; and conducting direct and cross examination of witnesses.

Negotiates plea bargains, dismissals, or other dispositions of assigned cases with prosecuting attorneys or other interested parties.

Trains less-experienced Public Defenders in the principles of trial advocacy and pleading, trial and criminal procedures, the concept of legal precedence, and the rules of evidence as they apply to legal advocacy.

Competencies Required

Knowledge:

- Law and Government – Laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.
- English Language – The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Customer Service – Principles and processes for providing customer services, including customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluating customer satisfaction.
- Education and Training – Principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.

Abilities:

- Oral Expression – Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- Oral Comprehension – Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- Written Expression – Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
- Written Comprehension – Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
- Speech Clarity – Speak clearly so others can understand.
- Deductive Reasoning – Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
- Inductive Reasoning – Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions.

Skills:

- Active Listening – Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- Critical Thinking – Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
- Reading Comprehension – Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents.
- Complex Problem Solving – Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
- Writing – Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
- Negotiation – Bringing others together and trying to reconcile differences.
- Persuasion – Persuading others to change their minds or behavior.
- Active Learning – Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.

Minimum Qualification Requirements

Applicants must meet at least one of the following minimum requirements to qualify for positions in this job classification:

- 1) Graduation from an accredited law school, possession of a current license to practice law in the State of Iowa, and experience equal to five years of full-time work in professional legal criminal trial advocacy or prosecution.
- 2) Current, continuous experience in the state executive branch that includes three years of full-time work as a Public Defender 2.

Effective date: 11/25 SA