

DEFENDER BASED ADVOCATE

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: The work involves responsibility for performing advocacy services and other work related to developing and operating a program which develops alternatives to pretrial detention and incarcerated sentences. The work is carried out utilizing a variety of approaches and involves developing individualized treatment plans for selected defendants and advocating viable alternatives to pretrial detention and incarcerated sentences for use in the courts. The incumbent works directly with clients, probation, human service agencies and other governmental agencies to achieve programmatic goals. The work is carried out under the general direction of the Public Defender or the Chief Assistant Public Defender with considerable leeway allowed for the use of independent judgment. Supervision may be exercised over the work of subordinates. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Identifies and screens potentially appropriate participants in the program, based on referrals from various agencies, but excluding defendants with histories of violent criminal behavior;

Develops individualized treatment plans for selected defendants as alternatives to pretrial detention and post-conviction incarceration;

Works with defense attorney to expedite bail or have defendant released on recognizance;

Assists the courts in ensuring that defendants appear as required through contact with defendants;

Prepares memoranda recommending non-incarcerated sentences for defendants;

Advocates the institution, where appropriate, of non-incarcerated sentencing as an alternative;

Attends various meetings and represents the program;

Checks criminal history and financial status of defendants;

Investigates and determines facts surrounding each case, including viewing the scenes of alleged crimes;

Locates, meets with and interviews all suspects and witnesses involved in an investigation in order to obtain specific information relating to the investigation;

May locate and search public and private documents in order to locate some individuals, or to question others and follow leads in order to locate an individual;

Acts as a liaison between the Public Defender's Office and the various municipal police agencies;

DEFENDER BASED ADVOCATE-cont'd

Assists the attorneys in the preparation on cases for trial and attends court when necessary;

Prepares and maintains reports for each case, describing all steps taken, visits made, persons questioned and facts established;

Prepares a variety of written reports and oral presentations.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of the terminology and best practices used in the fields of sociology, psychology and economics;

Good knowledge of social service programs and other community resources;

Good knowledge of laws pertaining to probation work and functions and procedures of Family and Criminal courts;

Good knowledge of factors related to crime and delinquency;

Working knowledge of social problems and social justice, particularly within the legal system;

Working knowledge of the criminal justice system;

Ability to effectively conduct interviews using current interviewing techniques;

Ability to demonstrate commitment to the dignity and worth of individuals served by the Public Defender's Office

Ability to project a strong and concerned image;

Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;

Ability to understand, interpret and prepare written material;

Ability to prepare clear and concise reports;

Ability to establish and maintain successful working relationships with others;

Initiative;

Tact;

Courtesy.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

A) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree in social work, social science, criminology, law, or closely related field; OR

B) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in social work, social science, criminology, law, or closely

DEFENDER BASED ADVOCATE-cont'd

related field and two years of experience in counseling, casework, community action or legal advocacy work in a recognized agency adhering to acceptable standards; OR

C) An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of A) and B) above.

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