

PROBATION ASSISTANT

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Assists probation officers in a local probation agency in various ways, such as gathering information for investigations and reports and helping to supervise persons on probation. Does related work as required.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is a para-professional position in a probation department. Unlike a Probation Officer, a Probation Assistant is not a Peace Officer pursuant to the New York State Criminal Procedure Law. The incumbent is responsible for assisting probation officers in a local probation agency in tasks which may include performing pre-dispositional/pre-trial related duties such as interviewing and screening individuals arrested and/or otherwise not yet adjudicated/sentenced for suitability for pre-trial release, making recommendations for release, monitoring individuals released into the community whose cases are pending; and notifying courts of case status. An incumbent may also serve as a probation department's point of contact for transfer of records and files with other probation departments, law enforcement agencies or courts. He/she also assists in the control and supervision of probationers by performing tasks such as opening and closing cases; retrieving archived files; delivering documents to law enforcement agencies and the courts; assisting with the collection of financial obligations; and processing intra and interstate transfers. The work is performed under the supervision of a Probation Supervisor or higher level probation professional in accordance with applicable rules/regulations, statutes and/or policies and procedures as directed by a Probation Director or his/her designee. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required. The ratio of probation assistant positions to probation officer positions (including probation officer trainees) shall not be in excess of one to four without written approval of the State Director of Probation.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Interviews individuals in custody of a law enforcement agency to assess their suitability for release from detention pending trial, monitors status of individuals released and notifies courts of their status;

Assists individuals receiving probation services in completing questionnaires and other documents, and by answering general questions;

Supports a probation department's involvement with specialty courts at the direction of a Probation Director or his/her designee which may include gathering information; conducting drug/alcohol screenings; and contacting victims, law enforcement agencies, human service agencies, treatment providers and other involved parties as necessary;

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- Gathers information about individuals receiving probation services from a variety of sources, including but not limited to, public and private human services agencies, law enforcement agencies, courts and employers to verify social and legal histories of probationers; secures information regarding conduct and progress of probationers and helps resolve problems of probationers including problems related to housing, health care, employment, or other essential matters;
- Obtains and forwards documents and information needed by law enforcement agencies and the courts in accordance with applicable regulations and/or statutes as directed by the Probation Director or his/her designee;
- Registers and updates cases by entering data into a database or other electronic file, conducts record checks through local, state, and federal databases where authorized and produces electronic reports as needed;
- Assists with the preparation of written memorandums, correspondence, transfer orders, discharge letters and other documents by gathering and relaying accurate information;
- Records attendance at day reporting;
- Performs a variety of office and/or clerical tasks including answering the phone, photocopying, and creating, filing and maintaining records;
- May perform drug and alcohol screenings and collect DNA samples;
- May prepare files for intra or interstate transfers and prepare and monitor inter/intra state transfers out of the local jurisdiction;
- May provide employment preparedness assessments and employment related training and assistance.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Good knowledge of pre-trial court procedures;
- Good knowledge of interviewing methods necessary to determine suitability for pre-trial release from detention;
- Good knowledge of tools used to monitor compliance with conditions of probation, such as drug and alcohol screening, DNA collection, and electronic monitoring devices;
- Good knowledge of the geography of the jurisdiction employed in;
- Working knowledge of laws pertaining to probation work and functions and procedures of family and criminal courts;
- Working knowledge of the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations and policies relating to confidentiality of case record information;
- Working knowledge of special offender populations such as domestic violence offenders, sex offenders, DWI offenders, youthful offenders, juvenile offenders, Persons in Need of Supervision and juvenile delinquents;

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Working knowledge of juvenile and adult risk and needs assessment instruments; Working knowledge of factors related to crime and delinquency;

Working knowledge of the rules of evidence, arrest laws and custody procedures; Working knowledge of community resources;

Working knowledge of employment, training and treatment options available to probationers; Working knowledge of office terminology, procedures, equipment and business English;

Ability to interview detainees and assess their suitability for pre-trial release; Ability to review and explain conditions of probation to a probationer;

Ability to gather and organize information related to the work performed; Ability to administer drug, alcohol testing and collect DNA samples as needed; Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with others;

Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions;

Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;

Ability to understand and empathize with the needs and concerns of others;

Ability to maintain composure and make rational judgments under stressful conditions.

OPEN COMPETITIVE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the Board of Regents to grant degrees, with an Associate's degree or higher in criminal justice, human services, chemical dependency counseling, business administration, or a closely related field or;

(b) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma and two (2) years of experience working with the public in a public or private human services agency or a criminal justice or juvenile justice agency or;

(c) An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of (a) and (b).

Special Requirement: Possession of a current driver's license or otherwise demonstrated ability to meet the transportation requirements of the position.

Note: The class specifications including the minimum qualifications for positions in Probation Departments are established by rule and regulations of the Division of Criminal Justice Services. These class specifications are found in Title 9 NYCRR Part 347, Appendix H-10, Standard Specifications for Professional Probation Positions.

Note: This position is allocated to the competitive class pursuant to the Executive Law Section 257(1).