**Class Summary**

The responsibilities of this classification include assisting attorneys in developing defense strategies by providing advice and recommendations to attorneys in assessing clients and their families, participating in case strategy and planning, and presenting relevant diagnostic social service needs of clients, particularly as it pertains to establishing the best possible legal defense and/or outcome.

**Distinguishing Characteristics**

This is the second level in a two-level classification series. The incumbent works collaboratively with an interdisciplinary team under the supervision of the attorney representing a particular client by applying advanced social service work skills and expertise as a consultative specialist on cases within the Department of Public Defense. Incumbents in this classification are distinguished from the Public Defense Mitigation Specialist I in that the Public Defense Mitigation Specialist II diagnoses mental illness or addictions and provides testimony regarding mental health status, competence or developmental issues.

**Examples of Duties**

1. Performs assessments, makes diagnoses regarding mental illness or addictions, conducts interviews to collect information, and gathers records for mitigation/competency. Prepares comprehensive psychosocial histories as needed.
2. Provide testimony regarding mental health status, competence or developmental issues.
3. Provides social services information/education to attorneys and clients. Coordinates, refers, and monitors relevant social services for clients.
4. Prepares and presents accurate case information and persuasive mitigation reports.
5. Advocates for clients in the criminal justice system by investigating, developing, and presenting information that supports an alternative sentencing plan or dispositional plan. Similarly advocates for clients in the legal system who are responding to a dependency petition, Sexual Offender Commitment petition and other proceedings affecting the client’s liberty or other constitutionally protected interest.
6. Performs other duties as assigned.

**Knowledge/Skills**

Knowledge of the role of the attorney-mitigation specialist relationship and familiarity with the Washington State Bar Association Rules of Professional Responsibility and other ethical standards which govern Mitigation Specialists

Knowledge of principles, methods and techniques of social services, including case management, assessment, coordination/referrals, research, mediation, report writing, and oral communications

Knowledge of human services related laws, rules, and regulations

Knowledge of individual and social development, counseling and psychology

Knowledge of the use of mitigation in criminal justice cases

Knowledge of local and state government processes

Knowledge of protocols and methodology for assessment, evaluation and documenting physical, psychological, and mental development

Knowledge of criteria for reliable diagnosis and assessment of mental disorders

Knowledge of community programs and resources

Skill in handling confidential information

Skills in identifying potential ethical issues and seeking advice/counsel when ethical issues arise or require clarification

Skill in interviewing and assessment methods and techniques

Skill in building rapport with defendants, their families, and witnesses from various backgrounds

Skill in assessing cases appropriately and utilizing resources to provide effective client services

Skill in preparing detailed narrative reports, correspondence and other written materials

Skill in using current office software programs including word processing, spreadsheet, database and email

Ability to testify effectively at trial, sentencing or other hearings

Ability to communicate effectively and professionally, in person and in writing

Ability to work calmly and respond courteously when in stressful situations

Skill in working with a variety of individuals from diverse backgrounds

Ability to work independently and as a team member

Skill in using current office software programs including word processing, spreadsheet, database and email

**Education and Experience Requirements**

Master’s degree in Social Work or a related behaviorial health field and one year of related social services experience

**Licensing, Certification and Other Requirements**

Valid Washington State Driver’s License

Valid Washington State Social Work or Mental Health License preferred

Some licenses, certifications and other requirements determined to be necessary to meet the business needs of the employing unit may be required.

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| **FLSA Designation** | Exempt (Professional) |
| **Service Status** | Career Service |
| **EEO Code** | 2 |
| **Levels within same series** | Public Defense Mitigation Specialist I  Public Defense Mitigation Specialist II |
| **Class History** | 05/2015 Created  09/2015 Updated content, title |