**Class Summary**

The responsibilities of this classification include providing professional civil and/or criminal legal services for juveniles and/or adults under the general direction of the Public Defender. Assignments within this class vary in degree of responsibility and amount of supervision received.

**Distinguishing Characteristics**

This classification provides legal services in criminal, civil, family support, and juvenile cases in the Department of Public Defense. Incumbents are fully knowledgeable of Court proceedings and the application of laws. The work will vary, depending upon the areas assigned and in accordance with The Supreme Court of Washington’s Standards for Indigent Defense; assignments require technical proficiency in completion of casework.

This classification utilizes multiple levels of responsibility from entry through the fully experienced professional level. Incumbents are assigned to various levels at the Public Defender’s discretion according to the organization staffing, workload, difficulty of assignments and cases, and the Attorney’s individual capabilities. This class is distinguished from the Public Defense Attorney II in that the positions at the second level are National/State-wide experts recognized by Department of Public Defense and regularly represents the department at the Public Defender’s direction in various forums.

**Examples of Duties**

1. Provides legal representation to juvenile and adult clients by appearing as counsel of record for selected clients at pre-trial police lineups, arraignments, preliminary hearings, hearings and trials.
2. Advises clients as to their rights and the actions they should take in court, including the relative merits of trial by judge or jury. Advises clients on settlement offers, options, and potential for success at trial or other dispositions of cases.
3. Requests mitigation services, and confers with law enforcement officers, experts, prosecuting attorneys, and other interested parties to determine the course of action that should be taken on behalf of their clients.
4. Performs legal research, prepares briefs, pleadings and other documents. Presents and argues motions.
5. Interviews and counsels defendants/clients and interviews witnesses.
6. Obtains documents by subpoena and other investigations and discovery methods.
7. Negotiates with prosecutors, probation officers and judges regarding the disposition, modification of charges or resolution of cases.
8. Orders investigations; confers with investigators to monitor progress of investigation.
9. Maintains and updates, as needed, a computerized case-management system to track caseloads and individual assignments.
10. Identifies cases which present an ethical conflict of interest.
11. Records time spent and itemizes work done and maintains case files. Submits hours for purposes of additional credit awards.
12. May lead assigned staff. Ensures work conforms with prevailing professional standards, and applicable statues and county policies.
13. Provides mentorship to less experienced attorneys.
14. Performs other duties as assigned.

**Knowledge/Skills**

Superior knowledge of the law in the assigned specialty area developed through academic training, seminars, and legal work experience in the specialty area.

Knowledge of the Standards of Indigent Defense adopted by the Washington State Supreme

Court and the performance Guidelines for Criminal Defense adopted by the Washington

State Bar Association

Knowledge of the role of the attorney-client relationship and the requirement to adhere to the Washington State Bar Association Rules of Professional Responsibility

Knowledge of community resources and referral agencies appropriate to the specific program service

Knowledge of civil and criminal law for adults and juveniles in DPD practice areas

Knowledge of application of legal principles to individual cases or problems

Knowledge of judicial and trial procedure and rules of evidence

Knowledge of applicable laws, codes and regulations

Knowledge of the principles, methods and practices of legal research and investigation

Knowledge of computer applications, particularly as related to the performance of legal research and case management

Knowledge of services, treatment and treatment alternatives for substance abuse and mental health issues

Knowledge of case management

Skill in the practice of law in DPD practice areas, including courtroom advocacy, forensic and psychological experts and issues, and legal research and writing

Skill in working and building rapport with diverse cultural, socio-economic and ethnic populations

Ability to build a strong attorney/client relationship

Skill in understanding and interpreting complex laws and regulations

Skill in the ability to present facts, evidence and precedents concerned in complex cases in the form of briefs, opinions, orders or decisions

Skill in analyzing complex legal documents and instruments

Skill in understanding and interpret constitutional provisions, statutes, administrative regulations and precedents

Skill in researching, interpreting, applying, and explaining applicable laws, codes, regulations and court decisions

Ability to communicate and work collaboratively with all segments of judicial and criminal justice systems

Ability to provide mentorship to less experienced attorneys and to train, supervise, evaluate and improve the work of professional legal and support staff

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**

Juris Doctor degree from accredited law school and/or admitted to practice law in Washington State at the time of application and satisfies the minimum experience requirements for practicing law in assigned practice area(s) as specified by the Washington Supreme Court Standards for Indigent Defense and/or

Or any combination of experience/education/training that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the work

**Licensing, Certification and Other Requirements**

Member of the Washington State Bar Association, in active status and in good standing, or have the ability to become licensed to practice in Washington

Washington State Driver’s License (some positions)

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **FLSA Designation** | Exempt (Professional) |
| **Service Status** | Career Service |
| **EEO Code** | 2 |
| **Levels within same series** | Public Defense Attorney I  Public Defense Attorney II  Public Defense Attorney - Supervisor |
| **Class History** | Created 05/2015 |