

**BANNOCK COUNTY**  
**CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**PUBLIC DEFENDER INTERN**

Department: Public Defender  
FLSA Designation: Exempt

Pay Grade: 10  
Effective Date: 10/04, 8/09

**Purpose of Class**

Provides limited professional legal services with emphasis on defending criminal misdemeanor cases; assists the Public Defender with legal and administrative work; performs related work as required.

**Primary Function**

The principal function of an employee in this class is to perform limited professional legal and administrative work involving misdemeanor criminal defense cases. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Public Defender and direct supervision of a Chief Deputy Defender. This is an entry-level position for a recent law school graduate or current advanced student; the position is limited to representing misdemeanor cases and operates on a limited license while the employee prepares for passing the bar examination to obtain full professional licensure. The principal duties of this class are performed in a general office and courtroom environment.

**Essential Duties and Responsibilities (will vary by assignment)**

- Prepares and manages misdemeanor criminal cases for defense, including but not limited to, entering pleas, conducting research, interviewing affected parties, preparing required legal and court documents, preparing and arguing briefs, and attending court proceedings;
- Negotiates case settlements;
- Interviews police officers, detectives, defendants, victims, witnesses, and other interested and affected parties;
- Conducts research of legal precedents, federal laws, state statutes, and County ordinances and represents the defendant's interest in court;
- Assists other staff attorneys;
- Assists Public Defender in administrative office duties, as needed;
- Performs all work duties and activities in accordance with County policies, procedures, and safety practices.

**Other Duties and Responsibilities**

- Performs other related duties as required.

## **Competency Requirements**

Knowledge of:

- Legal, court, and judicial procedures, rules, terminology, methods, documents, practices, and objectives, especially as applicable to preparing and presenting a criminal defense;
- Applicable County, city, state, and federal laws, statutes, ordinances, and codes;
- Legal research methods;
- Operation of standard office equipment including a personal computer and job-related software applications;
- Contemporary negotiation techniques and methods;
- English grammar, spelling, punctuation, and composition.

Ability to:

- Analyze, appraise, and organize facts, evidence, and precedents in determining the various aspects, alternatives, and possible outcomes of cases;
- Present material to opponents and develop an appropriate legal strategy;
- Appear without assistance in court and other judicial proceedings and present evidence, arguments, testimony, and witnesses before a judge or jury;
- Make legal decisions in individual cases based on a combination of factors including the law, policy, and rules of ethics;
- Negotiate complex legal issues;
- Bring interested and affected parties to consensus;
- Discern critical issues and needs of the defendant through a negotiations process;
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, for purposes of advocating, persuading, negotiating, and counseling for or on behalf of a defendant;
- Analyze, appraise, and organize facts and precedents and to present such material in a clear and logical form;
- Determine alternative courses of action, and possible courses of action of opponents;
- Present and argue cases and to handle unanticipated problems smoothly and effectively;
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with other County employees, staff, attorneys, law enforcement personnel, defendants, witnesses, supervisory personnel, state and local elected and appointed officials, and the public;
- Maintain a professional demeanor during stressful situations;
- Perform a wide variety of duties and responsibilities with accuracy and speed under the pressure of time-sensitive deadlines;
- Perform multiple tasks simultaneously, including handling interruptions, and return to and complete tasks in a timely manner;
- Perform time management and scheduling functions, meet deadlines and set case priorities;
- Operate standard office equipment and a personal computer using program applications appropriate to assigned duties;
- Demonstrate integrity, ingenuity, and inventiveness in the performance of assigned tasks;

- Use logical and creative thought processes to develop solutions according to written specifications and/or oral instructions.

**Acceptable Experience and Training**

- Graduation from a school of law accredited by the American Bar Association with a Juris Doctorate Degree or current attendance at law school;
- Limited license to practice law in the State of Idaho;
- Any equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the knowledge and abilities necessary to perform the work.

**Essential Physical Abilities**

- Sufficient clarity of speech and hearing or other communication capabilities, with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee to discern verbal instructions and to communicate effectively in person, on a telephone, and in a courtroom environment;
- Sufficient visual acuity, with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee to comprehend written work instructions and to assist in the preparation, monitoring, and litigation of all criminal and civil cases;
- Sufficient manual dexterity, with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee operate standard office equipment and a personal computer;
- Sufficient personal mobility, flexibility, and balance, with or without reasonable accommodation, which permits the employee to work in an office environment, lift up to 20 pounds, and perform in a courtroom environment.