

BANNOCK COUNTY **CLASS SPECIFICATION**

PUBLIC DEFENDER

Department: Public Defender
FLSA Designation: Exempt

Pay Grade: 20
Effective Date: 10/04, 8/09

Purpose of Class

Administers the Public Defenders Office; provides professional legal services, with emphasis on defending criminal cases; performs related work as required.

Primary Function

The principal function of an employee in this class is to administer the Public Defenders Office and supervise its employees. The Public Defender performs professional legal and administrative work involving criminal defense and representation in specific civil cases. The Public Defender supervises all subordinate positions. The position is supervised by the County Commission, but considerable latitude is granted for the exercise of independent judgment and initiative. The principal duties of this class are performed in a general office and courtroom environment.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities (will vary by assignment)

- Administers and supervises the Public Defenders Office, including its functions, employees, and budget;
- Supervises, trains, hires, and evaluates subordinate employees;
- Prepares and administers the annual budget;
- Represents the Public Defenders Office to legal, judicial, law enforcement, community, and other agencies and groups;
- Prepares and manages misdemeanor and felony 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;
- Prepares and manages civil cases for trial or other judicial hearings including, but not limited to, child protection cases, parental rights determinations, child support, and mental competency;
- 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 subordinate staff attorneys;
- 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;
- Employee supervision, training, and evaluation methods and techniques;
- Municipal budgeting methods and techniques;
- 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 significant/substantial 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;
- Supervise, train, assist, and evaluate employees;
- Prepare and implement an annual budget;
- 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;
- License to practice law in the State of Idaho;
- Five (5) years experience as a practicing attorney, preferably as a defense attorney, is required and five (5) to ten (10) years is preferred;
- Any equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the knowledge and abilities necessary to perform the work.

Special Qualifications

- Membership in good standing in the Idaho State Bar Association;
- Certification by the Idaho Supreme Court as a death penalty defense attorney is required.

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.