

COUNTY OF SOLANO

DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER I

Rev. 8/91

**DEFINITION**

Under general supervision, provides and/or assists in providing legal defense for clients needing publicly assisted representation in criminal matters; performs related duties as required.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

This class provides entry into the Deputy Public Defender series. Incumbents learn court procedures, office policy and the application of laws and legal procedures in providing criminal/civil defense for clients; and are assigned to routine cases while gaining criminal defense and trial experience. Incumbents may assist a more experienced attorney or be assigned a full and separate caseload. This class is distinguished from Deputy Public Defender II in that the latter is more experienced.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES**

Depending on assignment, duties may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Prepares and presents legal defense in misdemeanor, juvenile or civil cases; assists experienced attorneys in preparing felony trial cases; learns departmental and court policies and procedures by working with experienced staff.
2. Interviews clients and witnesses to solicit information needed to determine the facts and circumstances of individual cases; determines strategies to be used in providing legal defense for clients.
3. Interviews employees of various agencies or departments to obtain facts, evidence, circumstances leading to arrest, reasons for the decision to prosecute, or other information which may affect a client's defense.
4. Reviews and analyzes clients' case file documents; writes motions, pleadings, correspondence, appeals and reports; researches and maintains currency with case law.
5. Answers clients' inquiries made by telephone and in person; provides information to clients regarding legal rights, procedures and alternatives; deals with clients of various backgrounds and temperaments; may refer clients to other agencies which offer support services and assistance as necessary.
6. Prepares cases for presentation in court; coaches clients and witnesses in proper courtroom demeanor and procedures; appears in court to represent clients.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Continued)**

7. May request investigators to obtain information needed for clients' defense; may provide work direction to paralegal and/or clerical staff.

**QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES**

**Education and/or Experience**

No experience required; however, applicants must demonstrate possession of and competency in requisite knowledge and abilities.

**Knowledge/Abilities**

**Considerable knowledge** of criminal law, legal principles, research methods, rules of evidence and trial/hearing procedures.

**Working knowledge** of effective techniques for dealing with difficult, confused or hostile clients or witnesses; effective interviewing techniques.

**Ability to** learn and apply the policies and procedures used to assure an adequate defense is provided; interview people and solicit needed information to determine facts/circumstances; develop effective defense strategies; develop and maintain an effective attorney-client relationship with people of diverse backgrounds and temperaments; communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with clients, witnesses, judges, law enforcement officials, other attorneys, and employees of various agencies and departments; analyze cases and apply legal principles; present statements of law clearly and logically in both written and verbal form; present an effective defense in court; demonstrate patience, tact, courtesy and compassion.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Active membership in the California State Bar Association is required.

Possession of or ability to obtain a valid Class C California driver's license may be required.

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

Independent travel may be required.

Incumbents of this class should demonstrate necessary knowledge and abilities to be promoted to Deputy Public Defender II within twenty-four (24) months of appointment to this class.