

COUNTY OF SOLANO

PUBLIC DEFENDER INVESTIGATOR

DEFINITION

Plans and conducts investigations to gather information for use in the legal defense of criminal and civil charges.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the full working level in defense investigative work in support of the Public Defender function; positions are therefore allocated to each Public Defender Office. Incumbents work with minimal supervision, determining own work priorities and methods after consulting with defense attorneys requesting investigative support. Incumbents perform a broad range of investigative duties including those of a complex nature, requiring competency in law enforcement methods and investigative techniques. This class is distinguished from the District Attorney Investigator in that the latter is engaged in the full range of investigative duties coupled with active law enforcement activities.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from the Chief Investigator or other supervisory level employee.

Exercises supervision over technical staff.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES –*Duties may include but are not limited to the following:*

Reviews written requests for investigations from criminal defense attorneys; plans and conducts investigations to support a wide variety of criminal defense work.

Locates and interviews the defendant, complaint witnesses and victims; gathers pertinent information and evidence; reviews and analyzes police reports, witness statements, diagrams and photographs; consults with expert witnesses; contacts and coordinates with various agencies to obtain or verify information, facts and evidence; conducts computer and legal document searches. Conducts surveillance activities; searches and reviews crime scenes.

Coordinates with defense attorneys regarding findings of investigations, presentation of evidence, credibility and sequence of witnesses and other pre-trial preparations; provides court support for attorneys.

Prepares written and verbal reports containing facts and findings; makes recommendations on issues valuable to the defense; documents actions in case files; may draw charts, scale drawings and diagrams; operates cameras, electronic sound or video equipment, and other devices used in investigation activities; may operate polygraph equipment; coordinates discovery of evidence.

Reviews and subpoenas evidence from labs, police and other agencies for use in defense of a case; serves subpoenas on witnesses; coordinates witness court appearances and prepares witnesses to testify; provides transportation to witnesses; answers questions and explains court procedures; testifies and presents evidence in court as needed.

Maintains professional knowledge in applicable areas and keeps abreast of changes in job-related rules, statutes, laws and new business trends; makes recommendations for the implementation of changes; reads and interprets professional literature; attends training programs, workshops and seminars as appropriate.

JOB RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

Methods, practices and techniques of criminal investigation, including the gathering, organizing and presentation of evidence/facts.

Laws of search, seizure and arrest.

Rules of evidence.

Law enforcement practices and methods used in investigating major crimes.

Methods used in identification, evaluation and preservation of evidence.

Courtroom procedures.

Interviewing techniques.

Sources of information used in criminal investigations.

Rights of witnesses, victims and the accused.

Considerable knowledge of investigative report writing practices.

Working knowledge of the role of the Public Defender in the criminal justice system.

Use of cameras and video/audio equipment.

Skill to:

Operate office equipment including a personal computer, copy and fax machines and printers.

Drive a motor vehicle.

Ability to:

Independently plan, organize and conduct criminal defense investigations.

Locate and interview people to ascertain facts verifying/refuting allegations.

Analyze and evaluate statements of witnesses, victims and defendants.

Work as part of the defense team.

Communicate effectively both orally and in writing with people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

Analyze and evaluate facts and evidence and draw logical conclusions.

Maintain accurate records and document actions taken.

Organize and prioritize work assignments.

Research procedures and/or technical reference materials; prepare clear, concise and comprehensive reports.

Establish and maintain effective working relationships with representatives of local law enforcement agencies; demonstrate tact and diplomacy.

Operate tape recorder, camera and electronic audio/video or other investigative equipment.

Draw clear and concise diagrams; make decisions and independent judgments.

Maintain confidentiality of information.

EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION/TRAINING

Experience:

Two years of criminal investigation experience.

Education/Training:

Associate's degree is required from an accredited college, preferably in Criminal Justice or a closely related field.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

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

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Independent travel will be required.

Incumbents may be required to work outside normal business hours.

ADA COMPLIANCE

Physical Ability: Tasks require the ability to exert moderate, though not constant physical effort, typically involving some combination of climbing and balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, and crawling, and which may involve some lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of objects and materials of moderate weight (12-20 pounds).

Sensory Requirements: Requires the ability to recognize and identify similarities and differences between shade, degree or value of colors, shapes, sounds, forms, textures or physical appearance associated with job-related objects, materials, tasks or people.

Environmental Factors: Requires the ability to work under conditions where exposure to environmental factors poses a moderate risk of moderate injury or illness.

Director of Human Resources

Revised Date: November 2002

BOS Date: June 30, 2003