

VICTIM ADVOCATE

JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

Performs specialized counseling and referral functions in support of victims and witnesses. Works as a part of a trial team within the Prosecuting Attorney's Office to provide information, support, and referral to victims about justice system procedures. The Advocate identifies the need for and refers victims to community resources. Duties involve initiating contact with victims and witnesses, providing assistance and in-court support to victims, explaining court processes, participating in interviews and case discussions.

CLASSIFICATION DISTINCTIONS

This is a single class classification. The work involves knowledge of the criminal justice system and victim support systems within the community and necessitates close working relationships with other classification which are a part of the trial team. These include Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, investigators, legal assistants and legal secretaries. The requirement to apply counseling skills in dealing with victims and witnesses who may be experiencing high levels of distress, anger, possibly hostility, and other emotions and psychological responses is greater than that expected of the other team members. The Victim Advocate receives direction from the Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney assigned to the trial team.

KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Serves as the advocate assigned to a specific felony trial team, working with other members of the team to provide services to victims and witnesses.
- Interviews and assesses needs of victims and witnesses; determines needed Community resources such as counseling and support groups and refers victims/witnesses; educates victims/witnesses about justice system procedures.
- Provides victim counseling and makes appropriate referrals.
- Educates victims about the justice system and court proceedings; escorts victims to court and explains procedures and forms.
- Gathers and verifies information to determine, recommend and submit restitution reports to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Court; testifies in court regarding restitution reports and to advocate for victims..
- Makes presentations to community groups to educate and inform the public about the services to and rights of victims.

- Establishes and maintains working relationships with community, human and social service agencies to which victims may be referred, and with other agencies in the criminal justice system.
- Reviews completed cases by examining case records and reports; provides feedback and suggestions to other team members regarding case methodologies and procedures as they relate to victim services.
- Consults with and provides suggestions and information to assigned attorneys regarding the status of witnesses and expectations for court testimony.
- Conducts domestic violence assessments for deputy prosecuting attorneys and prepares recommendations.
- Recommends modifications to program objectives, policies, procedures and strategies to improve service quality.
- Maintains detailed case notes and files; works as a team with other advocates to prepare the annual report and other reports and statistics as may be needed.
- Perform related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in justice administration, counseling, psychology, social sciences or a related field.
- One to three years of experience interviewing and counseling clients involved in the justice system.

Knowledge of: laws and regulations related to victim/witness' rights and the criminal justice system; procedures of Superior, District and Juvenile Courts; principles of mental health evaluation and diagnostic techniques; principles and practice of interviewing and counseling; available community counseling resources and programs; crisis intervention methods.

Ability to: conduct interviews to accurately assess client needs; provide initial evaluation and counseling services to crime victims; provide ongoing support services to crime victims; interpret and apply applicable policies, procedures, laws and regulations; assess people and situations accurately and adopt effective courses of action; prepare reports, maintain detailed records and make presentations; communicate clearly, both orally and in writing; establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities will be considered.