

## **INDIGENT DEFENSE COORDINATOR**

### **JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

The Indigent Defense Coordinator (IDC) is responsible for directing, monitoring, supervising and coordinating the daily responsibilities and activities of the county's Indigent Defense Program. This position is responsible for ensuring the professional independence, integrity and effectiveness of the program, as well as fulfilling the county's constitutional and statutory obligations to appoint counsel to parties who are financially and legally eligible. The IDC is responsible for ensuring the courts and those eligible for indigent defense services, as well as opposing counsel, have qualified counsel available to provide timely and effective representation.

Clark County's Indigent Defense Program is a major service area within the criminal and civil justice systems in which appointment of counsel is mandated; i.e., criminal cases, representation of children in at-risk and abuse and neglect matters, guardianship, and involuntary commitment proceedings. The IDC is responsible for ensuring attorney and non-attorney services are available for parties who are determined to be indigent by judges in Superior Court, Juvenile Court and District Court cases, as well as those determined to be "near indigent" in District Court criminal cases. Direct legal services are provided by independent contractors rather than county employees, unlike other justice system components. This position is responsible for contracting with or otherwise ensuring a sufficient number of qualified professionals are available to the courts.

### **CLASSIFICATION DISTINCTIONS**

The IDC is a single position classification, similar to the Prosecuting Attorney's Administrator and Child Abuse Intervention Center Manager. This position exercises direct supervision and performance monitoring of more than 50 independent contract lawyers, as well as direct supervision of the operational duties. The IDC performs legal research, drafts legal documents and training materials, and consults with indigent defense contractors, as needed. This position may provide direct legal services, as needed and at the supervisor's direction. The IDC provides the primary administration of the program, with oversight by the General Service Department's Property and Indigent Defense Manager on budget and program performance.

### **KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Facilitate fulfillment of the county's obligation to provide high quality, independent counsel to those determined to be eligible for representation under the Indigent Defense Program.
- Promote professional independence and integrity of the Indigent Defense Program.
- Ensure attorney compliance and county compliance with relevant federal and state constitutional provisions and state statutes (e.g. RCW 10.101.030), Washington Supreme Court *Standards for Indigent Defense*, Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) Performance Guidelines, county policy and procedure, and contract provisions.

## Clark County, Washington

- Continuously monitor and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery methods and procedures.
- Work with the State Office of Public Defense to ensure ongoing State funding for the IDC, and to ensure consistency between County and State objectives.
- Receive and resolve client complaints regarding representation. Develop and maintain a data base to document receipt and resolution of client complaints.
- Ensure contract provisions are up-to-date and in compliance with Supreme Court and other standards or requirements.
- Develop and implement procedures for attorney contract selection.
- Review applications for contracts, conduct interviews and reference checks, as needed, and recommend contract awards.
- Draft and execute contract amendments and recommend terminations or modifications of contracts based on attorney performance.
- Evaluate attorney and non-attorney provider performance.
- Review and act on indigent defense attorney requests for non-attorney services in compliance with court rules and delegated judicial authority.
- Recommend, draft and administer policies and procedures.
- Develop and prepare reports on program performance, needs, and services.
- Recommend appropriate compensation for indigent defense attorneys and non-attorneys.
- Continually monitor and evaluate indigent defense workloads and take action to ensure compliance with Washington Supreme Court qualification and caseload standards.
- Perform legal research, draft legal documents and training materials, and consult with indigent defense contractors, as needed.
- May provide direct legal services as needed and at the supervisor's direction.
- Provide training on a regular basis for indigent defense providers in compliance with the WSBA's Mandatory Continuing Legal Education requirements for indigent defense attorneys; ensure trainings are approved by the State Office of Public Defense (RCW 10.101.050).

## Clark County, Washington

- Work closely with representatives of the Superior, Juvenile and District Courts, the Prosecuting Attorney's office, the Sheriff's office/jail, as well as Indigent Defense Program attorneys and non-attorneys, to improve the local justice systems.
- Develop and implement interagency agreements.
- Administer the "Near Indigent Program" (attorney referral service) for District Court criminal cases.
- Serve as a member of the county's Law and Justice Council and the Superior Court and District Court Bench/Bar Committees.
- Other duties and responsibilities as assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### ***Minimum Education and Experience:***

- Active membership in the Washington State Bar Association.
- Five (5) years' experience as a practicing attorney, with a minimum of three (3) years' experience as a criminal defense attorney.
- Experience with indigent defense mandates and the representation of those eligible for appointed counsel.
- Familiar with the varied types of cases in which indigent defense is mandated. In addition, familiarity with Clark County practices is preferred.
- Office management, contracting and budget experience.
- Any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge will be considered.

**Knowledge of:** National, state and county Indigent Defense Standards and Performance Guidelines; constitutional, statutory, court rule and case law provisions relating to indigent defense, criminal law, relevant civil law, and contracting; judicial procedure and rules of evidence; methods of legal research; pertinent Federal, State, and local laws, codes, and regulations; methods of monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of services; organizational and management practices as applied to the development of goals, objectives, policies and procedures; modern and complex principles and practices of business and office management; principles and methods of effective contracting, supervision, performance evaluation, personnel management, and case management; effective legal training methods and techniques; conflict or complaint resolution; principles and practices of budget preparation, expenditure monitoring, and workload and financial forecasting; and effective methods of communicating to a broad spectrum of others.

**Ability to:** provide administrative and professional leadership and direction for the Indigent Defense Program; recommend and implement goals, objectives, policies and practices for providing effective and efficient services; meet and deal tactfully and effectively with others within the justice systems, providers, clients and the public; communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing; establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work including county and other government officials, service providers and clients, community groups, and the general public; ability to create a stimulating work environment which places indigent defense in high value; analyze, appraise, organize and present facts, evidence and precedents in a clear and logical manner; interpret and apply legal principles and procedures, as well as legislation; and the ability to train/facilitate attorneys/legal staff regarding the Indigent Defense Program's requirements, policies, procedures, and expectations.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

Work is typically performed in an office setting, but work also may include field work, travel and attendance at meetings, trainings/seminars and public events outside the office or county and evening meetings. As a result, a valid driver's license is required.

Work involves management of multiple priorities and deadlines. Work generally involves a high activity level and pace, competing time demands, and interaction with dissatisfied or angry customers.

Essential tasks include reading and review of varied documents; legal research and document drafting; effective interaction with professionals, customers, and the public; use of various equipment associated with training, communications equipment, personal computer software including Excel, telephone, copiers, scanners, printers, and other applicable office equipment. In addition to sitting, some walking, standing, bending and carrying of light items is required. Incumbent is required to drive a vehicle to off-site training facilities, seminars and/or classes, to various vendors, etc. for training supplies/equipment, and to conferences and meetings.

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