



COUNTY OF HIDALGO

Department of Human Resources

Job Title: **PUBLIC DEFENDER I**
Grade: 13

The County of Hidalgo Department of Human Resources reserves the right to select candidates considered to be the most highly qualified based on education and experience. The hiring department will interview and select the candidates provided by the Department of Human Resources.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Performs entry-level legal research and indigent representation duties; Conducts both client and witness interviews, works with staff investigators to investigate cases, and files pretrial motions and litigating motions. Works under close supervision, with minimal latitude for the use of initiative and independent judgment.

EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED

Review facts and circumstances of assigned cases to determine appropriate action; research statutory and case law to prepare defense of assigned clients' cases

Advises staff and the public on legal matters and the interpretation and application of County laws and regulations

Negotiate settlements on behalf of assigned clients

Assists in identifying appropriate sentencing alternatives for clients

Prepares legal opinions, briefs, proposals, and reports necessary to conduct litigation and/or proceedings in related forums

Investigates alleged law violations and prepares reports of findings

Researches points of law involved in hearings to determine the validity and completeness of cases cited

Assists in conducting administrative, regulatory, evidentiary, and enforcement hearings

Assists in preparing cases for court trial and in representing the County in matters before court as appropriate

May draft or assist in drafting bills and amendments for legislative consideration

May represent clients in misdemeanor cases

Performs related work as assigned

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Juris Doctorate (JD) degree

One (1) year of experience in legal work, primarily in legal research and litigation

Member must be in good standing with the State Bar of Texas

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES AND REGISTRATION

Must possess a license to practice law in the State of Texas

Must have a current valid Texas motor vehicle operator's license

Must be able to be insured by the County's insurance carrier

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of legal principles, practices, and proceedings; and of laws, regulations, and rules related to the County

Ability to comprehend and analyze complex legal issues and complicated factual details

Ability to work effectively with others as well as work independently, without close supervision

Ability to conduct hearings, to prepare opinions and briefs, to prepare cases for trial, to conduct research, to summarize findings, to interpret and apply laws, to use legal reference materials, and to communicate effectively

Bilingual (Spanish and English) with ability to converse fluently in both languages

Employee may be assigned other duties in addition to those listed; duties may change according to the changing needs of the County

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to talk or hear. The employee frequently is required to stand. The employee is occasionally required to walk; sit; use hands to find, handle, or feel objects, tools or controls; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; stoop and kneel.

The employee must occasionally lift and/or move over twenty-five (25) pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounter while performing the essential functions of this job.

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Maintain physical conditions appropriate to the performance of assigned duties and responsibilities which may include the following:

- sitting for extended periods of time

- standing for extended periods of time
- operating assigned equipment

Maintain mental capacity which permits:

- making sound decisions and using good judgment
- demonstrating intellectual capabilities

Effectively handle a work environment and conditions which involve:

- working closely with others
- working in a multi-task environment

Maintain effective audio-visual discrimination and perception needed for:

- making observations
- reading and writing
- operating assigned equipment
- communication with others
- required to follow the County of Hidalgo Accident Prevention Plan and department's safety regulations