



# COUNTY OF HIDALGO

## Department of Human Resources

Job Title: **FIRST ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER**  
Grade: 19

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*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 supervisory work overseeing multiple attorneys and administrative personnel. Work involves planning, organizing, directing, and performing a wide variety of legal and non-legal duties in order to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, reliability of legal representation, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations; will serve as a lead capacity, advising other attorneys.

### **EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED**

Supervises and advises all legal personnel within the department

Supervises the implementation of improvements in policies, procedures, operations and programs

Recommends alternative approaches to interpreting and implementing legal and regulatory requirements, administrative requirements and policies and procedures with regard to engagements and manages their implementation

Assumes personal responsibility for assisting indigent individuals charged with misdemeanors, mental, juvenile cases and felonies such as criminal sexual assaults, armed robberies and homicides

Provides effective representation to clients who are frequently illiterate, uneducated and uncooperative while managing large caseloads

Handles arraignment court and bond court

Meets with clients and obtains their history to present their defense and release from custody

Performs functions to prepare the defendant's cases for trial or for plea negotiations including representation of the defendant at bond and/or arraignment court and attending line-ups to ensure that the line-up is conducted fairly and that defendant's rights are not denied

Researches case law and witness testimony conducts investigations and negotiates with the State's Attorney's Office. Analyzes facts, evidence and the strength of case, determines client's wishes and meets with prosecutor to resolve the matter short of trial

Prepares pre-trial motions such as Answer to Discovery, Motions to Suppress Evidence, Motions to Dismiss and Motions to Additional Discovery

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Works to determine a fair and affordable bond for the defendant through research and discussion about past and present employment, current residence, past histories of mental or medical problems, existence of previous criminal records and information on family status

Maintains close contact with the State's Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, staff at the County Correctional facilities, judges, police officials, and numerous physicians and psychiatrists who may be called as expert witnesses

Prepares the motion for Reduction of Bond and schedules a hearing

Keeps abreast of developments in the law and attends training sessions offered by bar association

Provides administrative assistance to the Public Defender by identifying legal problem areas, developing policy recommendations and responding to media inquiries

Performs related work as assigned

### **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

Juris Doctorate (JD) degree

Eight (8) years of experience practicing law with litigation with two (2) years of supervisory experience

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**

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

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

Knowledge of trial procedures and rules of evidence

Skill in legal research, business writing, grammar, and punctuation, report preparation and analysis

Ability to complete reports and answer routing correspondence

Ability to apply common sense understanding and direct staff in written, oral or diagram form

Ability to supervise and communicate effectively with staff and the public

Ability to deal with problems involving several concrete variables in standardized situations

Must have experience in office or related work

Must have knowledge of computers and spreadsheets

Must have previous supervisory experience

Ability to calculate figures and amounts such as discounts, interest, commissions, proportions, percentages, area, circumference, and volume

Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from judges, attorneys, County Board members and the general public

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, to communicate effectively, and to train others

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