



City of Pascagoula Job Description

Public Defender

DEPARTMENT: Courts	LABOR GRADE:
EXEMPT(Y/N): Yes	POSITION CODE:
REPORTS TO: City Council	

MEETING PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

To perform this job successfully, an individual must perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

SUMMARY:

This position is responsible for representing indigent citizens charged with felony crimes in accordance to all applicable laws and regulations and in compliance with the policies and procedures of the City of Pascagoula Municipal Court.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES include the following:

- Represents all indigent persons charged with crimes in the City. Defends individuals charged with misdemeanors and traffic cases for which a sentence of incarceration may be imposed.
- Provides effective representation to clients who are frequently illiterate, uneducated and uncooperative while managing a large caseload.
- Handles arraignment court and bond court. Meets with clients when arrested and obtains their history to make bond arguments to the court. Maintains working relationship with clients in person, by phone and by mail contact.
- May be called to represent individuals at investigative proceedings such as line-ups, taking of blood, urine, hair and fingernail scraping samples. May be assigned to handle misdemeanor cases involving post-conviction or appellate relief.
- Investigates alleged crime or offense by meeting with witnesses, police officers and reviewing the facts.
- Establishes close contact with defendants by regular visits to the correctional facilities or by constant correspondence via personal visits, phone contact or by letters to defendants not in custody.
- Represents defendants during other court proceedings as may be required by the Municipal Court Judge.
- Keeps abreast of developments in the law and attends training sessions offered by bar associations.
- 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.
- Prepares motions for reduction of bond and schedules hearings.
- Identifies legal problem areas, develops policy recommendations and responds to media inquiries.
- Meets regularly and works with a wide variety of governmental staff including State's Attorney's representatives, witnesses, judges, law enforcement officers and others.

The absence of specific statements of duties does not exclude those tasks from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment of the position.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill and/or ability required to successfully perform the essential functions of this position.

SUPERVISORY REQUIREMENT:

This position does not directly supervise staff.

EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE:

Law degree from an accredited law school. A license to practice law in the State of Mississippi is required. Two to three years of criminal defense experience.

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS:

Prior experience representing persons in criminal cases is required. Strong organizational skills are essential to ensure adequate defense is delivered to clients. Preference will be given to Attorneys who are residents of the City of Pascagoula or who maintain their offices for the practice of law in the City of Pascagoula.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS:

No travel required.

LANGUAGE AND REASONING SKILLS:

Ability to read, analyze, and interpret legal documents and interpretations. Ability to write reports, business correspondence, and procedure manuals. Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from judges, attorneys, and the general public. Ability to make effective presentations and speeches.

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.

This position requires periods of sustained sitting, standing, and walking and the ability to see, speak, and hear. Work requires physical activity, and occasional light lifting is required. Requires the use of hands and fingers to input data into computer, bundle documents and conduct legal research.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the primary functions of this job. Normal office conditions. Potential problems may exist with clients exposed to stressful situations. The noise level in the work environment is usually quiet to moderate. May require visits to incarceration facilities to interview clients.