

Jackson County

JOB DESCRIPTION



To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform the essential job functions satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the primary job functions herein described. Since every duty associated with this position may not be described herein, employees may be required to perform duties not specifically spelled out in the job description, but which may be reasonably considered to be incidental in the performing of their duties just as though they were actually written out in this job description.

VICTIM ADVOCATE – 04078

Department: Prosecuting Attorney
Pay Grade: 160
Reports to: Various Positions Within the Assigned Departments
FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

GENERAL PURPOSE

This position is responsible for notifying and providing information to victims/witnesses regarding hearing dates, pleas, trials, and sentencing; advises and assists victims with the filing of state compensation claims; and provides general support and advocacy services to crime victims. The associate elicits facts relating to the crime and informs victims the various stages of the legal process, helps victims and witnesses to understand how the criminal justice system operates and ensures that victims' interests are represented; confers with law enforcement and/or other legal or professional personnel with respect to victim's initial condition and circumstances surrounding the crime; may suggest to Assistant Prosecutor that a specific case be refiled after dismissal based on the knowledge of special circumstances.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Prepares and mails notices and brochures notifying victims and witnesses of the time and place of appearance and provides basic information.
- Follows up mail with personal phone calls to confirm or to encourage victims and witnesses to testify.
- Arranges and attends initial meetings between the prosecutor, victims, their family, and witnesses as necessary.
- Participates in interviewing with victim to gather factual data, address victim or family concerns, make the victim aware of what occurs during prosecution, create a supportive atmosphere, in the evaluation of facts and circumstances to determine whether charges

should be filed and may recommend to attorneys if prosecution should be pursued or dismissed.

- Accompanies victims and witnesses to court and provides support and assistance throughout the legal process, interprets, and explains court proceedings and procedures.
- Maintains communication with victims throughout the criminal justice process to update them with case status and other pertinent information.
- Reviews testimony with victims and witnesses to avoid confusion or misunderstanding. Apprises them of criteria for admissible evidence.
- Advises victims/witnesses of probable lines of questioning from attorneys during their testimony.
- Evaluates the status of the case as it proceeds through the prosecution process. Services as contact person for the victim.
- Tracks and seeks resolution of obstacles preventing victims and/or witnesses from appearing (e.g. employers reluctant to give associates time off to appear in court, illnesses, or transportation problems, etc.)
- Informs attorney of any new development in the physical or emotional condition, willingness to testify, etc. Obtains additional evidence from the victim or witness as requested by the attorney.
- Represents the interests of the victim in the absence of the prosecutor, e.g. if the defense attorney wishes to question the victim prior to preliminary hearings, trials or other court hearings.
- Sits with and supports the family to ensure hearings occur as planned.
- Provides parking information and parking lot ticket validation for victims and witnesses.
- Prepares to be alert to intimidation and harassment of victims and/or witnesses in the courtroom and acts to provide protections, including notifying the attorney and/or Sheriff Deputy.
- Acts as liaison with the police department and provides copies of the various dockets to ensure timely appearance of police witnesses to give testimony.
- Informs eligible victims of Missouri Crime Victims Compensation Fund, provides application forms, and assists victims, if necessary to complete forms.
- Encourages victims to complete Victim Impact Statements; assists victims in doing so, if necessary. Collects Victim Impact Statements.
- Refers victims to appropriate community agencies for counseling, social services, and housing.
- Initiates established procedures to notify police, prosecutor, and court of instances of victim and witness intimidation or harassment.
- Notifies victims and witnesses of final disposition of their cases.
- Recommends office procedures and methods, and plans workflow.
- Compiles and records daily statistics on contacts with victims and witnesses and makes monthly reports to the Director of Victim Services.
- Interviews interns and assigns them to various units.
- Performs other related duties as required/assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Associate's Degree from an accredited college or university.
- Two (2) years of experience working with the public in Human Services delivery.
- Must have a Victim Advocate Certificate or have successfully completed course requirements of a victim advocacy training program.
- Must submit to/pass pre-employment background check and drug screen.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of departmental policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of legal terminology.
- Knowledge of community and civic resources available to crime victims.
- Knowledge of crisis intervention, medical and psychological counseling techniques, and treatment for victims.
- Knowledge of interviewing techniques for eliciting information from witnesses and victims.
- Knowledge of current and proposed Missouri statutes pertaining to rights of crime victims.
- Knowledge of crime victims needs and issues.
- Knowledge of case disposition process from complaint processing through jury trial and sentencing.
- Knowledge of post-conviction process.
- Knowledge of the criminal justice system.
- Skill in oral and written communication.
- Skill in communicating with emotionally distraught people.
- Skill in basic word processing.
- Skill in time management techniques.
- Skill in analytical thinking.
- Skill in establishing rapport with crime victims and witnesses, including children.
- Skill in fielding media inquiries regarding confidential case information.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Work environment is primarily indoors, within a modern smoke-free office setting, where noise and temperature levels are moderate.
- May be required to work nights, weekends, etc. on short notice.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Climbing/Balancing** – Must be able to balance oneself sufficiently to maintain body equilibrium and prevent falling while moving up and down ladders, stairs, scaffolding, ramps, poles, and the like, to complete various assigned tasks.

- **Crawling** – Must be able to move about on hands and knees or hands and feet, to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Crouching/Kneeling** – Must be able to crouch and/or kneel sufficiently to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Grasping/Handling** – Must be able to extend arm(s) and hand(s) in any direction sufficiently to pick up, hold, and/or otherwise work with an object, using one's hands to complete assigned tasks.
- **Hearing** – Must be able to have normal conversations and two-way radio/telephone communications; must be able to receive detailed information through oral communication, and to make the discrimination in sound, to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Lifting** – Must be able to occasionally lift up to 10 pounds of equipment and supplies, to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Mental Acuity** – Must be able to make rational decisions through sound logic and deductive processes, to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Pushing/Pulling** – Must be able to sufficiently haul, tug and/or push objects weighing 20 pounds, using one's arms, to complete assigned tasks.
- **Repetitive Motion** – Must be able to repetitively move and/or motion using one's wrists, hands, and/or fingers, to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Sitting** – 75% of the time – Must be able to sit for long periods of time to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Speaking/Talking** – Must be able to speak English clearly to convey detailed or important spoken instructions to other workers accurately and concisely.
- **Standing** – 15% of the time – Must be able to stand while completing various assigned tasks. Particularly for sustained periods of time.
- **Stooping** – Must be able to sufficiently bend one's body down and forward, requiring full motion of the lower extremities and back muscles, to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Visual Acuity** – Must be able to sufficiently operate motor vehicles, heavy equipment, miscellaneous handheld tools, to complete various assigned tasks.
- **Walking** – 10% of the time – Must be able to walk between workstations and to wait on the general public.