

Assistant Public Defender Job Description

The Potter and Armstrong County Public Defender and Managed Assigned Counsel Offices are zealous advocates and trial lawyers serving the needs of our clients with qualified, compassionate, and holistic solutions. Our offices strive to mirror the hard-working demographics of the Texas Panhandle area with a resolute determination, a heart for service, and a justice-seeking spirit. The Assistant Public Defender (APD) is an employee of Potter County who represents indigent clients assigned to the Public Defender Office (PDO). This is an exciting opportunity to be part of a team that is starting up a new public defender office in Amarillo, TX.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Represent clients accused of felony and misdemeanor offenses in Potter or Armstrong County. May have appellate or juvenile cases as assigned by the PDO Director.
- Assure zealous representation for indigent clients.
- Meet with indigent clients for initial interviews, to explain the law, give legal advice, explain legal options, and discuss plea offers or trial strategies.
- Review discovery and evidence, including police reports, witness statements and interrogations, dashcam and surveillance video, cellphone records, forensic reports and other discovery and evidence.
- Research, analyze and interpret issues of law. Prepare memoranda, motions, and other pleadings. Review drafts of pleadings, motions, and memoranda prepared by legal staff.
- Appear in court for trial, pleas, and other hearings.
- Work with other APDs in the formulation of legal strategies and options for clients.
- Communicate with clients, witnesses, prosecutors, and law enforcement as required, including regular trips to jails and prisons. Includes magistration appearance with recently arrested clients when possible.
- Assist fellow public defenders in researching legal issues and in preparing memoranda, pleadings and motions.
- Prepare cases for jury trials, bench trials, open pleas, and contested motion hearings.
- Work with the social services and mental health coordinator to get clients into appropriate social and behavioral health services. Work for alternative dispositions such as specialty courts, mental health treatment, pre-trial diversion, and other options.
- Negotiate with prosecutors on behalf of clients.
- May have appellate or juvenile cases as assigned by the PDO Director.
- Maintain good standing with the State Bar of Texas along with all required CLE.
- The duties listed above are examples of types of work that may be performed. Nothing in this job description restricts the PDO Director's right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time as the need arises.

Requirements

- J.D. degree and license in good standing to practice law with the State Bar of Texas.
- Minimum of 2 jury trials to verdict.
- Good trial skills and/or a willingness to develop such skills are required.
- Effective organizational and time management skills.
- Ability to manage a trial schedule and caseload that complies with Texas Indigent Defense Commission Guidelines.
- May require evening and weekend hours. Travel may be required as well.

- Must have or obtain by date of hire a valid driver's license and reliable transportation.

Preferences

- Foreign language speakers. (Spanish and Burmese are in high demand)
- 2+ years of felony criminal trial experience.
- Prior appellate and juvenile criminal experience.
- Good technological abilities.

Potter County is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Salary: \$80,000-\$94,500 depending upon experience and special skills/foreign language.

Send resume and references to Jason.howell@papdmac.org

If you have any questions, call (806)242-3415.