

Public Defender Attorney Positions

Public Defender Offices provide legal services for indigent defendants charged with criminal offenses. Public Defender Office attorneys are responsible for trying cases in General district, Juvenile, and Circuit Courts for their respective locality. Cases may be handled at the trial and/or appellate level. Click on the position title for a sample position job description. Please note position descriptions may vary depending on the Public/Capital Defender Office's qualifications.

Public Defender

The Public Defender is responsible for handling a personal caseload and for the overall supervision of the office. Duties include oversight of defense team work by providing direction and guidance for case preparation, trial strategies, client contacts and communications, plea negotiation, and sentencing advocacy. Additional duties include researching, writing and arguing appeals before the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of Virginia and identifying appropriate sentencing alternatives for clients, ensuring attorneys and staff receive appropriate training and continuing education, ensuring attorneys receive and maintain certification for court appointment and fully comply with the Standards of Practice For Indigent Defense Representation as well as preparing, submitting and carefully managing the office budget, and all required administrative reports and documentation. Virginia State Bar admission is required for the position along with extensive criminal litigation experience, comprehensive knowledge of Virginia Criminal Law, Constitutional Law and the Standards of Practice For Indigent Defense Representation, and considerable knowledge of management principles and public administration, and a familiarity with agencies that interact with the Public Defender Office.

Deputy Public Defender

The Deputy Public Defender is responsible for handling a personal caseload and assisting in the overall supervision of the office. Duties include supervision and assisting the Public Defender in the oversight of defense team work by providing direction and guidance for case preparation, trial strategies, client contacts and communications, plea negotiation, sentencing advocacy as well as researching, writing and arguing appeals before the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of Virginia and identifying appropriate sentencing alternatives for clients. Virginia State Bar admission is required along with comprehensive working knowledge of criminal law, procedures and evidence. Prior experience in supervising and/or leading and training subordinate staff is required. The demonstrated ability to respond quickly and effectively in addressing client related issues and questions are also needed. Additional qualifications include the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, a valid driver's license with the means to travel to all courts and regional jails. Prior experience working with criminal defense of indigent clients and familiarity with agencies that interact with the Public Defender Office.

Senior Assistant Public Defender

The Senior Assistant Public Defender conducts client and witness interviews, works with staff investigators to investigate cases and files pretrial motions and litigating motions. The attorney is responsible for trying cases in the General District, Juvenile and Circuit Courts, researching, writing and arguing appeals before the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of Virginia and identifying appropriate sentencing alternatives for clients. Virginia State Bar admission is required for the position along with considerable working knowledge of criminal law, procedures and evidence. The ability to effectively supervise, mentor, and train less experienced attorneys may be required. Additional qualifications include the ability to learn and accept constructive criticism along with the ability to respond quickly and effectively in addressing issues and questions, and to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. A valid driver's

license with the means to travel to all courts and regional jails is also required. Supervisory skills and prior experience working with criminal defense of indigent clients is also preferred.

Assistant Public Defender II

The Assistant Public Defender II conducts client and witness interviews, works with staff investigators to investigate cases, and files pretrial motions and litigating motions. The attorney is responsible for trying cases in the General District, Juvenile and Circuit Courts, researching, writing and arguing appeals before the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of Virginia and identifying appropriate sentencing alternatives for clients. Virginia State Bar admission is required for the position along with considerable knowledge of criminal law, procedures and evidence. The qualified candidate must have the ability to argue legal positions successfully and persuasively as well as master subject matter and prepare cases thoroughly. The ability to learn and accept constructive criticism is important along with the ability to respond quickly and effectively in addressing issues and questions. The qualified applicant should have the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing and the abilities to multi-task, prioritize assignments and remain organized. A valid driver's license and the means to travel to all courts and regional jails are required. Prior experience working with criminal defense of indigent clients is preferred.

Assistant Public Defender I

The Assistant Public Defender I conducts both client and witness interviews, work with staff investigators to investigate cases, and files pretrial motions and litigating motions. The attorney is also responsible for trying cases in the General District, Juvenile and Circuit Courts and researching, writing and arguing appeals before the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of Virginia and identifying appropriate sentencing alternatives for clients. Virginia State Bar admission is required for the position as well as knowledge of criminal law, procedure and evidence. The qualified candidate must have the ability to argue legal positions successfully and persuasively, master subject matter and prepare cases thoroughly. The ability to learn and accept constructive criticism is important along with the ability to respond quickly and effectively in addressing issues and questions. The qualified applicant should have the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing as well as the ability to multi-task, prioritize assignments and remain organized. A valid driver's license and the means to travel to all courts and regional jails are required. Prior experience working with criminal defense of indigent clients is preferred.