CLASS TITLE: DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER I

BASIC FUNCTION:

Under the direction of the Assistant Public Defender, represent indigent clients accused of criminal violations in the phases of criminal defense.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The duties performed by the Deputy Public Defender I, II, III and IV are very similar in terms of the specific tasks assigned to each attorney. The difference between the classifications is expressed more in terms of the complexity and difficulty of cases assigned, the extent of supervision and responsibilities in the leading and directing of other staff. The Deputy Public Defender I is the entry level and works under close supervision working on more routine cases. The Deputy Public Defender II works under minimal supervision while performing the full duties and responsibilities of Deputy Public Defender job description. The Deputy Public Defender III may serve in a lead capacity, advising other attorneys while being assigned the more complex and difficult cases. Deputy Public Defender IV is the advanced level class in the series. Incumbents provide technical expertise and guidance to departmental staff and are assigned the most complex and controversial cases.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES:

Review facts and circumstances of assigned cases to determine appropriate action; research statutory and case laws to prepare defense of assigned clients' cases.

Review police reports and other pertinent information concerning clients' cases; confer with District Attorney to determine and define legal issues.

Negotiate settlements on behalf of assigned clients.

Represent clients at court appearances including jury trials; prepare assigned cases for trial by reviewing case notes, interviewing witnesses, investigators and others involved in the case.

Review cases to determine if pre-trial motions must be filed; review case to determine if investigation is needed; arrange for proper investigation as necessary.

Negotiate with judges regarding sentencing; negotiate settlements with District Attorney's office.

Contact probation and welfare departments regarding sentencing choices and options.

Consult with experts for preparation of reports and for services during jury trials.

Perform complex legal research; oversee the work of assigned office staff regarding assigned cases.

Prepare memoranda and legal opinions on a variety of issues presented by County officials.

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Prepare briefs, writs, subpoenas, appeals and other legal documents in preparation for court hearings.

Review cases to determine if pre-trial motions must be filed such as discovery motions, motions to suppress and motions to dismiss.

Appear in superior and municipal courts as assigned to provide for bail review, pre-trial conferences and readiness conferences on misdemeanor and felony cases.

Perform related duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

KNOWLEDGE OF:
Principles and practices regarding the practice of law in the State of California.
Laws such as County ordinances, State and federal statutes, State and federal constitutions and rules of court.
Technical aspects of field of specialty.
Record-keeping techniques.
Correct English usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary.
Oral and written communication skills.
Public speaking techniques.
Research methods and report writing techniques.
Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy.

ABILITY TO:
Represent the County's legal interest in a persuasive manner.
Research legal issues, complaints, pleadings, and points and authorities.
Counsel and advise the board of Supervisors, County boards, commissions and administrative bodies on legal matters.
Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
Prepare and deliver oral presentations.
Work cooperatively with others.
Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with others.
Prioritize and schedule work.
Maintain current knowledge of program rules, regulations, requirements and restrictions.
Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action.
Meet schedules and time lines.
Plan and organize work.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

Any combination equivalent to: consistent with requirements to be licensed by the State of California to practice law.

LICENSES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Valid California driver's license; license by the State Bar to practice law in the State of California.

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WORKING CONDITIONS:

Office environment; subject to driving a vehicle to conduct work.

Physical abilities required include seeing to drive a vehicle, and speaking to exchange information and make presentations.

Incumbents are exposed to contact with hostile or abusive individuals.