



PROBATION ASSISTANT

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, assists the public, Deputy Probation Officers, and other Probation Department personnel by performing a variety of basic casework support duties which may include a variety of public relations and technical work; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a non-sworn classification responsible for performing a variety of routine support duties for Probation staff. Incumbents typically assist professional staff by performing routine data inquiries, including extractions and entries in local and state law enforcement computerized databases. Incumbents create, gather, and distribute documents, files, and records and may also conduct interviews to collect standard information and/or provide routine information and instructions to clients and families.

This class is distinguished from the Deputy Probation Officer in that the latter is a sworn peace officer who makes arrests, conducts searches, and performs independent case investigations and assessments.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Obtains information and other documentation from clients participating in a Probation program.
- Assists Deputy Probation Officers with performing caseload management activities, including reviewing cases, scheduling appointments, preparing information contracts, and entering progress notes in case files.
- Performs duties related to program administrative support; annotates and files information such as phone calls, letters, appointments, drug tests, and a variety of forms and document.
- Collects urine samples for drug and alcohol testing; conducts and reads test results; recommends responses for positive readings; documents results and informs a Deputy Probation Officer or other appropriate staff.
- Maintains program statistics and prepares a variety of reports.
- Interviews adult and juvenile misdemeanor and felony offenders and family members; explains the terms and conditions of supervision.
- Assists clients in communicating with representatives of the department, community agencies, and others; provides case assistance; assists clients in completing forms; asks questions and obtains information on their behalf.
- Coordinates with other agencies; develops case history; monitors progress with terms and conditions by consulting with community service providers or other agencies.
- Gathers information and contacts various parties; communicates with clientele, law enforcement agencies, schools, parents, victims, and treatment providers, including residential facilities, courts, attorneys, other county, state or federal agencies, and other department staff.
- Refers clients who need additional assistance to appropriate departmental staff; prepares the necessary referral documents and confers with supervisor regarding clients who may need emergency assistance.

- Observes and reports, verbally or in writing, to supervisor and assigned worker regarding client behavior, activities, attitudes, or possible needs.
- Establishes and maintains accurate records of activities, both written and typed; enters and retrieves electronic data; and files documents electronically.
- May testify in court, as required.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic concepts of community corrections.
- Basic principles of criminology, juvenile delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse.
- Court processes and basic legal terminology.
- Standard office practices and procedures, including filing and the operation of standard office equipment, general operation of computer equipment and word processing.
- Recordkeeping principles and practices.
- Basic principles affecting human behavior; basic causes of delinquency and crime; and basic interviewing and case management principles and techniques.
- Techniques for dealing with a variety of individuals from various age groups, socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in person and over the telephone
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

Ability to:

- Maintain accurate records and files.
- Learn and apply applicable laws, rules and regulations; informing members of public of processes and procedures.
- Communicate effectively with members of the public; deal with individuals in stressful situations.
- Follow written and oral instructions and make decisions in routine procedural matters without immediate supervision; exercise judgment and discretion in analyzing and resolving problems.
- Prepare clear and concise reports and documents.
- Read, understand, and interpret standard official legal documents.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those encountered during the course of the work.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Deal tactfully and effectively with persons contacted in the course of work, including those of diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Effectively represent the department and the County in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.

- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of the required experience, education, and training that would provide the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying.

Equivalent to an associate degree from an accredited institution with coursework in psychology, sociology, criminal justice, social work or other behavioral science, or a closely related field;

OR

Two (2) years of experience working with members of the public, keeping records, interpreting and applying laws and regulations, and working with people from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Prior experience with case work, behavioral assessments, law enforcement, custodial corrections, or community corrections is highly desirable.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain and maintain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment and a satisfactory driving record.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various County and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 40 pounds. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Depending on the area assigned, employees may interact with members of the public under emotionally stressful conditions.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Must be willing to work off-shifts, weekends, and holidays.