



**DUTCHESS COUNTY
CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**SENIOR ASSISTANT PUBLIC
DEFENDER**

DATE ADOPTED: 8/14/2017

LAST REVISION: 3/6/25

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DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

Under the direction and supervision of a Bureau Chief, this is a senior attorney position requiring defense of all clients assigned to them by the Court or their Bureau Chief. Although direction, consultation and advice from the Bureau Chief and other higher-level employees will be available, latitude is given for the exercise of independent judgment with the expectation of full case management through trial. Senior Assistant Public Defenders shall counsel and represent clients at every stage of the proceedings either in Criminal court or Family court, and shall use their judgment to initiate such proceedings necessary to protect the rights of the accused, or rights as provided under case law or applicable statutes. Senior Assistant Public Defenders assist the Public Defender in the investigation, preparation, case management and appeal in Criminal or Family court and legal proceedings involving indigent clients. Work is performed in accordance with guidelines provided in the law. Travel during a workday may be required and assignments outside of normal working hours may be given.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

The following is indicative of the level and types of activities performed by incumbents in this title. It is not meant to be all inclusive and does not preclude a supervisor from assigning activities not listed which could be reasonably expected to be performed by an employee in this title.

1. Represents and counsels clients at every stage of proceedings in either Criminal or Family court;
2. Initiates such proceedings as necessary to protect the rights of their clients;
3. Assists the Public Defender in the preparation of various court proceedings and appeals;
4. Confers with clients, law enforcement officers, judges, lawyers and district attorneys concerning individual cases;
5. Prepares legal research and writing as necessary;
6. Advises and aids Assistant Public Defenders and Arraignment Attorneys as necessary;
7. Prepares for trial by researching points of law and rules of evidence and is available to assist and develop trial strategy;
8. Attends meetings and court as required;
9. Assists the Public Defender in carrying out operations of the department;
10. Responds in a timely manner to calls, e-mails and letters from clients, attorneys and outside agencies;
11. Attends staff meetings and attorney meetings;
12. Handles court assignments as deemed appropriate by the Public Defender or bureau chief.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of the principles and practices of criminal law applicable to state and federal criminal laws and/or family law; A high degree of skill in the preparation of briefs; Skill in presenting to a court and/or



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jury; Ability to analyze, appraise and apply legal principles, facts and precedent to legal problems; Ability to prepare and maintain high levels of confidential information; Ability to act logically and analyze information in high pressure situations; Ability to establish and maintain effective working and interpersonal relationships; Personal characteristics necessary to perform the duties of the position; Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Admission to the New York State Bar and:

- EITHER (A) Three (3) years as a practicing attorney involved with caseload management, courtroom experience and appellate brief writing or trial experience;
- OR (B) Two (2) years of work experience at a Public Defender’s Office involving caseload management and extensive court appearances with commensurate litigation or trial experience.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Candidate must possess a valid New York State Driver License at the time of appointment and to maintain position.

COUNTY USE ONLY:

BARGAINING UNIT: DSA	JURISDICTIONAL CLASSIFICATION: Exempt
GRADE: AG	FLSA Code: Exempt
REVISION HISTORY: 3/6/25	