

WHARTON-MATAGORDA REGIONAL PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICE

POSTION: INVESTIGATOR

JOB DESCRIPTION: INVESTIGATOR

STATUS: NON-EXEMPT

JOB TITLE: Investigator

SUPERVISOR: REGIONAL PUBLIC DEFENDER CHIEF

SALARY RANGE: \$69,000-72,000

JOB DESCRIPTION: The Wharton -Matagorda Regional Public Defender Office (WMRPDO) will provide quality legal representation for persons that cannot afford to hire or secure private counsel in felony and misdemeanor cases in Wharton and Matagorda counties. WMRPDO is a department of Wharton County primarily funded by the Texas Indigent Defense Commission, Wharton County and Matagorda County.

Investigator will assist the attorneys employed by WMRPDO in providing quality criminal defense of clients appointed to WMRPDO by investigating cases and suggesting possible defenses, and helping assure clients receive competent and zealous defense.

Essential and other important responsibilities and duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Confer with attorneys on a case when request made for Investigation of a case. Identify what specifically is being requested.
- performing investigation of alleged criminal conduct by a Defendant including but not limited to the following:

Speaking to witnesses and victims

Speaking to witnesses for the Defense

Running Criminal History of witnesses and do background checks

Locating potential witnesses

Speaking and getting Defendant's side of Story

Obtaining documents, audio/video recordings, and other items

- Conduct background investigations on prospective defendants and witnesses
- Prepare analytical and statistical reports on findings after investigation

*Record and keep all interviews in person or over the phone

*Maintain all written communications from or with any witness (text, emails, letters or other

Take photos/videos on cell phone when appropriate to the defense

Regular communication with the Wharton-Matagorda RPDO Public Defender assigned to your case.

- May be required to testify at jury trial .

*Prepare clear and concise written reports of investigative work..

* Gather, assemble, analyze, evaluate and use facts and evidence of the state's case. Identify any areas of weakness in the state's case.

*Analyze situations and adopt effective courses of action in assisting defense attorneys (Wharton-Matagorda Public Defenders) with an appropriate defense for clients consistent with the requirements of legal ethics.

- Interpret and apply laws and regulations of the State of Texas and United States.

- Demonstrate keen powers of observation and memory.

- Participate in public presentations as assigned.

- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

*Follow all safety rules. Policy and Procedures of WMPDO.

*Maintain effective audio-visual discrimination and perception needed for:

- *Making observations

- *Reading and writing reports

- * Interviewing witnesses

- Proficient in Operating and assigned equipment and or programs/software needed for investigation like Southern, ZLS ,

Communicating with others

- Keep attorney's informed of progress of investigation on case.

- Seek WMRPDO attorney direction and follow attorneys direction for investigative work

- Inform attorneys (WMRPDO) when there is a roadblock in locating a locating or developing a witness

- **Candidates with TCOLE certification must surrender it prior to joining the Wharton-Matagorda Regional Public Defender Team..**

Skills and Education:

*Minimum Education and Skills

*High School Diploma

*Past Law Enforcement Experience (preferred not necessary)

* Must be able to read and write the English language. Must be able to write out detailed investigation reports.

* Must have the ability to move, walk, and lift at least 15-20 pounds.

* Must be comfortable and able to handle difficult and or hostile situations.

* Must be able to drive. Must have a valid driver's license. Must be willing to drive all over Matagorda and Wharton County weekly

*Minimum of 5 years working in investigations or a BS Degree in Criminal Justice

*The ability to work under pressure and demonstrate patience and understanding with upset clients and client family members.

*Requires organizing, prioritizing, and demonstrating attention to details and accuracy.

*The flexibility to perform a variety of duties, when working with several attorneys or various case assignments

*Function as a team member and contribute to a positive, client centered work environment.

*Ability to receive and follow instructions furnished in written, oral, diagram, schedule and other formats.

Physical Abilities

Must be able to pass Employment Physical and Drug Screen and Background Check

Must be able to lift 15-20 pounds (copy paper or box of file folders)

Must have a valid Texas Driver's License

Must be able to drive. Must have reliable transportation.

Wharton County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.