Office of the State Public Defender - Trial Division
Spanish Speaking-Legal Secretary

POSITION SUMMARY: Under general supervision, provide legal secretarial support to local office following agency policies and procedures in a professional manner. Maintain knowledge of and observe ethical obligations required of a law office including client confidentiality.

As a bilingual Legal Secretary, this position is expected to use Spanish language skills to offer assistance to SPD staff, clients, and client contacts such as family members or potential witnesses for the defense. This position is expected to answer queries in Spanish, translate needed documents, and act as an interpreter when needed.

GOALS AND WORKER ACTIVITIES:

20% A. Support effective representation of clients.
   A1. Evaluate individuals (in the office and/or at the jail) and determine eligibility in accordance with Agency policies and procedures. Refer ineligible persons to the appropriate resources.
   A2. Maintain knowledge of cases represented by the SPD.
   A3. Maintain knowledge of Agency policies and procedures relating to eligibility evaluation and collection standards.
   A4. Interact professionally with all public defender staff and others in the judicial system.

20% B. Maintain case files utilizing provided computer software.
   B1. Process cases for opening by checking statute references and potential conflicts.
   B2. Set up, open, maintain and close cases on the computer. Send and maintain copies of the Order Appointing Counsel in compliance with policies and procedures.
   B3. Maintain security of case files.
   B4. Prepare reports as requested.
   B5. Process and sort notices of hearings and other file documents.
   B6. Maintain knowledge of all statutes, administrative codes and policies and procedures regarding cases and software usage.

20% C. Provide legal secretarial support to local office.
   C1. Accurately type pleadings, briefs, affidavits, motions, subpoenas, correspondence, memos and other legal documents from dictation, handwritten or typed drafts as directed.
   C2. Ensure that all typed material is proofread for the correct format, free of errors, and accurate spelling and grammar is utilized.
   C3. Ensure that client documents, including but not limited to, letters, transcripts, dispositional orders, and motions, are properly stored in client files.
   C4. Demonstrate a commitment to learning and improvement by attending and actively participating in regional, Agency, or other training opportunities.

15% D. Translation and Interpretation.
   D1. Assist Attorneys, Professional Staff, and Administrative Staff with interpreting conversations between English and Spanish speakers, inside and outside of the office.
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D2. Translate documents and recordings from English to Spanish and from Spanish to English.
D3. Financially evaluate Spanish speaking clients and determine eligibility in accordance with Agency policies and procedures. Refer ineligible persons to the appropriate resources.

20 % E. Maintain office operations and performance of other clerical duties
E2. Open and distribute mail; process outgoing mail.
E3. Maintain knowledge of attorney schedule to properly field calls and walk-ins.
E4. Photocopy and distribute memos and other information.
E5. Maintain active and inactive records and prepare records for transfer to retention center in compliance with SPD rules and regulations.
E6. Perform other duties as directed by management
E7. Occasional travel to other trial offices to provide coverage.

5 % F. Appoint cases to private bar attorneys.
F1. Contact private bar attorney or their staff to appoint cases following Agency and local office policies and procedures.
F2. Send and receive appropriate documents for the private bar attorney, forwarding information to administration as appropriate.
F3. Set up, open, maintain and close cases on the computer. Send and maintain copies of the Order Appointing Counsel in compliance with policies and procedures.
F4. Maintain knowledge of all statutes, administrative codes, and policies and procedures regarding appointment of private bar attorneys.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities
1. Knowledge and skills associated with office support and secretarial practices and procedures
2. Proficient with word processing software, (e.g. MS Word, Google Docs), spreadsheet software, (e.g. MS Excel, Google Sheets), database software, (e.g. MS Access, Google Forms), e-mail & scheduling software programs (e.g. Google mail) and internet usage
3. Proficient keyboarding skills
4. Proficient editing and proofreading skills
5. Transcription skills needed in some offices
6. Knowledge and skill utilizing legal office practices and procedures
7. Knowledge and skill utilizing legal terminology, forms and formatting
8. Basic math skills
9. Knowledge of an ability to apply financial evaluation guidelines
10. Efficient time management, organizational, problem-solving skills
11. Ability to multi-task and work as part of a team
12. Effective oral, written and interpersonal communication skills
13. Ability to work effectively with people, including those from different ethnic, cultural, political, economic, and religious backgrounds
14. Knowledge of the criminal justice system
15. Knowledge of SPD rules, policies and procedures
16. Maintain knowledge of and observe ethical obligations required of a law office, including client confidentiality
17. Ability to read, write and speak both English and Spanish

Special Qualification
Possession or eligibility to possess a valid Wisconsin driver’s license upon appointment, which must be maintained while serving in the position and the ability to legally operate an automobile in Wisconsin.

This position requires the incumbent to be able to read, write and speak both English and Spanish.