

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**  
**COUNTY OF HANCOCK, INDIANA**

**POSITION:** Chief Public Defender  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Defender  
**WORK SCHEDULE:** As Assigned  
**STATUS:** Full-time

A chief public defender is the chief executive officer of a county public defender agency. Chief public defenders are responsible for the overall management of a county agency, including daily administration, personnel, training, caseload management, ethics, and quality control of all areas necessary to secure high quality representation for clients appointed to the agency. The Chief Public Defender shall be hired by and report directly and solely to the public defender board of the county. To perform this position successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential function of the position satisfactorily. The requirements listed in this document are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Hancock County provides reasonable accommodations to qualified employees and applicants with known disabilities who require accommodation to complete the application process or perform essential functions of the job, unless those accommodations would present an undue hardship.

**I. DUTIES:**

1. The Chief Public Defender hires, administers, and directs all public defense staff, employees, contractors, and assigned counsel consistent with IC 33-40-7-7, Rule 5.1 of the Rules of Professional Conduct, and ABA Formal Opinion 06-441 and comprehensive plan of the county.
2. The Chief Public Defender supervises staff, including periodically analyzing workload, reviewing position documentation, interviewing and making hiring decisions, orienting new subordinates, planning, delegating, and controlling work assignments, establishing specific work goals, training, developing, and motivating assigned staff, determining

significant changes in responsibilities, evaluating performance results, recommending personnel actions, keeping assigned staff informed of organizational developments, maintaining discipline and recommending corrective action, and communicating and administering personnel programs.

3. The Chief Public Defender shall develop and implement policies and procedures for the county public defender agency to comply with the standards and guidelines of the Indiana Public Defender Commission. The Chief Public Defender shall take the necessary steps to insure that the county public defender agency submits quarterly requests for reimbursement of eligible expenses of the county public defender agency to Indiana Public Defender Commission for deposit to the County Auditor's office.
4. The Chief Public Defender creates and implements agency's vision and mission.
5. The Chief Public Defender maintains awareness of evolving case law, existing and new criminal statutes and rules, evolving strategies in representing clients, policies of Public Defender Council and the Commission.
6. The Chief Public Defender monitors and manages caseload requirements, including determining what attorneys are qualified to take what level/type of cases, monitoring training and other case type requirements, determining what types of cases and how many can be assigned, and calculating what cases can be counted for purposes of reimbursement.
7. The Chief Public Defender prepares reports to the Indiana Public Defender Commission for reimbursement, quarterly.
8. The Chief Public Defender represents caseload of clients charged with crimes.
9. The Chief Public Defender prepares and submits the agency's annual budget and supplemental budget requests. A Chief Public Defender shall manage the agency's budget and financial resources efficiently and effectively to provide high quality public defense representation to all clients.

## **II. JOB REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Doctor Jurisprudence with an active license to practice law in the State of Indiana. Must be an active member in good standing with the Indiana Bar Association.
2. Must have Five (5) years of Criminal Law experience with at least Non-Capital Murder qualifications.
3. Must be a resident of Hancock County Indiana.
4. Complete knowledge of and ability to apply federal, state, and local laws and ordinances to a wide variety of individual situations and circumstances for the preparation of cases and defense of clients before the court and/or jury.
5. Have an understanding of the ABA Criminal Justice Standards for the Defense Function (4th Ed.), the National Association of Public Defense Foundational Principles, the Standards and Guidelines of the Indiana Public Defender Commission, and the Performance Standards of the Indiana Public Defender Council;
6. Thorough knowledge of standard legal procedures and practices of Hancock County Courts with ability to effectively prepare and argue cases before the court.
7. Thorough knowledge County budgeting process.
8. Working knowledge of standard office procedures and computer software programs used by the Public Defender's Office, including LexisNexis, Indiana Criminal Code, Public Defender Information System (PDIS) manuals, West Law, and Odyssey with ability to apply such knowledge to a variety of interrelated processes, tasks and operations.
9. Working knowledge of standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation, and ability to prepare court/legal documents and written reports as required.
10. Ability to properly operate standard office equipment, such as computer, calculator, copier, fax machine, telephone, scanner, and vehicle.
11. Ability and willingness to effectively and fairly represent clients amidst potential controversy, unpopularity, and lack of support from members of the general public.
12. Ability to conduct legal research and interview and/or investigate clients, witnesses, crime scenes, and others persons/areas as individual cases demand.
13. Ability to supervise assigned staff, including periodically analyzing workload, reviewing position documentation, interviewing and making hiring decisions, orienting new

subordinates, planning, delegating, and controlling work assignments, establishing specific work goals, training, developing, and motivating assigned staff, determining significant changes in responsibilities, evaluating performance results, recommending personnel actions, keeping assigned staff informed of organizational developments, maintaining discipline and recommending corrective action, and communicating and administering personnel programs.

14. Ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing with co-workers, other County departments, Courts and Judges, Probation, law enforcement agencies, Indiana Public Defender Council and Commission, clients and their families, substance abuse and mental health treatment providers, and the public, including being sensitive to professional ethics, gender, cultural diversities, and disabilities.
15. Ability to provide public access to, or maintain confidentiality of, department information and records according to state requirements.
16. Ability to comply with all employer and department policies and work rules, including, but not limited to, attendance, safety, drug-free workplace, and personal conduct.
17. Ability to competently serve the public with diplomacy and respect, including occasionally encounters with irate/hostile individuals.
18. Ability to compare or observe similarities and differences between data, people or things.
19. Ability to compile, collate, classify, analyze, evaluate, make determinations, take action based on data analysis, and fabricate data.
20. Ability to understand, memorize, retain, and carry out oral and written instructions and present findings in oral or written form.
21. Ability to file, post, mail materials, and maintain accurate and organized records.
22. Ability to work alone with minimum supervision and with others in a team environment, often amidst frequent distractions and interruptions.
23. Ability to apply knowledge of people and locations and plan/layout assigned work projects. Ability to plan and present public speaking presentations.
24. Ability to present persuasive well-reasoned arguments in legal proceedings/court as required.

25. Ability to work extended hours, weekends, and evenings and travel out of town for trainings/meetings/investigations, sometimes overnight.
26. Possession of a valid driver's license and demonstrated safe driving record.
27. Be committed to maintaining the professional independence of the office.

### **III. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:**

Incumbent exercises analytical techniques to address problems that are embedded within the wide range of duties performed. Independent judgment is frequently needed to determine the impact of decisions on total operations and/or sets of cases. Incumbent operates within very general guidelines, adapting guidelines and rules to fit unique circumstances.

### **IV. RESPONSIBILITY:**

Incumbent is responsible for proper and timely completion of assigned tasks, where intended results are clearly specified. Unusual situations or problems may be discussed with the Board but incumbent's decisions on a wide array of complex issues have a major impact on departmental operations. Work product is periodically reviewed for soundness of judgment and compliance with legal requirements.

### **V. PERSONAL WORK RELATIONSHIPS:**

Incumbent maintains frequent contact with co-workers, other County departments, Courts and Judges, Probation, law enforcement agencies, Indiana Public Defender Council and Commission, clients and their families, substance abuse and mental health treatment providers, and the public for purposes of giving and receiving information, rendering service, presenting subject matter, exchanging ideas, and mentoring.

Incumbent reports directly to the Public Defender Board.

**VI. PHYSICAL EFFORT AND WORK ENVIRONMENT:**

Incumbent performs duties in a standard office environment and in a courtroom, involving sitting for long periods, sitting/walking at will, keyboarding, lifting/carrying objects weighing less than 25 pounds, handling/grasping objects bending/reaching, crouching/kneeling, close/far vision, color/depth perception, speaking clearly, hearing sounds/communication, and driving.

Incumbent maintains considerable contact with the public and may be exposed to irate/hostile individuals.

Incumbent works extended hours, weekends, and evenings and travels out of town for trainings/meetings/investigations, sometimes overnight.

**APPLICANT/EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The job description for the position of Chief Public Defender for the Hancock County Public Defender's Office describes the duties and responsibilities for employment in this position. I acknowledge that I have received this job description and understand that it is not a contract of employment. I am responsible for reading this job description and complying with all job duties, requirements and responsibilities contained herein, and any subsequent revisions.

Is there anything that would keep you from meeting the job duties and requirements as outlined?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant/Employee signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type Name