VICTIM/WITNESS ADVOCATE

DEFINITION

Under general direction, to provide a variety of services to victims and witnesses of crimes in accordance with the Victim/Witness Program in the County District Attorney's Office; to interview victims and witnesses, assessing needs and making referrals; to assist with the development of community resources for victim/witness assistance; to represent the Victim/Witness program with community organizations and agencies; and to do related work as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Positions in this class are responsible for providing a variety of victim/witness and program support services for the Victim/Witness Program.

REPORTS TO

Victim/Witness Coordinator.

CLASSIFICATIONS DIRECTLY SUPERVISED

Victim/Witness Advocate.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

Interviews victims and witnesses of crimes, advising them of restitution rights and the availability of services; assesses needs and makes referrals to appropriate community resources and organizations; keeps program clients aware of the status and disposition of cases; provides transportation for persons unable to get to court; explains program procedures, policies, and services; works with community organizations to develop resources and appropriate referral services for victims and witnesses; makes presentations as necessary; maintains liaison with law enforcement agencies; may provide some basic counseling and crisis intervention support for Program clients; maintains program records and enters data into a computer system; performs a variety of victim/witness administrative and support functions.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Sit for extended periods; frequently stand and walk; normal manual dexterity and eye-hand coordination; corrected hearing and vision to normal range; verbal communication; use of office equipment including computers, telephones, calculators, copiers, and FAX.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed in an office; occasionally works outside; continuous contact with staff and the public.

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DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

! Basic knowledge of rules and regulations governing victim/witness services and programs.
! Functions of public law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system.
! Principles of providing assistance to victims and witnesses of crimes.
! Client problems requiring referral to other organizations and support services.
! Interviewing and record keeping techniques.

Ability to:

! Provide a variety of client and program support services for the Victim/Witness Program.
! Interview people, identify needs, and make appropriate referrals.
! Analyze and interpret laws and regulations related to victim/witness services.
! Gather, organize, analyze, and present a variety of data and information.
! Prepare, clear, concise and accurate records and reports.
! Communicate with others from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.
! Elicit factual information from applicants and recipients in difficult circumstances of deprivation or emotional disturbance.
! Assist with development of community referral resources for program clients.
! Effectively represent victim/witness programs in contacts with service providers, the public, community organizations, and other governments agencies.
! Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships.

Training and Experience: Any combination of training and experience which would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required knowledge and abilities would be:

One (1) year of responsible work experience in dealing with victims and witnesses of crimes, or within the criminal justice system.

Advanced in social or behavioral science, criminology, public administration, or administration of justice is highly desirable. 12 Semester units in an appropriate field may be substituted for the required experience.