

Victims Advocate

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: The work involves responsibility for coordinating and participating in the various activities of a Crime Victims Program. An incumbent acts as a liaison between the Office of the District Attorney and the courts, police departments, social service agencies and the other support agencies, as well as providing continuing direct personal assistance to crime victims or witnesses and their families. The employee establishes a working relationship with the victims or witnesses, providing them with necessary information on court procedures and accompanying them throughout the entire process. The work is performed under the general supervision of the District Attorney with leeway allowed for the use of independent judgment within established guidelines. A Victims Advocate does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Coordinates the activities and operations of the Crime Victims Program;
- Conducts research to locate and contact victims and witnesses;
- Maintains contact between the Office of the District Attorney and victims/affected family members, encouraging victim participating in the criminal justice process;
- Provides case status information, informing victims of court appearance dates and times as well as postponements and cancellations;
- Assists victims/affected family members to understand court procedures and their rights and responsibilities;
- Assists victims in the preparation and filing of a wide variety of orders, statements and claims;
- Arranges appointments, transportation, interpreters and other services for victims;
- Develops and maintains contact with various community agencies whose services may be relevant to client needs;
- Maintains contact with the New York State Crime Victims Board, cooperates with program audits and ensures compliance with Federal and State mandates and regulations;
- Provides program presentations to various public and private agencies;
- Recruits, trains and oversees volunteers to work with victims and witnesses;
- Maintains a variety of records and prepares and submits statistical and financial reports relative to service delivery and program operations.
- Ensures program compliance with applicable rules and regulations;
- Interacts with police departments, courts, support agencies, crime victims, witnesses in a professional manner;
- Maintains records relative to service delivery and program operations;
- Maximizes information flow to clients.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Good knowledge of the structure, organization and procedures of the criminal court system; good knowledge of the rights of victims and witnesses; good knowledge of the policies and procedures of the District Attorney's Office; working knowledge of the principles and techniques of interviewing; ability to assess the need for professional counseling and make appropriate referrals; ability to develop and maintain satisfactory working relationships with victims, witnesses and the public; ability to work independently; ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing; sound judgment; physical condition sufficient to perform the essential functions of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- A. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with an Associate's degree in Criminal Justice, Human Services, Paralegal Studies, or related degree and one year of experience involving interviewing and counseling members of the public in a human services or law enforcement setting; OR
- B. Three years of experience involving interviewing and counseling members of the public in a human services or law enforcement setting; OR
- C. An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of A. and B. above.

ADOPTED: 1/16/14

CATTARAUGUS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION