

CLASS SPECIFICATION



CLASS: Victim Witness Advocate
ALLOCATION: Probation
FLSA STATUS: Non-Exempt
UNION AFFILIATION: YCEA

ESTABLISHED: Circa 1994
REVISED: January 2025

Job Summary

Under general supervision, assist victims and witnesses of crime by providing information, support, referral and advocacy services; monitor cases through the judicial system; conduct educational presentations regarding victim services; assist in completing victim compensation claims; and perform related work as assigned.

Class Characteristics

This is the journey level in the victim witness advocate class series and is expected to exercise considerable initiative and independent judgment. Incumbents work initially under close supervision as they learn procedures and complex regulations and acquire the ability to apply the regulations. As experience is gained, an incumbent will work with more independence and carry an increasingly larger and/or more difficult caseload.

This position reports directly to a manager within the Victim Witness Division and works closely with the Senior Victim Witness Advocate. This class is distinguished from Senior Victim Witness Advocate in that the latter has full responsibility for the full range of associated Victim Witness Advocate duties along with daily oversight of the incoming unit work and caseloads.

Examples of Duties

Essential:

- Perform the delivery of supportive services to victims and witnesses, including crisis intervention, referrals to community service agencies, and follow-up services.
- Provide information regarding the criminal justice system, case status, restitution process and related information to victims and witnesses.
- Interview victims of crime and/or their families to determine eligibility for Victims Program services; assist victims and their families with documentation necessary to file for compensation and restitution.
- Make appropriate referrals to community agencies; refer clients to criminal justice agencies, public or private agencies to obtain supportive services; refer clients to professional counseling as needed; maintain contacts with other agencies regarding the status of individuals.
- Provide crisis intervention services such as immediate-needs referral for food, shelter, health care, clothing or protection.
- Arrange meetings with peace officers and attorneys; assist the Deputy District Attorney's with interviews of victims and/or witnesses of a crime and provide an assessment of the victims' reaction to crime, emotional state and ability and family dynamics.
- Maintain contact with victims and/or witnesses to coordinate court appearances; escort victims and/or witnesses to court; orient victims and/or witnesses for their participation in the criminal justice system; provide support during testimony at all phases of the trial process; obtain transportation services when needed; assist victims and their family during the court proceeding; keep victims and/or witnesses apprised of the status and disposition of cases; assist in the return of property to victims and/or witnesses.
- Conduct educational presentations on the Victim Service Program for community groups and schools; answer inquiries regarding the Program from the public; provide training to public and private agencies on victimology issues.
- Recruit, orient, train and oversee volunteers and interns engaged in assisting victims and/or witnesses.
- Maintain liaison with other departments and agencies, business groups and community organizations on activities and procedures related to the Victim Services Program.

- Attend meetings and conferences dealing with victim/witness issues in order to obtain knowledge regarding new or revised laws and procedures.
- Prepare and maintain records and files; prepare special and detailed reports and statistics as required.

Important:

- Comply with all County equipment and safety policies and procedures, and California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (CalOSHA) rules and regulations.
- Must be able to review, prepare and maintain confidentiality of documentation.
- May be required to drive a county motor vehicle to attend various meetings or transport clients.
- Uses standard office equipment, including a computer, in the course of the work.

Employment Standards

Knowledge of:

- Laws and procedures of criminal justice agencies as they affect the responsibilities and rights of victims and witnesses of crime.
- Domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse laws.
- Personality development, group and family dynamics, human motivation and behavior patterns sufficient to gain rapport with hostile and uncooperative, or traumatized individuals.
- Rules of professional confidentiality concerning victim and advocate, as well as of attorney/client work product.
- Psychological dynamics of child abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Principles, practices and techniques of interviewing.
- The needs, problems, attitudes and behavior patterns of emotionally vulnerable individuals.
- Community resources available to victims and/or witnesses.
- Basic arithmetic and computer applications related to the work.
- Record keeping principles and practices.
- Child abuse reporting laws.
- Techniques for dealing with a variety of individuals from various socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in person and over the telephone, often where relations may be confrontational or strained.

Skill in:

- Interpreting, applying and explaining applicable laws, codes, regulations and procedures to a variety of individuals.
- Assisting victims or witnesses of crimes with progression through the criminal justice system in a timely and reasonable manner.
- Effectively interview victims, families and other individuals to obtain information on a variety of complex and sensitive subjects.
- Providing psychological and emotional support to reduce stress associated with being a victim or witness of crime.
- Relating to a wide variety of individuals from different socio-economic, cultural and ethnic groups.
- Developing and maintaining the confidence and cooperation of emotionally vulnerable individuals.
- Initiating and maintaining computerized case files to document case activities.
- Speaking in public before a variety of groups and organizations.
- Making accurate arithmetic calculations.

Ability to:

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with victims and/or witnesses and their families, departmental staff, law enforcement officer, attorneys and community agencies.
- Provide psychological and emotional support to reduce stress associated with being a victim or witness of crime. Listen carefully to what other people are saying, take time to understand the points being made, and ask questions as appropriate for clarification.
- Communicate clearly, concisely, competently and effectively in writing and verbally as appropriate for the needs of the audience.

- Analyze situations accurately and to take effective action.
- Prepare and deliver effective presentations to meet the needs of the audience.
- Work independently, but within established guidelines.
- Adjust to workload changes and meet deadlines under pressure.
- Exercise independent initiative and judgement in applying laws, rules and regulations and in analyzing and resolving a variety of issues.
- Observe the rules of confidentiality.
- Maintain accurate records and files.

Physical Demands: The physical demands and work environment described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential function of the job, with or without accommodation. Prospective employees must complete a pre-employment medical exam (Occupational Group IV) which will measure the ability to:

- See well enough to read fine print and view a computer screen; speak and hear well enough to understand, respond, and communicate clearly in person and on the telephone; independent body mobility sufficient to stand, sit, walk, stoop and bend to access the work environment and a standard office environment; manual dexterity and sufficient use of hands, arms and shoulders to repetitively operate a keyboard and to write; and the ability to sit or walk for prolonged periods of time.
- Mobility to drive a motor vehicle to attend meetings or visit various work locations.

Accommodation(s) may be made for some of these physical demands for otherwise qualified individuals who require and request such accommodation.

Work Environment:

- Work is performed both in an office and in the field at various private and public locations.
- Work with exposure to uneven footing, inclement weather, temperature extremes, or other potentially dangerous conditions.

Qualifications

The minimum and preferred requirements are listed below. While the following requirements outline the minimum qualifications, Human Resources reserves the right to select applicants for further consideration who demonstrate the best qualifications match for the job. Meeting the minimum qualifications does not guarantee further participation in selection procedures.

Licenses and Certification:

- The ability to obtain a valid California Class C driver's license within ten (10) days of employment; maintain throughout employment.
- Possess or ability to obtain (within the 1st twelve months of employment) an entry Victim Advocate Training course certificate.
- Possess or ability to obtain (within the 1st 24 months of employment) an advanced Victim Advocate Training course certificate.

Special Requirements:

- Must successfully complete an extensive and thorough background investigation which includes Live Scan fingerprinting prior to hire.
- DMV printout prior to hire.
- Will be required to perform disaster service activities pursuant to Government Code 3100-3109.

Education and Experience:

MINIMUM: Equivalent to an Associate's degree from an accredited college with major coursework in social or behavioral science, criminal justice or a related field and one (1) year of responsible public contact experience involving law enforcement, supportive counseling or similar work in a public or private agency that provided knowledge of community social service resources and/or the criminal justice process. Relevant client counseling experience may be substituted for the required education

on a year-for-year basis.

PREFERRED: In addition to the minimum, three years of experience providing direct services to victims and witnesses, peer counseling or social work that provided considerable knowledge of the criminal justice process.

This class specification lists the major duties and requirements of the job. Incumbent(s) may be expected to perform job-related duties other than those contained in this document.

Dept. Approval:
Date:

Signature: _____

Human Resources Approval:
Date:

Signature: _____

EEOC: F
WC: 9410

Established: Circa 1995
Revised: April 2017