

PUBLIC DEFENDER DIRECTOR

DEFINITION: Under administrative direction, oversees the general administration and technical direction of the Office of Navajo Public Defender; the overall purpose for the Public Defender's office is to provide representation for court appointed indigents charged with misdemeanor felony criminal offenses; performs related work as assigned.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: This list is ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY and is not a comprehensive listing of all functions and tasks performed by incumbent of this class.

TASKS:

Plans, oversees, and coordinates activities of the Office of Navajo Public Defender; decides overall program goals and objectives; develops guidelines and policies to improve and respond to changing conditions; evaluates and redirects program to a more productive and effective legal service in representing clientele; develops internal control mechanisms, procedures and guidelines to maintain program accountability; coordinates criminal proceedings and plea agreements with the Nation's prosecutorial office.

Serves as the technical authority on the most complex legal defense motions; determines nature of court appointed cases; assigns cases to staff attorneys and/or staff; assures defense practice and/or work produced by the staff are consistent with the objectives of defending clientele; advises on legal issues that are of a controversial nature; provides direction on trial strategies; represents individual indigent persons in the Nation's courts; consults with legal investigators, prepares pretrial motions and affidavits, responses, replies and other pleadings.

Ensures that all practitioners meet continuing legal education (CLE) requirements to maintain licensure; develops training for staff and obtains certification from Navajo Nation Bar Association as CLE sponsor when necessary; reviews case files to evaluate work performed and conducts case reviews; identifies issues and/or problems associated with the practice of law that may be encountered by staff practicing in courts; coordinates the pro bono system of other attorneys/advocates for the presentation of indigent persons not represented by the Office of Navajo Public Defender.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:

Knowledge of applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines governing aspects of Navajo Nation operations relating to legal work.

Knowledge of supervisory methods and techniques.

Knowledge of counseling and defending indigent clients in various aspects of court hearings.

Skill in communicating effectively orally and in writing.

Skill in interviewing clients to obtain general information regarding alleged offenses.

Skill in reviewing complaints, police reports, witness statements, medical and accident reports.

Skill in researching legal court decisions of U.S. Supreme Court, Circuit Courts of Appeal, U.S. District Courts, State and Navajo Nation Courts.

Skill in establishing cooperative work relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Skill in supervising and managing staff.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT: Work involves a minimum of physical effort in an office setting.

THE NAVAJO NATION

Class Code: 0305
Unclassified Personnel Series
Executive Appointments Group
Overtime Code: Exempt
Pay Grade: 70

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MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: A Juris Doctorate; and eight (8) years legal experience as a defense attorney, two (2) years of which must have been in a supervisory capacity. Must be licensed to practice law in Arizona, New Mexico or Utah, and in the Navajo Nation.

Depending upon the needs of the Nation, some incumbents of the class may be required to demonstrate fluency in both the Navajo and English languages as a condition of employment.