

PROBATION OFFICER

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is the entry-level professional position in a probation department responsible for the control, supervision and care of adults and juveniles subject to probation supervision or intake services which requires them to meet certain standards of conduct. The incumbent uses sound professional judgment and applies investigative techniques to evaluate the conduct of those subject to court ordered investigation, analyze data and make recommendations regarding court dispositions. He/she also counsels and coaches probationers and others receiving probation services to change patterns of thinking and behavior to help promote and sustain a law-abiding relationship with society and reduce the likelihood of becoming re-involved in criminal or delinquent behavior. Depending upon individual needs and/or court orders, a Probation Officer may arrange for medical, mental health or substance treatment services. Supervision is not a characteristic of this position. The work is performed under the general supervision of a higher-ranking probation professional. A Probation Officer is a Peace Officer pursuant to Criminal Procedure Law Section 2.10 and may be authorized to carry a firearm in the performance of his/her duties. The incumbent will perform all duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Gathers, verifies, reviews and analyzes social, medical, mental health, substance abuse, sex offender, legal and other documentation and interviews defendants/respondents, victims, law enforcement personnel and other case-related individuals to conduct pre-plea/pre-sentence/pre-dispositional investigations;

Prepares reports and/or testifies in court regarding persons awaiting disposition of the courts in regard to the seriousness of the crime committed, the individual's circumstances and risk to self and society and the legally permissible dispositional options and makes a recommendation for or against detention, residential placement, or incarceration including, when appropriate, a recommendation regarding the length and conditions of probation which may include community service or other services;

Conducts risk and need assessments and evaluates results for pre-trial, investigation, and supervision purposes;

Prepares case/supervision plans and interprets conditions of probation to probationers;

Meets with probationers, family members, school officials, service providers and others having contact with probationers to help ensure probationers are meeting terms and conditions of probation including school attendance and participation in treatment programs;

Performs risk reduction by providing direction and support to help probationers change factors that promote and maintain criminal or delinquent behavior including coaching probationers to select new patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving and to develop new attitudes and skills which help sustain a constructive and law-abiding relationship with the broader community and reduce the likelihood of becoming re-involved in criminal or delinquent behavior;

Prepares progress reports on probationers and periodically reviews case histories to determine the degree of adjustment;

Prepares violation reports and testifies at violation hearings;

Prepares a final report once a case is closed;

Meets with or otherwise communicates with his or her supervisor and peers to provide information related to the work performed;

Develops and maintains relationships with other social and law enforcement agencies and cooperates with them in matters of mutual interest to assist probationers with life adjustments;

Develops specific work goals and plans to prioritize, organize, and accomplish the work performed;

Attends training and keeps abreast of professional developments and current technology to assist in the monitoring of probationers;

May collect financial obligations from and issue receipts to offenders;

May perform urine drug/alcohol screenings and collect DNA samples from probationers;

May arrange for medical, mental health, substance abuse treatment or other services according to individual probationer's needs or court orders;

May execute arrest warrants, conduct warrantless searches and/or make warrantless arrests;

May use a firearm in performing duties and exercising authority pursuant to departmental policy.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Good knowledge of interviewing and investigative techniques and practices related to probation work;

Good knowledge of laws and rules pertaining to probation work and the functions and procedures of family and criminal courts;

Good knowledge of methods of different supervision of probationers including the application of cognitive behavioral interventions and motivational techniques;

Good knowledge of effective case planning and management;

Good knowledge of special offender populations such as domestic violence offenders, sex offenders, DWI offenders, youthful offenders, juvenile offenders, Persons in Need of Supervision and juvenile delinquents;

Good knowledge of juvenile and adult risk and needs assessment instruments;

Good knowledge of tools used to monitor compliance with conditions of probation, such as drug and alcohol screening DNA collection, and electronic monitoring devices;

Good knowledge of the powers of a Peace Officer;

Good knowledge of the geography of the jurisdiction employed in;

Good knowledge of factors related to crime and delinquency;

Working knowledge of the rules of evidence, arrest laws and custody procedures;

Working knowledge of the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations and policies relating to confidentiality of case record information;

Working knowledge of social science, including sociology, psychology and demography;

Working knowledge of community resources;

Working knowledge of employment, training and treatment options available to probationers;

Working knowledge of firearm safety;

Skill in the use of firearms where authorized;

Ability to administer accurate and thorough assessments;
Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions;

Ability to analyze and organize data and prepare records and reports;

Ability to conduct effective case planning;

Ability to refer a probationer to the right types of services within the probation department and the broader community;

Ability to promote and monitor change and take appropriate action to sustain growth or help the probationer initiate appropriate behavior patterns;

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with others;

Ability to counsel probationers regarding social, emotional and vocational problems;

Ability to understand and interpret complex written technical information including statutes, regulations and operational procedures;

Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;

Ability to administer drug and alcohol testing and collect DNA samples as needed;

Ability to understand and empathize with the needs and concerns of others;

Ability to maintain composure and make rational judgements under stressful conditions;

Ability to use a firearm safely and effectively if so authorized.

OPEN COMPETITIVE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- (A) Satisfactory completion of a Probation Officer traineeship, or
- (B) Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents to grant degrees with a graduate degree in social work, social sciences, education, administration, law, criminal justice, or a related field; or
- (C) Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents to grant degrees, with a Bachelor's degree or higher with at least thirty (30) credit hours in the social or behavioral sciences and two (2) years of experience in counseling, law enforcement, juvenile or criminal justice, education, or casework in a probation, law enforcement, juvenile or criminal justice, corrections, community corrections, parole, social services, mental health, social work or other public or private human services agency.

NOTE: Course work at the graduate degree level in social work, social sciences, education, administration, law, criminal justice, or a related field may be substituted for work experience for a maximum of one (1) year of experience.

PROMOTIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:

This position is not filled by promotion.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Where required, possession of a current driver's license or the ability to otherwise meet the transportation requirements of this position.

NOTE: Counseling Experience involves interviewing individuals and/or families, discussing and evaluating their problems (e.g. drug and alcohol abuse, family conflicts, disabilities) and developing and carrying out plans to resolve problems. Those who perform counseling duties work directly with individuals and/or families on an ongoing basis in order to assist them and monitor and evaluate their progress.

Law Enforcement Experience involves providing for public safety by maintaining order, responding to emergencies, protecting people and property, enforcing motor vehicle and criminal laws and promoting good community relations as a member of a regional state park police or a police force, police department or other organization of a county, city, town, village, housing authority, transit authority or police district.

Education Experience involves teaching a curriculum to students or supervising/administering such a curriculum and those teaching it or experience as guidance counselor, school or educational counselor or instructional coordinator/curriculum coordinator in a criminal justice or juvenile justice setting.

Casework Experience involves activities directed toward enhancing a client's ability to cope with and solve problems and the referral of clients to supporting resources and services. Functions include client assessment, problem identification, development, monitoring and revision of a service plan, motivational support, counseling, crisis intervention, referral to social and support services and coordination of services.

NOTE: Individuals whose duties and responsibilities include the use of a firearm must also complete training pursuant to Criminal Procedure Law Section 2.30(3).

NOTE: The class specifications including the minimum qualifications for positions in Probation Departments are established by rule and regulations of the Division of Criminal Justice Services. These class specifications are found in Title 9 NYCRR Part 347, Appendix H-10, Standard specifications for Professional Probation Positions.

NOTE: This position is allocated to the competitive class pursuant to Executive Law Section 257(1).