



Lemanu P.S. Mauga
Governor

David Vargas
Acting Public Defender

Talauega E. V. Ale
Lt. Governor

Office of the Public Defender

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POSITION DESCRIPTION – ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER

General Description

Seeking an Assistant Public Defender (APD) to provide legal representation to indigent defendants in criminal felony, misdemeanor, juvenile, and certain proceedings as appointed by the Court. Our office employs five (5) attorneys and five (5) support staff to assist with a multitude of cases we handle each year. We are putting together a team of diverse and outstanding individuals from all racial and ethnic backgrounds who are able to provide high quality representation to our clients.

Position Type

Full time, entry-level assistant public defender position.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

Assistant Public Defender's are accountable for providing high quality representation to clients. Responsibilities include:

- Preparing each case efficiently and expeditiously;
- Advising and counseling each client;
- Establishing and maintaining a professional relationship with each client;
- Effective and efficient use of investigators, mitigation and placement specialists and other support staff;
- Seeking assistance from experts appropriate to the case;
- Demonstrating professional demeanor;
- Exercising sound judgement to achieve desired results; and
- Assisting the Public Defender in carrying out responsibilities

Minimum Requirements

- Licensed to practice law in any U.S. State or Territory – American Samoa does not administer a bar exam – a law license in good standing in any U.S. jurisdiction is sufficient for local admission.
- Up to two years' experience handling criminal cases;
- Participation in a law school trial advocacy course or litigation skills program preferred but not required;
- Participation in a law school clinic or externship in which applicant was authorized to provide direct representation in litigation to individuals or entities;
- Excellent verbal, computer, and communication skills;
- Demonstrated ability to write clearly and concisely;

- Bilingual skills: English/Tagalog and/or English/Vietnamese helpful but not required;
- Willingness to interview clients in jails and in juvenile detention facilities; and,
- Valid Driver's License.

Employment Status

Contractor – Minimum two (2) year term.

Salary Range & Benefits

- \$60,000 – \$70,000 per annum
- Monthly Housing Allowance
- Bonus upon completion two (2) year term
- Travel allowance for yourself and your dependents.
- Household shipping allowance
- 26 days paid leave per annum
- 13 sick days per annum
- Medical & Dental benefits for employee and dependents through Lyndon B. Johnson Tropical Medical Center or the American Samoa Department of Health (you are responsible for co-pays and nominal facility charges).

Application Process

The application forms and further instructions are available at www.americansamoa.gov/jobs. A scanned PDF copy of the completed and signed application must be emailed to secretaryofamericansamoa@go.as.gov. All of the following must be included as well:

- Law school transcripts;
- Copy of law school diploma;
- State bar certifications of good standing;
- Letters of Reference (letters of reference not included with application will not be considered);

This is a continuous and open recruitment. Once a hiring determination is finalized, additional instructions will be provided to the successful candidates.