

VICTIM ASSISTANCE ADVOCATE

DEFINITION

Under general direction, coordinates the involvement of victims of crime through the criminal court system to coordinate support for victims of crimes and performs other work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from assigned supervisory or management personnel.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a journey-level administrative classification that performs a wide variety of specialized technical and administrative support work for the Police Department. Incumbent is responsible for managing a local, comprehensive program designed to provide a variety of services to victims and witnesses of crime.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Provides immediate field and office crisis intervention services to victims of crime by interviewing them and identifying their needs and referring them to the appropriate community resources; provides follow-up to assure victim's needs are being met.
- Interviews victims and gathers information to determine their eligibility for reimbursement and restitution by various federal and State programs and agencies; assists them in completing, verifying and submitting reimbursement claims.
- Advises and provides support for victims in order to reduce their stress and anxiety by keeping them informed of the status of cases, explaining criminal justice and police procedures, and being available to respond to their questions and concerns regarding the criminal justice process.
- Prepares victims of crime for their participation in the criminal justice system by educating them on the criminal justice process and the various steps involved, escorting them to court and community resource agencies for assistance, and providing reassurance when having to face a defendant in court.
- Establishes and maintains a relevant list of community referral and service agencies.
- Keeps current and interprets rules, regulations and policies regarding State victim reimbursement and restitution programs.
- Serves as a liaison between the victim and community resource agencies, police agencies, and judicial agencies; keeps attorneys up to date of the status, reaction, emotional state and extenuating circumstances of a victim's case; works with various federal and state governmental agencies providing restitution and assistance concerning program policies, procedures, and client eligibility.
- Keeps current of the court calendar; coordinates victim and/or witness court appearances, arranges meetings with police agents, attorneys and community resource agencies.
- Conducts educational presentations on the Victim/Witness Assistance Program for community groups, schools and law enforcement agencies; answers public inquiries regarding the program solicits

participation from volunteers.

- Attends training and educational conferences to stay current on issue, trend and developments in the field of victim/witness assistance programs.
- Completes forms; maintains case files; calculates costs; writes reports and correspondence related to mandated victim services.
- Performs administrative tasks such as tracking and tallying workload statistics for the Victim/Witness Assistance Program and complies and summarizes program information for grant applications.
- Trains and orients new program staff.
- Provide in-person or over the phone crisis intervention for victims.
- Accompanies victims to court, medical facilities, and provides assistance during interviews as needed or requested.
- Assists victims with impact statements for court.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- The laws, procedures and legal terminology used in the criminal justice system pertaining to victim assistance programs.
- The various community agencies, organizations and individuals who aid victims of crime.
- The principles and techniques of interviewing in order to gather information.
- State and federal agencies and programs that provide reimbursement and assistance to victims of crime.
- Standard office procedures and record keeping practices.
- Techniques used to counsel individuals under emotional stress.

Skills and Ability to:

- Research and be able to obtain the knowledge of appropriate laws, rules, mandates to assist victims of crimes with court procedures.
- Gather and analyze data and draw logical conclusions and/or recommend an effective course of action.
- Communicate orally for the purpose of gathering sensitive, factual information from victims of crime and for speaking before groups.
- Recognize the symptoms of emotional stress and trauma of victims of crime and obtain the appropriate assistance.
- Exhibit tact, sensitivity and a supportive attitude when dealing with victims of crime from a wide variety of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.
- Gain the confidence and cooperation of victims of crime.
- Write clearly and concisely.
- Work under minimal daily supervision within a framework of policies and procedures and independently organize and prioritize work.
- Work under pressure of deadlines.
- Read and interpret federal and State laws and procedures pertaining to reimbursement and restitution for victims of crime.
- Provide excellent and courteous customer service and establish and maintain effective working relationships.
- Be able to use computers and other electronic equipment and be able to adequately use programs such as Word, Office, Excel, Grammarly, etc.
- Provide excellent and courteous customer service and establish and maintain effective

- working relationships with clients, community agencies and co-workers.
- Exercise sound judgment, diplomacy and discretion under difficult circumstances.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

- Two years of clerical or paraprofessional experience within the criminal justice system, or coursework in a behavioral science such as psychology, sociology or another related field.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various City and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects necessary to perform job functions.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- Successfully complete an in-depth background investigation that includes Livescan fingerprinting, DMV check, pre-employment medical, drug test and background check.
- Possess a valid California Class C driver license or be able to provide suitable transportation that is approved by the appointing authority.