

Victim Witness Advocate

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, provides crisis intervention and advocacy services to victims and witnesses of crimes; assists victims of crimes and witnesses in authorizing a variety of services and obtaining reimbursement for financial losses resulting from a crime; provides information to victims of a crime about the criminal justice system; and performs related work as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Incumbents in the Victim Witness Advocate classification receive supervision from professional, supervisory or management staff.

TYPICAL DUTIES

Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reviews, evaluates, and verifies all financial losses and alternative reimbursement sources in order to determine the amount of benefit the victim or witness is entitled to receive in accordance with established criteria under the California State Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board.
- Counsel crime victims and refer them to appropriate agencies; advise victims of crime of their rights and benefits under local, State, and/or Federal agencies (i.e. State Board of Control). Assists victims in completing claim forms for victim services and benefits.
- Provide crisis intervention and emergency assistance.
- Conduct follow-up counseling with victims to ensure their needs have been met.
- Screens application forms for victims and witnesses of cases referred by Victim/Witness
- Prepare, counsel and encourage victims to testify and accompany them to court, giving special attention to children and elderly victims and witnesses.
- Assess need for and authorize referrals to other victim services and/or community resources/agencies to assist applicants/participants in identifying and utilizing the resources and services available; establish and maintain liaison with local private and public resources to provide continuity of services and awareness of designated program areas.
- Prepare correspondence, assessment reports, victim fact sheets, docket sheets, program information and related reports.

- Promote, attend and initiate awareness of Victim Witness Programs at community events.
- Perform various office support and clerical duties such as receiving and logging phone calls, typing and processing program forms.
- Establish and maintain working relationships with other criminal justice and public and private agencies.
- Build and maintain positive working relationships with co-workers, other County and departmental employees, community agencies and resources, and the public utilizing principles of effective customer service.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Knowledge of:

- Methods and techniques of interviewing and technical-clerical case management
- Human behavior and cultural and socio-economic diversity
- Basic regulations and procedures of the victim restitution program
- Community resources available to victims and witnesses
- Penal code and general operations of the criminal justice system
- Office procedures, methods and practices
- Arithmetic to make calculations and process financial records including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and percentages

Ability to:

- Gather, record, and evaluate data necessary for determining eligibility for a specific program
- Effectively interview and counsel a wide variety of individuals from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and who may be physically, emotionally or mentally impaired or distressed
- Solicit and verify information effectively in a wide variety of circumstances
- Assist victims and witnesses of crime
- Learn practices and procedures of the criminal justice system
- Learn basic regulations and procedures of victim restitution
- Learn pertinent local, State, and Federal laws
- Understand and apply complex laws and regulations
- Deal with hostile and uncooperative victims and witnesses who are under emotional stress
- Maintain confidentiality

- Organize and prioritize work in order to meet various program compliance deadlines
- Act quickly and calmly in crisis and/or emergency situations.
- Work fairly and courteously with the public; handle multiple case assignments; and work effectively with interruptions
- Analyze situations quickly and objectively and determine proper course of action within established guidelines and parameters
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing
- Use an automated system to enter/retrieve information and to track/monitor participants through program components
- Operate a computer utilizing a variety of standard and specialized software
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the performance of required duties

EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION GUIDELINES

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

Experience and Education

Equivalent to an Associate's degree with major course work in criminal justice, sociology, psychology, or a closely related field.

OR

Completion of 30 units of college with major course work in criminal justice, social work, sociology, psychology, or a closely related field and two (2) years of full-time experience providing case management and interviewing and advising clients of available programs, services, and resources in a public or private social service, health care, or criminal justice agency.

OR

Three (3) years, full-time experience in a Victim Witness Program engaged in clerical and public contact duties related to interviewing clients for program eligibility and assistance with case management duties such as claims processing and verification of service authorizations.

License or Certificate:

Must satisfactorily complete the OCJP Entry Level Victim Advocate Training Curriculum within one year of appointment to the position.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Mobility - Frequent operation of a data entry device and sitting for long periods of time; occasional standing for long periods of time, walking, pushing/pulling, bending/squatting, driving, and climbing stairs.

Lifting - Frequently 5 lbs or less; occasionally 5 to 30 lbs.

Visual - Constant use of overall vision and reading/close-up work; frequent need for color perception, hand/eye coordination, and field of vision.

Dexterity - Frequent holding, reaching, grasping, repetitive motion, and writing.

Hearing/Talking - Frequent hearing of normal speech, hearing on the telephone, talking in person and on the telephone.

Emotional/Physiological Factors - Frequent decision making, concentration, and working alone; occasional public contact.

Special Requirements - Some assignments may require occasional working weekends, nights, and/or occasional overtime; occasional travel.

Environmental Conditions - Occasional exposure to noise, dust, and poor ventilation; occasional exposure to varied weather conditions.

Classification Code:	
Bargaining Unit:	
FLSA Status:	
Workers' Compensation Code:	
Pay Table:	
Range:	310