

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY
CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Legal Assistant 3
DEPARTMENT: Children & Youth Services

GENERAL SUMMARY: Under general supervision, prepare court documents and testimony for Juvenile Court hearings; schedule and coordinate preparation for hearings; as court liaison, review policies and procedures to assure that the court process and agency are compliant with the Juvenile Act and Child Protective Services Law; perform clerical duties to support court related duties.

1. Supervision and training of Clerks, and SWAN paralegal in their preparation of material and activities necessary for Juvenile Court proceedings, including petitions, affidavits, court reports for agency fiscal department and C&Y Administrator, proposed court orders and calendar entry in the CPCMS system, subpoenas, parent's request for court appointed counsel, hearing notices, filing of court orders with Clerk of Courts and mailing orders to all interested parties.
2. Prepares the schedule of hearings in accordance with the Juvenile Act, CPSL, Rules of Court and regulations.
3. Schedule court hearings in accordance with the Juvenile Act, Rules of Court, regulations concerning children & youth or based on a review of prior hearing decisions by the Court.
4. Review and analyze information from caseworkers, either written or dictated, and agency record for inclusion into detailed court documents. Work with agency staff in the preparation of court documents and ensure that pertinent information is included. Change recommendations of caseworkers that do not conform precisely with the prescribed laws or regulations or where judgment or interpretation is in question. Notifies casework supervisors and/or C&Y Administrator of important discrepancies which may affect the final outcome of a case.
5. Schedule and conduct pre court meeting, which is an intra-agency meeting with caseworker and his/her supervisor to: review testimony and ensure the case is prepared for hearing; review and analyze agency reports and reports from service providers; make recommendations as to the entering of exhibits at court hearings; assess the need for additional witnesses; make recommendations or changes regarding services and court recommendations, based on conversations, reports, laws and regulations governing children & youth.
6. Contact witnesses to discuss and prepare court testimony.
7. Attend court to ensure the smooth flow of activity at hearings. Determine the schedule of the hearings being presented to the Court. Intervene with counsel to resolve case and/or narrow issues to be addressed at hearing. Monitor and assess the performance of agency staff and other witnesses. Assessments of these proceedings are provided to the

caseworker, casework supervisor and Agency Director. Recommendations are made for corrective policies and procedure changes to ensure the quality of court presentations.

8. Liaison with the Court Administrator's Office. Prepare court report for Court Administration Office for inclusion in their AOPC reports. Work in conjunction with Court Administration to assign counsel and coordinate the exchange of information.
9. Discuss emergency situations with caseworker and casework supervisor. Review and analyze any reports available. Make recommendations. Prepare affidavit (report) with information obtained from discussions with caseworker staff and other personnel involved in the emergency situation (i.e., police, medical professionals, mental health professionals, service providers). Prepare proposed court order. Contact and meet with Judge to provide information, discuss circumstances, recommendations and request emergency custody. Schedule detention hearing as outlined in the Juvenile Act.
10. Maintain a workable reference file on court precedents. Conduct legal research as needed.
11. Assists solicitor in drafting briefs for Superior Court appeals. Review and compiles files of pertinent documents for use at hearings before the Court of Common Pleas and when appealed, Superior Court.
12. Court liaison to ensure that the agency is in compliance with the Pennsylvania Juvenile Act, the Pennsylvania Child Protective Service Law, Rules of Court and Local Rules of Court. Maintain open line of communication with Judges, Agency Solicitor, Guardian ad litem, Advocate Attorney and parents' Attorney. Advise Agency Solicitor, Guardian ad litem, Advocate Attorney and parents' Attorneys on general policies and practices of our Juvenile Court. Prepare detailed summaries for Attorneys and Judges. Provide updated information to Court on regulation/policy changes, recent court decisions and changes in practices that affect children & youth court hearings. Make recommendations to address changes or inconsistencies with the laws, regulations or rules of court governing children & youth.
13. Train and advise new casework staff, clerical staff and paralegal in the court process, analysis of cases and in the laws, regulations and rules of court governing children & youth.
14. Review, analyze and interpret legal documents, changes in laws, regulations and rules of court. Make recommendations to C&Y Administrator and Solicitor regarding changes to assure agency compliance. Devise and implement system within the agency to ensure changes are implemented. Meet with state regional representatives of OCYF, AOPC and local service providers to review and discuss changes in laws, regulations and rules of court.
15. Supervise SWAN paralegal staff in the preparation of Petitions for Termination of parental rights, various reports and summaries for termination of parental rights hearings. Supervise paralegal staff in compiling reports and assuring information is distributed to parties/counsel.

16. Meet with parents to explain court process, ramifications of termination of parental rights proceedings and recommendations regarding their children. Prepare Consents (for adoption), review with parents and caseworker.
17. Meet with casework staff to develop court testimony for termination of parental rights proceedings. Review reports and make recommendations as to the need for additional witnesses. Contact proposed witnesses to discuss and prepare testimony. Review records and make recommendations to solicitor for exhibits for termination of parental rights proceedings.
18. Prepare and supervise the preparation of praecipes for Domestic Relations division to suspend child support payments by parents.
19. Oversee the record keeping of all court related activity within the agency.
20. Notary Public.

JOB SPECIFICATIONS:

*Indicates developed after employment

Education/Employment:

One year as a Legal Assistant 2 ; or five years of progressively responsible clerical, auditing, enforcement, or investigative experience, including two years of legal clerical experience, and graduation from high school; or any equivalent experience and training.

Knowledge:

Thorough knowledge of office practices and procedures.

Thorough knowledge of legal forms and terminology related to the Juvenile Act.*

Advanced knowledge of County department policies and procedures.*

Advanced knowledge of department services and programs.*

Advanced knowledge of English work usage, spelling, and punctuation.

Knowledge of the laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures used to govern regulatory programs.

Knowledge of legal, enforcement and regulatory procedures and practices.

Knowledge of pertinent or precedent setting cases.

Knowledge of HIPAA Regulations as they pertain to privacy, security, and confidentiality.*

Skills:

Typing and computer keyboard operation.

Abilities:

Ability to guard confidentiality of documents.

Ability to read and interpret detailed case history notes and extract appropriate information to complete legal forms. Ability to express complex statutes, procedures and ideas clearly and concisely

Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing and follow oral and written instructions. Ability to express complex statutes, procedures and ideas clearly and concisely.

Ability to post information accurately to record.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with fellow employees and the general public.

Ability to operate office equipment, including computer and periphery equipment, copier, facsimile machine.

Ability to sit and operate keyboard for extended periods of time.

Ability to review and analyze applications, reports, recommendations, rulings, or decisions of field personnel to determine possible inconsistencies with the laws or regulations governing regulatory programs.

Ability to apply pertinent laws, rules, and regulations.

Ability to comprehend and interpret legal documents and to perform legal research.

Ability to prepare and to supervise the preparation of case summaries including all pertinent information.

Ability to train and supervise subordinates

Working Conditions:

Work is performed in a normal, but sometimes busy office environment and may involve frequent interruptions. Work may occasionally involve responding to angry or upset clients. Work may involve occasional travel during and after work hours to various training seminars. Work may require some lifting, up to 15 lbs., and some moderate bending, stooping, sitting or standing for long periods of time.

DISCLAIMER:

Classification descriptions are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by a person assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required to perform the job.

REPORTS TO: Executive Director
FLSA STATUS: exempt
DATE: March 2011