

HARRIS COUNTY IS SEEKING A CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER

*****DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS EXTENDED TO SEPT. 24, 2010*****

Harris County, Texas, is seeking an experienced professional to help launch the county's first Public Defender's Office.

Interested candidates should submit a letter of application, resume and salary history on or before **September 24, 2010** to:

**Harris County Public Defender's Office Advisory Committee
c/o Bob Wessels and Clay Bowman
1201 Franklin, 7th Floor
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 755-6576**

HARRIS COUNTY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

HARRIS COUNTY CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER JOB DESCRIPTION

<u>JOB TITLE</u>	Chief Public Defender
<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	Public Defender's Office
<u>APPOINTMENT</u>	The Commissioners Court will appoint upon recommendation of the <i>e.g.</i> Harris County Public Defender's Office Advisory Committee. The appointee serves at the pleasure of the Court. ¹ Appointment is subject to the results of a background check including but not limited to an F.B.I. name and fingerprint check, an I.R.S. tax check, a credit report, and drug test.
<u>HOURS</u>	As established by Harris County for a county department head.
<u>SALARY</u>	Commensurate with District Attorney Bureau Chief – First Assistant.
<u>QUALIFICATIONS</u>	
<u>REQUIRED</u>	

¹ Harris County has an employment at will policy.

1. JD/LL.B. from an accredited law school.
2. Licensed to practice law for at least ten (10) years and currently in good standing in the licensed jurisdiction. If the applicant holds an out-of-state license, he or she must become an active member of the Texas State Bar not later than the first anniversary of the first day of employment by Harris County, Texas.
3. Peer recognition of professional skills and legal knowledge as evidenced by a history of published articles and presentations at professional education seminars.
4. As lead counsel, tried to verdict before a jury at least fifteen (15) felonies not lower than the highest degree of non-death offense.
5. Tried at least two (2) capital murder cases in which the prosecutor sought the death penalty or have comparable complex trial experience as determined by the hiring committee.
6. Authored at least 5 appellate briefs in a state and/or federal court system.
7. History of effective communication with the funding source of the public defender's office (county state or federal) the judicial branch, local bar associations, associations of lawyers who provide representation to persons charged with criminal and juvenile offenses, the media and the public.
8. Averaged at least fifteen (15) hours a year over the last 5 years of accredited continuing legal education or training in criminal or juvenile law or both.
9. Experience in fiscal planning and management of government budgets including grants.
10. Public sector leadership experience including positions involving personnel management, public policy development, implementation, and review of performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of services provided.

DESIRABLE

1. Experience in a state or federal public defender's office.
2. Multilingual.
3. Accredited continuing legal education or training in mental health law and representing clients with mental health issues.

4. Experience in maintaining effective public relations with state and county departments, justice agencies, the media, and the public regarding matters relating to the operation or administration of the criminal justice system.

JOB DESCRIPTION

GENERAL

1. Administer the Public Defender's Office as required by constitutional provision, statute, county policy, and local rules of court.
2. Provide high quality legal representation to individuals found indigent for purposes of the appointment of counsel, or for whom the appointment of counsel is in the interests of justice as provided by article 1.051, Texas code of criminal procedure in the courts served by the Office.
3. Appear as the attorney of record in all cases pursuant to the Fair Defense Act Alternative Plans in the courts served by the Office.
4. Participate in the development of criminal and juvenile justice policy in Harris County, Texas.
5. Coordinate the application, approval and assignment, of *ad hoc* counsel as provided in the alternative plans of the courts served by the Office.
6. Coordinate the assignment of investigators and experts as provided in the alternative plans of the courts served by the Office.
7. Create and manage a system for the approval of fee voucher and contract payments between the county auditor as provided in the alternative plans of the courts served by the Office.
8. Provide resources and support including professional education to attorneys representing adults and juveniles accused of criminal and juvenile conduct in the courts served by the office.

SPECIFIC

1. Develop organizational mission statement, practices and procedures for the office.
2. Develop a strategic plan to identify and implement the long-term goals of the office, including the establishment of office philosophy.
3. Work with the administrative offices of the district and county courts.
4. Represent the office in all communications with other county entities.
5. Maintain effective working relationships with subordinates, co-workers, county employees, department heads, elected and appointed officials, outside organizations, bar associations, attorneys, the news media, and the general public.

HARRIS COUNTY CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER
JOB DESCRIPTION

6. Assist in developing and implementing appropriate performance measures and outcomes and evaluating results.
7. Monitor receipt of and make all case assignments to staff attorneys.
8. Perform other duties as assigned including special tasks involved in responding to an emergency event.
9. Prepare and administer the annual budget for the office and control budget expenditures to meet budget goals and requirements.
10. Develop and implement continuing legal education programs for office personnel and attorneys in private practice representing individuals charged with adult criminal and juvenile misconduct.