

**OFFICE OF THE DEFENDER GENERAL
PRISONERS' RIGHTS DIVISION
JOB SPECIFICATIONS – INVESTIGATOR – PG 24**

Class Definition:

Investigative work for the Prisoners' Rights Office. Provides legal services to persons in the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections, including persons who are detained for lack of bail, sentenced, on work furlough, on extended furlough, on parole, or under probation supervision. Duties are performed with a high degree of independence, but require teamwork with attorneys and other staff members. Work is performed under the supervision of a Prisoners' Rights attorney and is reviewed by the Defender General or his/her designee.

Examples of Work:

Responsible for and performs investigations of complaints arising from custodial, pre-release, parole or post-conviction problems. Conducts in-depth interviews of clients at correctional centers, both in-person and by telephone. Conducts visits to all Vermont correctional facilities on a regular basis to conduct face-to-face interviews with incarcerated persons. Interacts with all levels of DOC staff in an attempt to negotiate an administrative remedy to client complaints. May refer cases to staff attorneys, providing background information regarding any unsuccessful attempts to settle cases and gathering further information as directed by the attorneys to prepare for legal action. Keeps clients up-to-date on the status of legal actions filed on their behalf by the office. Acts as a resource and referral person for defense investigators and attorneys throughout Vermont, and on occasion other states. Assists in the formulation of sentencing alternatives. Advocates for clients in need of special services. Interviews clients involved in Parole revocation hearings. May interview witnesses, Parole Officers, Field Supervision Unit officers, caseworkers, and law enforcement officers. Retrieves and requests records and other documentation such as affidavits, character witness statements, medical records, and prior record information for use by staff attorneys in hearings before the Parole Board. Helps prepare clients for these appearances. May determine the need for and secure expert assistance in consultation with the attorney. Reviews and evaluates drafts of DOC policies and procedures, resident handbooks, and rulebooks. Assists with case management. May supervise volunteers and interns. May serve subpoenas for the department. Performs related duties as required.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

Thorough knowledge and understanding of investigative principles and techniques. Thorough knowledge of interview techniques. Thorough knowledge of DOC practices, rules and procedures. Considerable knowledge of Vermont criminal law. Working knowledge of applicable state and federal laws. Ability to research, read, and interpret laws, regulations, and caselaw of considerable complexity. Ability to consider and identify interpersonal problems facing clients, such as learning disabilities, substance abuse issues, and psychiatric needs. Knowledge of community resources and counseling services available to clients, and the ability to coordinate these and present them in an assessable format. Ability to draft legal documents, such as subpoenas. Ability to prepare clear and concise, or detailed and complex, reports as

required. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Ability to gather, analyze and interpret large amounts of complex data or documentary evidence. Ability to prepare graphics or other documentation for legal proceedings. Ability to make public presentations. Ability to operate equipment such as cameras and tape recorders. Ability to manage a heavy caseload. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships, and perform job functions with tact and discretion.

Environmental Factors:

Incumbents should be in good physical condition. May need to perform strenuous physical activity if required. May have to work long and irregular hours in the field during work assignments. Duties require travel for which private means of transportation is required. The nature of the work can be very stressful, and may create situations of potential danger and injury. Evening and weekend work may be necessary.

Minimum Qualifications:

Education: Bachelor's degree. Experience: Four years of professional investigation work, or experience as required by the Defender General. Additional work experience may be substituted for the bachelor's degree on a six months for a semester basis.