



Lorain County Domestic Relations Court

Position Description

Classification Title:

Court Services Specialist

FLSA Status: Non-exempt

Employment Status: Full-time

Exemption Type: N/A

Reports To: Deputy Court Administrator

Civil Service Status: Unclassified

Division: Court Services

DISTINGUISHING JOB CHARACTERISTICS

Conducts comprehensive investigations, evaluations, mediations, and/or home inspections of court-involved parties and makes written recommendations to the Court. Facilitates and observes visitation between parties and child(ren), as ordered by the Court. Attends and assists the Judge in facilitating the monthly Seminar for Separating Parents.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to satisfactorily perform each essential duty listed below. Reasonable accommodations will be made for disabled persons, covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, in accordance with its requirements.

Completes investigations on cases referred by a Judge or Magistrate. Investigations include interviewing parties and related individuals in-person or virtually, including family members, teachers, or any other person who may have significant information regarding the child. Maintains communication with Judges, Magistrates, and attorneys to discuss issues of a case.

Reviews litigants' court documents and gathers and analyzes other information including police reports, probation reports, children services records, counseling agency records, medical records, and information obtained from Ohio Court Network to complete court-ordered investigations.

Creates written reports to capture the facts and findings learned through the investigation. Makes recommendations for companionship time, services, and/or restrictions, based upon findings.

Conducts home visits when ordered by the Court, and views all structures on the property, including all rooms, cupboards, closets, garages. Assesses home for safety or environmental hazardous and that basic needs are met. Prepares a timely and factual report of inspection for Court.

Facilitates and observes visitation between parties and child(ren), as ordered by the Court. Provides intervention and assistance when necessary and prepares a written report for Court detailing observations during visitation sessions.

Conducts mediation and other dispute resolution services regarding issues of custody, visitation of minor children, shared parenting plans, medical bills, transfer or return of property, and childcare.

Assists the Judge in facilitating a monthly Seminar for Separating Parents regarding the impact of divorce on families, visitation issues, and effective ways to successfully co-parent children. Seminars are held after normal business hours. Provides Zoom assistance and answers questions from participants.

Serves as liaison with court personnel, attorneys, outside agencies, other departments, and caseworkers regarding Court Services cases, policies, and procedures.

Maintains a professional and polite disposition at all times when dealing with the public, coworkers, court staff, service providers, and other outside agencies. Stays calm and even-tempered when handling crises, stressful situations, continuous change, or unexpected developments.

Completes work in a timely, consistent manner and is committed to being available during business hours to further organizational goals. Maintains flexibility in work hours to accommodate the needs of the Court and community. Consistently meets deadlines.

Demonstrates regular and punctual attendance and arrives prepared to work; meets all job safety requirements and all applicable OSHA safety standards that pertain to essential functions.

OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Administers oral drug tests as ordered by a Judge or Magistrate. Testifies before a Judge or Magistrate when subpoenaed regarding gathering of information and investigative methodology used in collecting and weighing information generated in reports. Participates in community outreach on behalf of the Court when appropriate. All other duties as assigned by Administration.

SCOPE OF SUPERVISION

None

EQUIPMENT OPERATED

Computer; laptop, tablet, scanner, copier, telephone, fax machine, projector, and other general office equipment.

CONTACTS WITH OTHERS

Regular contacts inside and outside of the Court to furnish or obtain information and discuss controversial subjects requiring tact to avoid friction and to obtain cooperation. Contacts include, but are not limited to, Judges, Magistrates, prosecutor's staff, bailiffs, attorneys, GAL's, counselors, therapists, school staff, physicians, children services caseworkers, law enforcement, probation/parole officers, parents, children, and the general public.

CONFIDENTIAL DATA

Work involves some confidential data such as Juvenile records and files including psychological, mental health and chemical dependency evaluations, Judge's and Magistrate's decisions, treatment assessments, police records (child/parents), medical reports, GAL reports, personal and financial information, and school information which if disclosed, may have an adverse internal or external effect detrimental to the Court's interest or contrary to professional ethics.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Good working conditions but with occasional exposure to noise, dust, heat or some other disagreeable element. Occasional exposure to inclement weather while traveling to home visits. Home visits may be conducted in less-than-optimal home environments or communities.

USUAL PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The following physical demands are typically exhibited by position incumbents performing this job's essential duties and responsibilities. These physical demands are not, and should not be construed to be job qualification standards, but are illustrated to help the employer, employee and/or applicant identify tasks where reasonable accommodations may need to be made when an otherwise qualified person is unable to perform the job's essential duties because of an ADA disability.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is required to sit, speak clearly and to hear. Job can involve operating and sitting in a vehicle for periods in varied weather conditions. Employee converses with others in-person, telephone, or virtually. Vision demands include close, relatively detailed vision when using a computer screen.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of: criminal justice system, private and public community services and resources, human behavior, Domestic Relations Court system, local rules, co-parenting techniques, interviewing methods, de-escalation techniques, child protective services procedures. Standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation and ability to complete required reports. Complete knowledge of all computerized systems for data management, communication, and documentation as well as excellent interpersonal communication skills.

Ability to: constructively work and communicate verbally and in writing with litigants, court staff, and general public; remain fair and impartial; work independently; maintain compliance with docket time frames; establish workload priorities, demonstrate sensitivity to professional ethics, gender, cultural diversities and disabilities. Ability to exercise patience, objectivity, maturity, effectiveness under stress, initiative, and adaptability. Ability to relate and communicate effectively, ability to recognize when further direction and/or assistance is needed, ability to recognize boundaries between job duties and authority. Ability to take initiative, make appropriate decisions, maintain confidentiality, meet deadlines, and to work in a team environment. Exercise sound judgment, make informed decisions, apply common sense, carry out instructions and independently problem solve situations that arise and require immediate resolution. Ability to administer oral drug tests. Ability to work extended, evening, irregular, and/or weekend hours.

Skill in: active listening, exceptional speaking, writing, and critical thinking. Must possess a high level of stress tolerance, integrity, self-control, and be an analytical thinker. This individual's abilities are composed of oral comprehension, oral and written expression, and deductive and inductive reasoning; Operation of computer, application of departmental software programs, Zoom/Teams virtual platforms, MS Platform, spreadsheets and databases. Basic arithmetic includes the ability to calculate percentages and decimals and the ability to analyze data and present statistics in graphical format. Entering and retrieving data from Court's Case Management System. Communicating effectively with members of lower socio-economic means, and with persons who have various mental health issues, remaining perceptive as to potentially threatening situations with respect to self and other parties.

QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor's degree in psychology, social services, or other related field from an accredited college or university. Ability to document identity and employment eligibility within three (3) days of original appointment as a condition of employment in compliance with Immigration Reform and Control Act requirements. Possession of a valid Ohio driver's license and a demonstrated safe driving record. Must be eligible to drive under the county commissioner's Driver/ Vehicle Risk Reduction Program.

LICENSURE OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Notary Public, State Motor Vehicle Operators License, and proof of insurance. Must complete mediation training through the Supreme Court of Ohio within a reasonable period.

This job description in no manner states or implies that these are the only duties and responsibilities to be performed by the employee filling this position, who will be required to follow instructions and perform any duties required by the employee's supervisor or designee.

MANAGEMENT APPROVAL

Authorized Court Management Representative

____/____/____
Date

EMPLOYEE UNDERSTANDING

Employee

____/____/____
Date