Skagit County

Public Defender I / II / III

SALARY	See Position Description	**LOCATION**	605 S 3rd St, Mount Vernon, WA
JOB TYPE	Regular Full-Time	**JOB NUMBER**	29251-1026
DEPARTMENT	Public Defender's Office	**OPENING DATE**	10/15/2026
CLOSING DATE	11/13/2026 5:00 PM Pacific		

Summary

Skagit County Public Defender seeks skilled, committed attorneys to provide zealous legal representation to indigent clients. Representation may include work in Skagit County District Court, Superior Court, or Juvenile Court. Our Office represents adult and juvenile clients facing misdemeanor criminal charges, felony criminal charges, juvenile status offenses, civil contempt of court, and civil mental health involuntary treatment commitments.

Skagit County Public Defender strives to create a workplace culture that is inclusive, flexible, and supportive of our employees. Our attorneys work with in-house legal assistants, contracted investigators, and professional experts to provide client-centered representation. Attorneys are encouraged to go to trial and are supported by experienced supervisors. In keeping with state court rules and best practices, we remain within caseload standards for indigent defense and provide opportunities for in-house and outside continuing education. A Hybrid in-office/telework schedule is permitted, so long as attorneys are able to meet their court and client-related obligations

Salary upon hire is step 1 through 3 dependent on qualifications:

- **Public Defender I - Range 29 $7,456/mo. - $7,987/mo.**
- **Public Defender II - Range 31 $8,560/mo. - $9,168/mo.**
- **Public Defender III - Range 34 $10,517/mo. - $11,269/mo.**

Progressive increases are based upon years of service with Skagit County, up to step 10 of the AFSCME Public Defender salary schedule:

- **Public Defender I - Range 29 top step $9,915/mo.**
- **Public Defender II - Range 31 top step $11,382/mo.**
- **Public Defender III - Range 34 top step $13,995/mo.**

Essential Functions

Defend indigent individuals charged with a crime or other conduct that could result in a loss of liberty.

Communicate effectively with clients to obtain information that is relevant to the defense of their case, which may include obtaining information that is relevant to the issue of release from confinement or a reduction of bail; to determine

the client's goals of the litigation; to discuss possible defenses and trial strategy; and to provide legal information and advice. Attorneys maintain communication with clients in person in the office, by meeting with clients at the jail, by phone, by e-mail, or by mail throughout the course of the representation to keep their clients informed regarding the status of their case.

Conduct or direct investigation that is appropriate for each case, including, but not limited to, interviewing State and defense witnesses, obtaining records, consulting with expert witnesses, and visiting alleged crime scenes.

Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the cases assigned to him or her; develop an understanding of the possible sentences or outcomes of the litigation, including immigration and other collateral consequences; and develop an understanding of the law that is relevant to the case through legal research.

Engage in a robust motions practice involving research, writing, and arguing motions.

Engage in negotiations with the Prosecuting Attorney to develop possible resolutions to each case that are favorable for the client.

Appear in court at pre-trial hearings, trial, and post-trial hearings, including sentencing, restitution, and review hearings.

Keep abreast of developments in the law and attend training sessions to receive CLE credit and to enhance knowledge of the law in his or her practice area.

Work with social service agencies, schools, treatment providers, or other professionals.

Work with young adults, youth, and children.

Communicate with individuals who lack English proficiency. Ability to speak Spanish is desired, but not required. Additional compensation is available to employees who are proficient in Spanish and use the language regularly in their employment (per AFSCME collective bargaining agreement).

Work with clients experiencing mental illness, drug addiction, trauma, or other issues.

May represent clients in mental health proceedings in the local treatment facilities where clients may be confined, and work with psychiatrists and other medical treatment personnel.

Utilize an electronic case management system to maintain accurate and current client files.

Serve as a 24-hour, on-call attorney on a rotating basis (with additional compensation).

Supervisory:
May direct non-attorney staff on specific projects or cases, but does not have direct supervisory responsibilities.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:
May be tasked with performing related duties. Related duties as required are duties that may not be specifically listed in the position description, but are within the general occupational series and responsibility level typically associated with the employee's classification of work.

Minimum Qualifications

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills and abilities is qualifying. A typical path to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Public Defender I

- Experience in criminal defense or civil cases handled by the Public Defender is desired, but is not required.

Public Defender II

- Minimum two years of experience as a public defender or other significant criminal or relevant civil experience.

Public Defender Ill

- Minimum four years of experience as a public defender or other significant criminal or relevant civil experience.

Requires knowledge of and the ability to:

Perform thoroughly and accurately the full scope of **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS** for this position as listed above.

- Computer-based legal research programs
- Microsoft Office suite
- Court docket systems
- Washington law and statues relating to criminal offenses and select civil cases
- Washington rules of evidence, criminal procedure, and civil procedure in select civil cases
- Operation of standard office equipment, including printers, fax machines, copy machines, calculators, computers, and scanners
- Work with people in a courteous manner
- Maintain confidentiality and follow the code of ethics
- Conduct bench and jury trials
- Read, analyze and interpret legal documents
- Effectively present information and respond to questions from judges
- Define problems, collect data, establish facts and draw valid conclusions
- Function in a self-directed capacity and collaborate well with others working as a team

Licenses and/or Certifications:

Member of the Washington State Bar Association in good standing, or the ability to become licensed within the probationary period.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Work is performed primarily in an office, jail, hospital, and/or courtroom environment. Job may require sitting at a desk for extended periods of time. Some bending, stooping, or light lifting to access files may be required. Public defense by its very nature is demanding and stressful. However, staff members are professionals and strive to maintain close mutual support.

Hazards:

Hazards are those present in an office, jail, hospital, or courtroom environment. A physical hazard may occur from hostile individuals, which may include verbal or physical threats, and threats with weapons. Hazards may also include exposure to germs from aspiration or physical contact with other persons and objects, including, but not limited to, documents, writing instruments, and writing surfaces.

Supplemental Information

Skagit County, as an equal employment opportunity employer, encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply. It is the policy of Skagit County to follow all federal and state laws to ensure non-discrimination in its employment practices.

The statements contained herein reflect general details as necessary to describe the essential functions of this position, the level of knowledge and skill typically required, and the scope of responsibility, but should not be considered an all-inclusive listing of work requirements. Individuals may perform other duties as assigned, including work in other functional areas to cover absences or relief, to equalize peak work periods, or otherwise to balance the workload. Changes to the position description may be made at the discretion of the employee.

Employer
Skagit County

Address
1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, Washington, 98273

Phone
(360) 416-1380

Website
http://www.skagitcounty.net

Public Defender I / II / III Supplemental Questionnaire

*QUESTION 1

Did you attach a resume?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

*QUESTION 2

Did you attach a cover letter?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

*QUESTION 3

Are you currently licensed to practice in Washington State?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

*QUESTION 4

How many years of criminal experience do you have?

*QUESTION 5

Approximately how many misdemeanor cases have you tried to a jury?

*QUESTION 6

Approximately how any felony cases have you tried to a jury?

*QUESTION 7

Have you represented clients accused of sex offenses?

*QUESTION 8

Have you consulted with or used mental health experts?

*QUESTION 9

Have you consulted with or used other experts or investigators?

*QUESTION 10

Do you have any appellate experience?

*QUESTION 11

Have you written and argued substantive motions?

*QUESTION 12

Do you speak Spanish proficiently or fluently? If yes, have you used this skill with Spanish speaking clients?

*QUESTION 13

Have you ever been subject to discipline by a Bar Association? If yes, provide the year and State.

* Required Question