

ATASCOSA AREA RURAL PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE (AARPDO)

Seeking AARPDO Chief Public Defender

Chief Public Defender

Salary: Depending on experience – up to \$130,000.

Atascosa, Wilson, Frio, and Karnes Counties (Four Counties of the 81st-218th Judicial District)

Deadline: August 19, 2022 – 5 pm.; please submit resume and cover letter via mail to Judge Robert L. Hurley, 1 Courthouse Circle Drive, Jourdanton, Tx 78026; or email to Judge Robert L. Hurley, countyjudge@atascosacounty.texas.gov; or drop off at the Atascosa County Courthouse at Suite 206 in Jourdanton, Texas.

Job Summary:

The Atascosa Area Regional Public Defender's Office will provide quality legal defense to individuals charged with criminal offenses who cannot afford counsel. The AARPDO will handle a caseload that includes felony, misdemeanor, juvenile, mental health, and other cases in all four counties. The Chief will be a full-time employee of Atascosa County, Texas. The Chief will carry a limited (less than 5%) caseload. Outside legal work is prohibited. This is a an exciting opportunity to help create a holistic, client-centered regional public defender office from the ground up.

Atascosa, Wilson, Frio, and Karnes Counties:

Atascosa, Wilson, Frio, and Karnes Counties provide idyllic, quiet family life, with kind-hearted residents, amenities within a short drive, excellent schools, and family-centered events throughout the year. We are ideally located in South Central Texas. Our region is an easy drive to Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and beaches along the Gulf Coast.

Chief Public Defender Duties:

- Lead an office of approximately fourteen attorneys and seven support staff.
- Ensure that AARPDO provides quality criminal defense representation that complies with federal and state constitutions, state statutes, ethical rules, and state and national best practices.
- Oversee, and in a limited percentage of cases, provide criminal legal representation to defendants.
- Hire, evaluate, discipline, and dismiss attorneys and staff as needed.
- Ensure that all attorneys and staff are trained to comply with state and federal constitutions, state and federal laws, ethical rules, and best practices, including holistic, client-centered representation.
- Direct staff on legal issues, case dispositions, and advocacy.
- Supervise professional and support personnel.

- Responsible for AARPDO finance, including but not limited to allocating resources for services, equipment, training, and facilities.
- Supervise the planning, development, preparation, and monitoring of the annual budget.
- Submit statistical and grant-compliance reports.
- Plan and advocate for future services and budgetary needs.
- Coordinate meetings with clients, judges, prosecutors, commissioners, and others.
- Represent criminal justice's public defense function in meetings coordinated by stakeholders and community resource representatives.
- Identify community-based resources that support client needs.
- Present to social and civic groups, incarcerated persons, and other organizations to explain, publicize, and promote the public defender program and defendants' rights.
- Represent the Public Defender's Office in appropriate public and professional meetings and conferences; in interactions with state, county, and municipal officials; county and state bar associations; and citizen groups.
- Report regularly to the Atascosa Area Regional Public Defender's Office Oversight Board and Atascosa County Commissioners' Court.
- Perform additional duties that are logical assignments to the position of Chief Public Defender.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Juris Doctor degree from an accredited law school for at least seven years.
- Licensed by the State Bar of Texas and must be in good standing with the State Bar.
- Possess leadership, litigation, public defense, supervision, management, and budgeting skills.

Priority will be given to applicants who meet or exceed the following qualifications:

- Demonstrate commitment to criminal justice and indigent defense.
- Embrace a holistic, client-centered philosophy for criminal defense.
- Litigated criminal cases for at least seven years.
- Tried at least 15 cases to verdict
- Worked as a lawyer in public defense for at least five years
- Managed daily operations for a legal organization for at least four years

Skills: Advanced research, writing, and advocacy skills. Leadership, supervision, management, budgeting, and organizational skills. Advanced knowledge of the rules of evidence, case law, Texas Penal Code, and Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. Ability to motivate, train, supervise, and develop attorneys and support staff.

Applicant must have no disciplinary history (including private reprimands) with the State Bar of Texas or any other state bar.