



Prioritizing love, compassion, and equity over judgment, shame, and division.

Assistant Public Defender – Level I

Salary Range: \$73,500 – \$81,374

Kalamazoo Defender is an independent non-profit organization that represents the adult indigent population charged with a crime within Kalamazoo County.

Kalamazoo Defender operates as a holistic public defender office, employing social workers and client navigators and housing service agencies that support our clients needs.

Our mission is rooted in the conviction that poverty and various forms of discrimination put our clients on inequitable footing within and beyond our criminal justice system. Our job is to be their zealous defender in the face of these systemic barriers, upholding not just the letter but the spirit of the U.S. Constitution's Sixth Amendment, whatever the particulars of a given case.

Core Responsibilities

- Provides court appointed indigent defense services within Kalamazoo County Courts.
- Carries a misdemeanor caseload with supervision from the Chief Defender or their designee.
- Reviews charging instruments, police reports, and all discovery provided by Prosecution.
- Promptly meets with clients and learns the client's goals for the representation and any special needs of the client.
- Determines what further fact investigation to undertake and employs the services of internal investigators or outside investigators as agreed upon with the Chief Defender or designee.
- Determines what legal issues need investigation, researches accordingly, and presents them in the appropriate forum.
- Negotiates with Prosecution and promptly advises client of the status of those negotiations.
- Litigates any necessary and appropriate legal issues, including bringing cases to trial.
- Conducts any post-trial litigation necessary such as sentencing and post trial motions (excluding appeals).
- Maintains availability to other staff members for consultation and education; participates in training programs; maintains current knowledge of appropriate support functions.
- Maintains accurate, complete and well-organized electronic case files.
- Participates in legal clinics held in community forums.
- Mentors less experienced Assistant Public Defenders, based on experience level.
- Completes special projects and other duties as assigned by the Chief Public Defender or designee.

Expertise and Experience

- A Juris Doctorate, with license to practice in the State of Michigan in good standing.
- Compelling references and a solid legal track record.
- Court experience, particularly with criminal proceedings, a plus.
- Administrative and supervisory experience welcome.
- Experience in a public defender office welcome.
- Demonstrated commitment to the holistic model at the heart of Kalamazoo Defender's mission, vision, and values.
- High levels of professionalism, collaboration, integrity, and compassion.
- Exemplary interpersonal skills.
- Familiarity with the communities from which our clients come.

Benefits

- Competitive salary, superior health care coverage, generous retirement contributions, and generous paid time off.
- An opportunity to work within a dynamic, innovative legal program, backed by a County capable of maximizing Kalamazoo Defender's mission.
- Employees' children who attend Kalamazoo Public Schools may participate in the Kalamazoo Promise, which can provide free or reduced college tuition.

How to Apply:

Please send your resume, a cover letter, and your references to Jobs@KalamazooDefender.org