**Child Advocacy Social Worker/Social Service Advocate**

**Job Code:**

**FLSA Status: Non-Exempt**

**EEO-1 Code: 21-1029, Social Workers, All Other**

**Division/Department: Child Advocacy Unit, Social Services**

**Reports to: Director of Child Advocacy Unit**

**Direct Reports: N/A**

**Job Summary**

The mission of Social Services in the Child Advocacy Unit is twofold; to (1) strengthen individuals, families, and communities we serve by promoting safety, permanency, self-determination, and community engagement; and 2) to collaborate with attorneys in protecting the legal rights of dependent children while promoting their best interest, stability, well-being, and positive outcomes. The primary focus of this position is to explore the dependency issues that warranted the child and their family to become court involved and provide ongoing assessment of the child’s physical, emotional, educational, and social needs. This position serves as an active partner in the Defender Association’s efforts to provide high quality, client centered legal representation to dependent clients who range in age from birth to 21 years, advocate in court for the delivery of effective community based services for our clients and their families, and develop an appropriate permanency plan for every child and youth.

The position of Child Advocate Social Worker/ Social Service Advocate requires the management of a caseload of approximately 70-80 dependent children. Social Workers / Social Service Advocates work closely with child advocate attorneys in an integrated team, based approach throughout the life of each case. Social Workers/Social Service Advocates routinely visit clients in their placement setting and consult with caregivers, provider agency workers, therapists, teachers, and other service providers to assess a clients’ well-being. Social Workers/Social Service Advocates prepare a detailed court report and recommendations to be used in court proceedings and testify in court as needed. Candidates should possess excellent verbal and written communication skills.

**Major Areas of Responsibility**

**Administrative**

* Maintain well documented and dated files on all clients ;
* Document all interaction with clients, caregivers, and service providers on CAU approved forms;
* Maintain a spreadsheet of all open cases to track court dates and client contacts;
* Attend and participate in department program, trainings, and staff meetings;
* Assist with the development of community resource information files, share information relative to programs and services with co-workers and Defender staff.

**Assessment**

* Conduct client assessments in their home and/or dependent placements to determine their physical, social, emotional, and educational and treatment needs;
* Collect collateral reports from placement agencies, schools, therapists, DHS, Community Umbrella Agencies (CUA), hospitals, and other service providers to assist with assessment and determining appropriate legal and social service recommendations in court;
* Contact clients, caregivers, and service providers to gather information relevant to the case in preparation for court proceedings;
* Actively participate in case related meetings to assure appropriate services are provided to clients.

**Reporting and Referrals**

* Establish and maintain rapport with attorney teammates on cases and discuss client needs and legal and social service recommendations throughout the life of each case;
* Prepare a written court report for each case in preparation for court that outlines each client’s progress in regard to placement, services received, education, medical needs, visitation with family, and progress of family members in meeting goals and objectives as outlined in the Single Case Plan.
* Maintain a high level of collaboration with assigned and list attorneys to assure effective representation of clients;
* Provide court support for attorneys by appearing in court and providing court testimony on behalf of clients when needed.

**Qualifications:**

**Education:**

* BSW or BA/BS in related Human Services field
* MSW OR MA preferred in related Human Services field

**Experience:**

* Must be able to work with diverse client population;
* Must be able to work well with others;
* Must have good organizational skills;
* Must be able to handle a number of tasks simultaneously;
* Must have excellent verbal and written communication skills.
* Spanish speaking preferred, but not required.

Nothing in this job description restricts management’s right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time. This description reflects management’s assignment of essential functions. It does not proscribe or restrict the tasks that may be assigned. This job description is subject to change at any time.

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