



Ontario County Department of Human Resources
3019 County Complex Drive
Canandaigua, NY 14424
www.ontariocountyny.gov ~ ~ (585) 396-4465

Vision: A vibrant community where every citizen has the opportunity to be healthy, safe and successful

Mission: Provide strategic and responsive public services that are fiscally responsible and sensitive to the diverse and changing needs of our community

JOB OPENING NOTICE

JOB POSTING #: 26-018 **POSTING DATE*:** FROM: 2/20/26 TO: 3/31/26

JOB TITLE: Senior Assistant Public Defender (2 positions)

2026 RATE OF PAY: \$136,920/yr.

LOCATION: Public Defender's Office

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AS SHOWN ON JOB DESCRIPTION

QUALIFICATIONS:
 County Values: All employees of Ontario County are expected to uphold and exhibit the County's shared values and behaviors to achieve the County's Vision and Mission.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Possession of a license and current registration to practice law in the State of New York, AND at least six (6) years of experience as an attorney representing individuals charged with crimes or individuals entitled to representation under the Family Court Act, AND other qualifications as the Public Defender may prescribe.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: License to practice law in the State of New York must be maintained in good standing throughout the course of employment.

APPLICATION DEADLINE / LAST FILING DATE*: until filled

* Last filing date established for an announced exam always supersedes posting date.

HOW TO APPLY: All applications must be received through the [Ontario County Civil Service Employment Portal](#).

Ontario County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and, as such, offers equal opportunities for all qualified applicants with no discrimination as to age, race, color, creed, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, predisposing genetic characteristics, marital status, domestic violence victim status, disabilities or, in certain circumstances pursuant to Executive Law 296, conviction record. Any person with a disability requesting reasonable accommodations in order to participate in examinations will be accommodated.

SENIOR ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER

QUALIFICATIONS:

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SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: License to practice law in the State of New York must be maintained in good standing throughout the course of employment.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is professional legal work of a complex nature involving responsibility for providing legal representation to indigent clients charged with criminal offenses and other matters where representation is required by law, including preparing and presenting cases from arraignment through motions, hearings, trials, and appeals, as necessary. Additional responsibilities include administrative and supervisory responsibilities with regard to a specific area of practice within the Public Defender's Office, as determined by the Public Defender, including mentoring, coaching, and supervising subordinate attorneys and staff. The Senior Assistant Public Defender functions as a bureau head and is distinguished from the First Assistant Public Defender in the scope of responsibilities, which include management and oversight of a limited number of staff, matters, and functions. This is an appointed position in which the incumbent serves under the direction of the Public Defender or designee with wide latitude in the exercise of independent judgment in applying legal knowledge to specific problems and taking appropriate legal action. Incumbent at all times serves at the pleasure of the Public Defender. Supervision is exercised over professional staff and a specific and designated area of expertise. Work may require the incumbent to be on-call at nights and on weekends and ability to travel throughout Ontario County. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative only)

- Assists the Public Defender with the planning, directing and management of all major activities and functions within a designated practice and limited scope in the Public Defender's Office;
- Directs, coordinates, and administers the assignment of cases within a designated work area;
- Provides direct supervision of the legal training, document review, trial preparation, and work product of subordinate attorneys to ensure effective legal competency;
- Ensures procedures are in place for proper preparation of trial ready cases;
- Consults with other criminal justice agencies, as appropriate, including courts, probation, assigned counsel, treatment providers, and other criminal justice agencies, to ensure effective client representation and efficient case processing;
- Represents indigent clients in criminal and related proceedings in local, county, and higher courts, including hearings, trials, motions, and appeals, as necessary;
- Prepares cases for trial, conducts legal research, drafts motions and legal memoranda, evaluates cases, negotiates dispositions, and discusses complex or sensitive matters with the First Assistant Public Defender or Public Defender, as appropriate;
- Researches points of law and rules of evidence to assist attorneys in the development of defense strategies and effective advocacy;
- Assists with appellate matters, as needed, on cases within their assigned bureau;
- Identifies, manages, and resolves unusual and/or sensitive issues and problems which affect their assigned bureau;

SENIOR ASSISTANT PUBLIC DEFENDER

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative only) (Continued)

Conducts employee performance reviews, counseling, and makes recommendations regarding discipline actions to the Public Defender;
Provides guidance and effective leadership to subordinate attorneys, investigators, and staff;
Consults and coordinates with other County departments and service providers to ensure that both County and departmental goals are met while safeguarding client interests;
Responds to communications, answers correspondence and prepares reports;
May act for and in the absence of the Public Defender;
Performs a variety of related activities as required.

Typical Work Activities are intended only as illustrations of possible types of work that might be appropriately assigned to an incumbent of this title. Work activities that do not appear above are not excluded as appropriate work assignments, as long as they can be reasonably understood to be within the logical limits of the job. Jobs in the Exempt Class, the duties are at the discretion of the appointing authority.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of duties, powers, and limitations of the Public Defender's Office;
Thorough knowledge of New York State substantive and procedural criminal law, Family Court Act provisions, and applicable court procedures;
Thorough knowledge of the organization, powers, and limitations of county government as they relate to indigent defense services;
Thorough knowledge of criminal defense practice, including trial advocacy, motion practice, plea negotiation, and client representation;
Thorough knowledge of investigative techniques;
Thorough knowledge of legal ethics applicable to criminal defense and indigent representation;
Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of supervision and training;
Ability to prepare and maintain high levels of confidential information;
Ability to analyze information, appraise, and apply legal principles, facts, and precedence to legal problems in high pressure situations;
Ability to supervise subordinate staff and provide training and guidance, as appropriate;
Ability to effectively organize material;
Ability to interpret and apply legal principles and precedents to new and difficult legal problems;
Ability to establish and maintain effective working and interpersonal relationships;
Ability to provide direction and act as a resource to legal and subordinate staff;
Ability to effectively communicate in English, both orally and in writing;
Ethical conduct in the practice of law;
Sound professional judgment.

APPROVED: JANUARY 23, 2026

CIVIL SERVICE CLASSIFICATION: Pending Jurisdictional Classification (PJC) by NYS CSC - EXEMPT

JURISDICTION: ONTARIO COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

ONTARIO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES