



Office of the State Public Defender
Position Duty Statement
HR- 4872 (09/2026)

Proposed

Classification Title Graduate Student Assistant (GSA)		Department Office of the State Public Defender (OSPD)	
Working Title 2027 Summer Appellate Law Clerk		Office/Unit/Section/Geographic Location Appellate Division / Oakland-Sacramento	
Position Number 426-015-4872-901		Name and Effective Date	
WWG: 2	CBID: E	Tenure: Non-Tenured	Time Base: Intermittent

General Statement: Under the close supervision and direction of a staff attorney, the GSA provides legal support in death penalty cases. Duties include but are not limited to the following:

Specific Tasks [Essential (E) / Marginal (M) Functions]

- 40% (E) Assist assigned counsel with legal research regarding issues pertaining to capital post-conviction litigation, research regarding non-legal subject matters (e.g., psychiatry, psychology, forensic pathology, etc.), and drafting memos and legal pleadings.
- 30% (E) Assist assigned counsel with legal research regarding issues pertaining to non-capital post-conviction litigation and research regarding non-legal subject matters (e.g., psychiatry, psychology, forensic pathology, etc.).
- 20% (E) Assist assigned counsel in reviewing the appellate record prior to certification, review and catalogue trial evidence and documents, review for RJA violations, assist in motions to correct and augment the appellate record and assist in drafting preservation motions.
- 5% (E) Manage and control case documents through use of all manual and computerized systems employed in the case, collect documents and records as necessary.
- 5% (M) Other job-related duties and tasks as assigned.

Supervision Received

The GSA is supervised by assigned staff attorneys and the Intern Committee.

Supervision Exercised

None.

Administrative Responsibility

None.

Personal Contacts

Continuous contact with OSPD attorneys, management staff, other OSPD employees, and other California government agencies. May also include personal contact with witnesses, private and government agencies in states other than California, and clients incarcerated at state prisons.

Actions and Consequences

The GSA performs critical legal tasks, and failure to perform these tasks adequately could negatively affect OSPD's mission to provide high-quality representation to its clients.

Functional Requirements

The GSA works Monday through Friday (typically 9:00 to 5:00). Telecommuting is an option, when consistent with State policy. Business travel reimbursements consider an employee's designated Headquarters Location and primary residence. The policy may be subject to change by the California Department of Human Resources. All commute expenses to the headquarter location will be the responsibility of the incumbent.

When in the office, the GSA will be sitting most of the time under fluorescent lighting with sufficient temperature control and utilizing typical office equipment such as but not limited to telecommunications equipment, computers, and photocopiers/scanner. The GSA may occasionally transport small office equipment.

The GSA will have the opportunity to attend a week of formal training at the beginning of the summer with interns from our sister agencies (the Habeas Corpus Resource Center and the California Appellate Project) in San Francisco, CA, and to tour a State Prison.

Desired Qualifications

- Knowledge of Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Constitutional Law, and Evidence.
- Knowledge of computer programs such as Teams, Word, and other Microsoft Office applications, Adobe, and Westlaw, and ability to use such programs in an efficient and effective manner.
- Knowledge of legal research and writing principals.
- Ability to work independently with supervision, and in a team environment.
- Ability to develop and maintain good working relations with all levels of staff.
- Ability to maintain security and confidentiality of privileged information in compliance with applicable laws.
- Ability to problem solve and manage time effectively.
- Ability to adapt to unpredictable changes in case priorities and assignments.
- Ability to meet scheduled and last-minute deadlines.
- Ability to communicate efficiently, both verbally and in writing.
- Demonstrated ability to act independently and to use good judgment.
- Strong analytical and organizational skills.

Special Requirements

- The incumbent is expected to always maintain confidentiality due to the access to sensitive information and the nature of the work performed.
- The position requires traveling to conferences, meetings, and trainings up to 10% of the time and includes occasional overnight travel. Travel is primarily by automobile but also includes occasional train, airplane, or public transportation.

I have read and understand the duties listed above, and I can perform these duties with or without reasonable accommodation. (If you believe reasonable accommodation is necessary, discuss your concerns with the supervisor).

Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date

I certify that this duty statement represents the current and accurate description of the essential functions of this position. I have discussed the duties of this position with and have provided a copy of this duty statement to the employee named above.

Printed Name

Supervisor Signature

Date