



# WEXFORD COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Administration Office, 437 E. Division, Cadillac, MI 49601 231-779-9453 231-779-9745 FAX

Position Available – Internal/External Posting

## **Job Title: Chief Public Defender**

The Public Defender's Office for the Wexford-Missaukee Court System is funded primarily by the State of Michigan through the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC). The intent of the MIDC is "to ensure the state's public defense system is fair, cost-effective, and constitutional while simultaneously protecting public safety and accountability." The Wexford-Missaukee Public Defender Office has a strong and experienced staff that is committed to providing indigent adult offenders with high quality defense.

### **Core Responsibilities & Duties**

- Ensures that the Public Defender Office meets all constitutional and legislative requirements as they pertain to the representation of indigent adult offenders.
- The Chief Public Defender is responsible for the oversight and direction of the Public Defender Office; the Chief Public Defender is under the supervision of the Wexford County Administrator.
- Directs and/or performs the administrative functions of the office; prepares and manages the office's annual budget.
- Staffs the office; this includes hiring, supervising, counseling, and disciplining the Public Defender Office staff.
- Develops/implements internal caseload management; responsible for working with the system's Managed Assigned Counsel regarding the private counsel conflict/overflow list to ensure client representation.
- Develops/implements procedures for compliance and maintain standards of indigent defense as proposed by the MIDC and approved by the Michigan Supreme Court; monitors MIDC contract provisions, remedies compliance issues; responsible for assembling quarterly report information.
- Assigns cases to Assistant Public Defenders and private counsel at first appearance. Directs Assistant Public Defenders in gathering and analyzing evidence, preparing arguments, filing necessary documents, and presenting cases in court. Consults and recommends course of formal legal defense as appropriate and regularly monitors cases in progress, makes departmental decisions on major courses of action & plea-bargaining conditions.
- Represents clients in court proceedings; interviews law enforcement personnel, witnesses, corrections officers, etc.; engages in negotiations with Prosecutor and clients; prepares correspondence and legal documents; gathers and reviews case evidence, conducts research and reviews evidence, exhibits, reports, statements, etc., appears and argues in court for arraignments, preliminary hearings, pre-trial motions, presents case, examines and cross examines witnesses; issues subpoenas for witnesses to appear, testify, or provide evidence pertinent to cases.

### **Requirements**

- A Juris Doctorate with license to practice in the State of Michigan—and good standing with the State Bar of Michigan throughout employment with the County.
- Extensive criminal law experience that includes criminal trial level experience; experience with circuit court trial experience involving serious felony charges.

*Posted October 16, 2020*



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## ...Requirements (continued)

- Demonstrates administrative and supervisory experience, public defense experience preferred.
- Exemplary interpersonal skills, including the ability to organize, educate, and motivate a team of attorneys with dedicated servant leadership.
- Must be comfortable with the daily use of technology.
- Must be able to deal effectively with people with widely divergent backgrounds, within and outside of the office; must relate empathetically to clients and their special needs.
- Must pass a pre-employment physical, drug screen, and background check.
- Must possess a valid driver's license.
- Must meet the continuing education requirements set forth by the MIDC.
- This is a full-time position that requires frequent travel between Wexford and Missaukee Counties; the successful candidate may not maintain a practice outside of the office.

## Benefits

- Hybrid pension with 5% employee contribution
- Health, dental & vision insurance with 10% employee contribution
- Life insurance and short-term disability insurance
- Paid holidays, vacation & medical leave
- Cell phone stipend

## Salary

- \$84,000 to \$88,000 DOQ

## How to Apply

Applications and a complete job description may be obtained from the Wexford County Administration Office or online at [www.wexfordcounty.org](http://www.wexfordcounty.org). Submit cover letter, resume, a minimum of three professional references, and application to the Wexford County Administration Office, 437 E. Division Street, Cadillac, MI 49601 or e-mail to [administration@wexfordcounty.org](mailto:administration@wexfordcounty.org). For questions regarding this position, contact Janet Koch, Wexford County Administrator at 231-779-9453 or at the email above. **The application deadline is 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 6, 2020.**



## **Wexford County Position Description**

### **Position: Chief Public Defender**

**Summary:** The Chief Public Defender is responsible for the oversight and direction of the Wexford-Missaukee Public Defender Office and ensures that the Office meets all constitutional and legislative requirements as they pertain to the representation of indigent adult offenders and provides a high level of indigent defense services.

**Supervision Received:** Work is performed under the general supervision of the Wexford County Administrator.

**Supervision Exercised:** The Chief Public Defender supervises all staff in the Wexford-Missaukee Public Defender Office. There are currently three staff attorneys, an office manager, and one additional support staff member.

**Responsibilities, Essential Duties, and Functions:** An employee in this position may be called upon to do any or all of the following essential duties. These examples do not include all of the duties which the employee may be expected to perform.

1. Responsible for the oversight and direction of the Wexford-Missaukee Public Defender Office.
2. Ensures that the Public Defender Office meets all constitutional and legislative requirements as they pertain to the representation of indigent adult offenders. Monitors legal developments, including court decisions which may impact the work of the Office; ensures that Office staff is kept up to date on such developments.
3. Develops/implements procedures to assess, meet, or exceed standards of indigent defense as adopted as a requirement by the MIDC, the American Bar Association, and the State Bar of Michigan for competent legal defense services; monitors MIDC contract provisions, remedies compliance issues; responsible for quarterly report information.
4. Assigns cases to Assistant Public Defense Attorneys and private counsel/overflow list. Consults and recommends courses of formal legal defense as appropriate.
5. Directs and/or performs the administrative functions of the office, including preparation and management of the office's annual budget.
6. Staffs the office; this includes hiring, supervising, counseling, and disciplining the Public Defender Office staff.
7. Works with the system's Managed Assigned Counsel regarding the private counsel conflict/overflow list to ensure client representation.
8. Attends court proceedings to monitor staff attorney performance; monitor staff attorney participation in continuing legal education (CLE).
9. Assigns cases to Assistant Public Defenders and private counsel at first appearance. Directs Assistant Public Defenders in gathering and analyzing evidence, preparing arguments, filing necessary documents, and presenting cases in court. Consults and recommends course of formal

legal defense as appropriate and regularly monitors cases in progress, makes departmental decisions on major courses of action & plea-bargaining conditions.

10. Represents clients in court proceedings; interviews law enforcement personnel, witnesses, corrections officers, etc.; engages in negotiations with Prosecutor and clients; prepares correspondence and legal documents; gathers and reviews case evidence, conducts research and reviews evidence, exhibits, reports, statements, etc., appears and argues in court for arraignments, preliminary hearings, and pre-trial motions; presents cases, examines and cross examines witnesses; issues subpoenas for witnesses to appear, testify, or provide evidence pertinent to cases.
11. Utilizes County resources efficiently and effectively to provide a high level of indigent defense services; ensures that legal representation of each client continues to represent each client through to completion of the proceedings unless a reassignment is necessary.
12. Attend meetings, conferences, and Continuing Legal Education (CLE) opportunities.
13. Resolves client/staff conflicts, arranging replacement counsel as appropriate.
14. Performs other duties as required by the County Administrator.

**Essential Functions, Qualifications, and KSA's for Employment:** All of the following functions, qualifications, knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs) and duties are essential. An employee in this class, upon appointment, should have the equivalent of the following:

1. This position requires a Juris Doctorate Degree with a Certificate of Admittance to the State Bar of Michigan as evidence of continued good standing and the authority to practice law through the State of Michigan throughout employment with the County.
2. Extensive criminal law experience that includes criminal trial level experience; experience with circuit court trial experience involving serious felony charges.
3. Exemplary interpersonal skills, including the ability to organize, educate, and motivate a team of attorneys with dedicated servant leadership.
4. Demonstrates administrative and supervisory experience, public defense experience preferred.
5. Must be able to deal effectively with people with widely divergent backgrounds, within and outside of the office; must relate empathetically to clients and their special needs.
6. Ability to effectively communicate in writing and orally with staff, clients, and the court; must be comfortable with the daily use of technology.
7. Must possess a high degree of professionalism.
8. Must meet the continuing education requirements set forth by the MIDC.
9. Ability to pass a pre-employment physical, drug screen, and background check.
10. Must possess a valid driver's license.
11. This is a full-time position that requires frequent travel between Wexford and Missaukee Counties; the successful candidate may not maintain a practice outside of the office.

**Physical Requirements:**

1. Must be able to perform essential job functions with or without reasonable accommodations.
2. Ability to access all courtrooms within the Wexford-Missaukee Court System.
3. Ability to remove books and other reference materials from bookshelves, filing cabinets, and any other necessary locations and transport to worksite.
4. Prolonged sitting and standing while in the courtroom.
5. Ability to carry briefcase, laptop computer and/or any other necessary technological devices, files, and legal volumes to courtrooms.

**Working Conditions:**

1. Work is generally performed in normal office and court environments with travel between Wexford and Missaukee Counties.
2. Exposure to individuals charged and/or convicted of a variety of criminal offenses.