



Victoria County, TX

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| <u>Position Title:</u> | Assistant Public Defender III | <u>Effective Date:</u> | 9/1/24 - Until Filled |
| <u>Department:</u> | Crossroads Defenders (CxD) | <u>Status:</u> | Regular, Full Time, Exempt, In-Person |
| <u>Pay:</u> | \$110,000+ Depending on Experience | <u>Apply:</u> | Email Resume and Cover Letter to bw@cxdtx.org |

CROSSROADS DEFENDERS

The Crossroads Regional Public Defender's Office, a.k.a. Crossroads Defenders (CxD), is a new, holistic public defender's office serving Victoria, Jackson, Lavaca, and Refugio Counties. CxD represents indigent clients in criminal cases ranging from Juvenile Offenses through Non-Capital Felonies. Crossroads Defenders aims to become a model office for rural defense in Texas. The office will leverage cutting-edge technology, training, and techniques to provide the strongest possible advocacy for our clients. Additionally, the office will provide wrap-around services for clients to assist them with employment, mental health, substance abuse, housing, and immigration issues.

Our Assistant Public Defender III will represent clients on the most serious of criminal charges, setting a standard of excellence for indigent criminal defense. The Assistant Public Defender III must live or be willing to relocate within the region. This position provides a full range of legal services to indigent defendants in the assigned felony, juvenile and misdemeanor courts. Primary responsibility to handle the most complex felony cases. Additional responsibilities include assisting in mental health caseload, misdemeanor cases, juvenile cases, trial preparation and trials, and appeals as directed.

VICTORIA, TEXAS

Victoria, Texas is a jewel in the Texas Coastal Bend region, where past and present are perfect neighbors. Victoria offers a perfect blend of big city amenities while maintaining small-town charm. The city boasts a deep history, plentiful outdoor recreation, and a thriving arts and entertainment scene. Victoria also features diverse culinary options, a strong economy driven by healthcare, education, and manufacturing, and an affordable housing market. The city is served by top-rated schools in the Victoria Independent School District. With Houston, Austin, and San Antonio just a two-hour drive away, Victoria is truly the crossroads of Texas. For those seeking a high quality of life, rich history, and abundant opportunities, Victoria is the perfect place to call home.

["Past. Present. Future. A Reflection of Victoria's 200 Years."](#)

[Explore Victoria Texas](#)

JOB SUMMARY

An Assistant Public Defender III at Crossroads Defenders (CxD) is responsible for providing high-quality legal representation to indigent clients facing non-capital felony charges. The Assistant Public Defender III will manage a caseload of felony cases, conduct thorough investigations, develop effective defense strategies, and zealously advocate for clients in court proceedings. This position requires strong trial skills, excellent communication abilities, and a deep commitment to protecting the rights of the accused. Assistant Public Defender III will work collaboratively with the CxD team, including investigators, social workers, and support staff, to provide holistic, client-centered representation. The ideal candidate will have a passion for justice, a dedication to serving poor communities, and the ability to thrive in a fast-paced, challenging environment.

ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES

- Manage a caseload of serious, complex, non-capital felony cases, providing high-quality legal representation to indigent clients.
- Conduct thorough investigations and develop effective defense strategies for each case.
- Zealously advocate for clients in court proceedings, including hearings, trials, and sentencings
- Draft and file legal motions, briefs, and pleadings.
- Negotiate plea agreements with prosecutors when appropriate.
- Collaborate with investigators, social workers, and support staff to provide holistic, client-centered representation.
- Conduct legal research and stay updated on changes in criminal law and procedure.
- Represent clients in mental health dockets as needed.
- Assist with misdemeanor and juvenile cases when required.
- Prepare and conduct jury trials and bench trials.
- Handle appeals as directed, with assistance from appellate attorneys.
- Provide mentorship and supervision to Assistant Public Defender I & II attorneys.
- Participate in training and professional development activities.
- Maintain client confidentiality and adhere to ethical standards of the legal profession.
- Engage in community outreach and education efforts related to criminal justice issues.
- Assist in developing office policies and best practices for indigent defense.
- Performs Other Duties as Assigned

MINIMUM SKILL LEVEL

Professional - The characteristics and duties of an APD III are professional in nature and includes work providing highly developed planning or implementation of professional activities requiring the application of advanced knowledge and communication skills, research, data analysis, client assistance, and/or other activities.

- Familiarity with Texas Criminal Law and Procedure.
- Skilled at working with diverse and incarcerated populations.
- Skilled at drafting complex legal motions, briefs, and pleadings
- Fully proficient with modern technology.
- Candidates should be comfortable using email, text messaging, presentation software, Microsoft Office, and legal research programs.

MINIMUM EDUCATION

1. *Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) (PhD Equivalent) + Bachelor's Degree*

- Represents comprehensive study of the specialized and complex field of law, which requires extensive independent research and creative work; ability to write and edit complex theoretical and informational material; ability to define and resolve complex and intricate problems and to develop corresponding theories.

MINIMUM EXPERIENCE

1. Considerable Experience between three and five (3-5) years of related experience required.
2. Skilled trial attorney, with a demonstrated track record of resolving felony cases.
3. Capable of exercising sound legal analysis and judgment.
4. Skilled in oral and written communications.
5. Able to establish and maintain good working relationships with clients, court personnel, and co-workers.
6. Must possess the skill and ability to manage a demanding and diverse caseload assigned from the Chief Defender.

MINIMUM LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, OR REGISTRATIONS

1. Licensed to practice law in the State of Texas (or immediately eligible to obtain licensure).
2. Valid Texas driver's license and reliable motor vehicle.

WORK LEVEL AND WORK COMPLEXITY

1. Work Level

- Senior level work which requires handling advanced tasks and problems and provides input on policy and procedural changes.

2. Work Complexity

- This position requires a high level of mastery and calls for legal experts. It requires the direct handling of all assignments and problems, including developing policy, procedures, and best practices in the field of work. Work will be widely varied and involve many complex and significant variables, requiring analytical ability and inductive thinking in adapting policies, procedures, and methods to fit unusual and complex situations.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS, WORKING CONDITIONS, AND HAZARDS

The characteristics listed below are representative of the physical demands, physical agility, sensory requirements, and environmental exposures required by an individual to successfully perform the essential duties of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential duties.

• Physical Demands

- o Light – Requires light physical effort working almost exclusively with light weight materials (up to 25 pounds) or short periods in difficult work positions (e.g. moving banker's box).
- o Employees sit most of the time but may walk or stand for periods of time.
- o This is light duty work requiring some physical agility such as: climbing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, reaching, pushing, pulling, repetitive motions and manual dexterity.
- o Sensory requirements include standard vision requirements, ability to convey detailed or important instructions to others accurately, loudly or quickly, and standard hearing requirements - hear information at normal spoken word levels.

- **Working Conditions and Hazards**

- Disagreeable (Level 4) – This position will be exposed to hazards such as close, prolonged, and frequent contact with potentially violent, drug addicted, and/or mentally ill clients, co-defendants, and witnesses.
- Serious mental effort and stress is involved which could result in tension, anxiety, and mental anguish.
- This position requires visiting incarcerated clients at county jails and prison units.
- This position requires visits to crime scenes, businesses, and private residences that are not under County Control, and may pose safety and health risks.
- This position involves legal confrontation of law enforcement, prosecutors, and those with significant amounts of social, political, and legal power. This may result in the targeting of the employee, and present an ongoing threat to life, liberty, and personal freedom.
- Position requires outdoor walks to the courthouse, less than ¼ mile, exposed to the elements

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

INTERPERSONAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- This position requires continuing contacts involving difficult, and sometimes life and death, negotiations calling for a well-developed sense of timing and strategy and detailed explanation and interpretation of laws, policies, rules, regulations, and/or the handling of very difficult interpersonal relationships, including representing the department or organization in policy settings.
- Attorneys will have regular interactions and communications with:
 - Clients facing a broad range of serious criminal and civil legal issues
 - Appellate, District, County, and Administrative Judges
 - Felony, Misdemeanor, and Juvenile Prosecutors
 - Elected Officials and their staffs
 - Police Officers, Investigators, Probation Officers, and other agents of the criminal legal system
 - Expert Witnesses including psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians, and other professionals
 - Citizens, including jurors and witnesses

LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPACT OF RESULTS

- **Broad**
 - The work, by its nature and scope, is subject to functional policies and goals under general managerial direction.
 - Independently manages a caseload of complex felony cases, including violent crimes, drug offenses, and sexual offenses.
 - Develops case strategies and makes critical decisions on plea negotiations, trial tactics, and sentencing arguments.
 - Interprets and applies evolving case law and statutory changes to defend clients effectively.
 - Collaborates with investigators, social workers, and experts to build comprehensive defense strategies.
 - Represents the office in high-stakes court proceedings and negotiations with prosecutors and judges.

- **Primary**

- Major individual impact on and accountability for end results affecting organizational unit, involving dire and serious consequences for both clients and our office. The impact of actions will have profound and life changing results, good or bad.
- Outcomes of cases directly impact clients' liberty, potentially resulting in decades-long prison sentences or acquittals.
- Decisions made in case management can affect clients' families, employment prospects, and long-term life outcomes.
- Successful representation may lead to systemic changes in local law enforcement and prosecution practices.
- Performance in high-profile cases can significantly influence public perception of the office and support for public defense.
- Effectiveness in advocating for alternatives to incarceration can reduce recidivism rates and impact community safety.
- Identification of constitutional violations or prosecutorial misconduct can lead to case dismissals and affect office-wide strategies.
- Success or failure in complex cases can set precedents that impact future cases and local criminal justice practices.
- Ability to secure expert witnesses and resources for clients can dramatically alter case outcomes and establish office credibility.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

- Supervision and Mentorship of 11+ junior attorneys.
- Effectively Recommend decisions made on hiring, reward, transfer, promotion, demotion, training, evaluation of performance, and other duties as required.
- Directly take action on training, assigning of work, directing of work, inspection of work, coaching, counseling, and developing staff schedules, and other duties as required.

BENEFITS

In addition to a competitive and stable County Salary, full-time employees will receive full Victoria County Benefits including:

- Low cost health, dental, and vision insurance.
- Prescription drug coverage and optional FSA.
- Enrollment in the Texas County and District Retirement System with a guaranteed 7% rate of return, 200% match, and a lifetime benefit after the vesting period.
- Tuition Assistance
- Discounted membership to Citizens HealthPlex Gym and Spa
- Optional Group Rates for Term Life, AD&D, and Disability Policies.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Victoria County, and Crossroads Defenders, is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to creating a strong and welcoming workplace. We encourage applications from qualified individuals of all backgrounds. Crossroads Defenders believes that an intellectually and experientially diverse team enhances our ability to provide the highest quality of legal representation to our clients and community. We strive to create an environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and supported in their

professional growth. We welcome and celebrate the unique perspectives and experiences that each individual brings to our team.

<https://www.vctx.org/page/employment>

Please email resume and cover letter: Attn: Brian Watson bw@cxdtx.org