



Victoria County, TX

<u>Position Title:</u>	Social Worker	<u>Effective Date:</u>	9/1/24 - Until Filled
<u>Department:</u>	Crossroads Defenders (CxD)	<u>Status:</u>	Regular, Full Time, Hourly, In-Person
<u>Pay:</u>	\$62,913 & Full County Benefits	<u>Apply:</u>	Email Resume and Cover Letter to bw@cxdtx.org

CROSSROADS DEFENDERS

The Crossroads Regional Defender's Office, also known as 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.

Crossroads Defenders is seeking a dedicated and compassionate Social Worker to join our holistic defense team. This position is integral to our mission of providing comprehensive support to our clients beyond legal representation. The ideal candidate will have a strong background in social work, experience in the criminal justice system, and a passion for helping vulnerable populations.

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

The Client Support Social Worker will work closely with our legal team to address the underlying social, economic, and health issues that may contribute to our clients' involvement in the criminal justice system. This role is crucial in providing wrap-around services and support to help clients achieve better outcomes both in their legal cases and in their lives.

ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES

Key Responsibilities:

- Conduct comprehensive psychosocial assessments of clients
- Develop individualized service plans to address clients' needs
- Coordinate and provide referrals to community resources for mental health, substance abuse treatment, housing, education, and employment services
- Assist clients in accessing public benefits and social services
- Collaborate with attorneys to develop mitigation strategies for sentencing
- Prepare social history reports and recommendations for court proceedings
- Advocate for alternatives to incarceration when appropriate
- Provide crisis intervention and support to clients and their families
- Maintain accurate and timely documentation of client interactions and services provided
- Develop and maintain relationships with community partners and service providers
- Participate in case conferences with the legal team to ensure holistic representation
- Assist in data collection and analysis to evaluate program effectiveness
- Contribute to grant writing and reporting efforts related to social services
- Build policies, procedures, and organizational structures to effectively deliver services
- Performs other duties as assigned.

MINIMUM SKILL LEVEL

Professional - The characteristics and duties of the Social Worker require work in providing highly developed planning or implementation of professional activities requiring the application of advanced knowledge, communication skills, research, data analysis, client assistance, and other professional activities.

- Deep knowledge and understanding of available and conceptual models of holistic service delivery.
- Familiarity with legal concepts and procedures
- Skilled at drafting and editing documents, forms, and media.
- Skilled at working with diverse, mentally ill, drug addicted, homeless, and indigent populations
- Ability to run reports and analyze case data from case management systems
- Fully proficient with modern technology.
- Candidates should be comfortable using email, text messaging, calendar, presentation software, and Microsoft Office.
- Capable of exercising sound judgment and pragmatically solving problems
- Able to establish and maintain good working relationships with clients, court personnel, and co-workers.
- Knowledge of the criminal justice system and its impact on individuals and communities
- Familiarity with community resources and public benefits systems in the Crossroads Region
- Strong assessment, intervention, and case management skills
- Excellent interpersonal and communication abilities
- Valid driver's license and ability to regularly travel within the service area (with mileage reimbursement).

MINIMUM EDUCATION

- *Master's degree in Social Work (MSW) + Bachelor's degree*

MINIMUM EXPERIENCE

- Moderate Experience (1+ year of relevant experience)
 - Experience sufficient to enable the employee to acquire moderate familiarity with the methods and procedures found in common work situations in the legal or social work field.

MINIMUM LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, OR REGISTRATIONS

- Valid Texas driver’s license and reliable motor vehicle.
- Licensed Social Worker

WORK LEVEL AND WORK COMPLEXITY

1. Work Level - Senior

- Senior level work which requires handling advanced tasks and problems and provides input on policy and procedural changes. This position will help design and operate the operating principles of the office.

2. Work Complexity - Complex

- 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. This position requires a high level of mastery. It requires the direct handling of all assignments and problems, including developing policy, procedures, and best practices in the field of work.

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**

- 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).
- Employees sit most of the time but may walk or stand for periods of time.
- This is light duty work requiring some physical agility such as: climbing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, reaching, pushing, pulling, repetitive motions and manual dexterity.
- 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.

- o 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.
- o 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

- **Influential:**
 - o Requires regular contacts with persons of importance and influence involving considerable tact, discretion and persuasion in obtaining desired actions and/or handling of difficult interpersonal relationships.
- The Social Worker will have regular interactions and communications with:
 - o Attorneys and non-attorney staff within the office
 - o Clients facing a broad range of serious criminal and civil legal issues
 - o Court, Jail, and Prosecutor Staff
 - o Elected Officials and staff
 - o Testify in court in front of District and County Judges
 - o Coordinate with directors and staff from local mental health and substance abuse facilities

LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPACT OF RESULTS

- **Strategic**
 - o The work involves setting policies and goals for the department and organization's operation.
 - o Develops and implements comprehensive client assessment protocols that inform office-wide strategies for holistic defense.
 - o Creates policies for integrating social work interventions with legal defense strategies, shaping the office's approach to client representation.
 - o Establishes guidelines for collaborating with community organizations, treatment facilities, and social service agencies, expanding the office's resource network.
 - o Designs and implements client support programs, such as mental health interventions, substance abuse treatment referrals, and housing assistance initiatives.
 - o Formulates strategies for addressing systemic issues affecting clients, such as racial disparities in the justice system or gaps in community services.
 - o Develops metrics and evaluation systems to measure the impact of social work interventions on case outcomes and client well-being.
 - o Creates training programs to educate attorneys and staff on the role of social factors in criminal defense and effective client advocacy.
- **Primary**
 - o 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 a profound affect on how services are delivered and the continuity of office operations.
 - o Assessments and recommendations directly influence sentencing outcomes, potentially determining whether a client faces incarceration or receives community-based interventions.

- o Successful placement of clients in treatment programs or supportive services can be the deciding factor in achieving case dismissals or favorable plea agreements.
- o Interventions addressing underlying issues (e.g., mental health, substance abuse) can break cycles of recidivism, profoundly impacting clients' long-term life trajectories.
- o Advocacy for alternatives to incarceration not only affects individual clients but can also influence local judicial practices and sentencing trends.
- o Coordination of re-entry services for incarcerated clients can significantly impact their successful reintegration into society, reducing recidivism rates.
- o Identification of client competency issues or developmental disabilities can fundamentally alter case strategies and outcomes.
- o Effective crisis intervention in high-risk cases can prevent further legal complications and protect clients' well-being.
- o Collaboration with immigration specialists on collateral consequences can be crucial in preventing deportation or family separation.
- o Assistance in family reunification efforts can have life-changing impacts on clients' support systems and stability.
- o Development of individualized education plans for juvenile clients can significantly affect their future educational and employment opportunities.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

- Work Group/Team lead with supervision of one caseworker.
- Effectively Recommend decisions made on hiring, reward, transfer, promotion, demotion, and other duties as required.
- Directly take action on training, inspection of work, assigning of work, directing of work, coaching, counseling, evaluation of performance, development of 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