

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC DEFENDER

The City of Prairie Village, Kansas is seeking an independent attorney or law firm to provide public defender services to indigent defendants charged with certain offenses in Prairie Village Municipal Court.

All submissions should be electronically sent to Deana Scott, Court Administrator, dscott@pvkansas.com, by 4:00 p.m. on March 15, 2024.

Background

Prairie Village is located in Northeast Johnson County Kansas. The City's current population is estimated at just under 23,000. The City operates under the Mayor-Council form of government with an appointed professional City Administrator. Working independently with oversight by the City Administrator's Office, the Prairie Village Municipal Court adjudicates traffic infractions and misdemeanors, criminal misdemeanors, and violations of City Code.

Scope of Services

The scope of work includes criminal defense services and all related legal and administrative tasks pursuant to those defense services. The Public Defender will provide effective legal representation for indigent defendants facing jail time. There is no predetermined number of hours per week and cases will be assigned by the Municipal Judge at their discretion. The past few years have averaged 100 appointments per year.

The Public Defender is expected to perform all required functions of the job for all appointed clients, including, but not limited to:

- Review discovery materials, such as police reports and videos;
- Counsel clients;
- Be available to meet with clients outside of scheduled court dockets;
- Meet with in-custody clients at the Johnson County detention facilities;
- Prepare for and attend all scheduled court hearings, including plea hearings and bench trials in Municipal Court;
- Assist clients with diversion agreements;
- Prepare for and handle revocation proceedings, whether for diversion, probation or a suspended sentence;
- Assist clients with filing appeals as needed;
- Prepare all documents, motions, briefs, letters, etc. necessary to carry out the above described duties;
- Perform all work with attorney's own support staff, materials, stationary, postage, etc.;
- Be licensed to practice law in Kansas and maintain malpractice insurance; and
- Perform all other work essential to providing effective legal representation.

The Public Defender is required to attend regularly scheduled plea and sentencing dockets, which are typically held the second Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM. These dockets are performed via ZOOM and last approximately three hours, including time to meet with the prosecutor. The Public Defender will be required to attend a docket for in-custody defendants. This docket is the second Thursday of each month at 4:00 PM as needed. In addition to the regular monthly scheduled docket dates, the Public Defender may be required to attend any special in-person hearing/trial settings.

Term, Compensation, and Related Expectations

- This is a two-year contract.
- The Public Defender will be compensated at a monthly rate of \$1,350 and subject to an annual increase.
- The attorney and/or firm must carry Professional Liability Insurance during the performance of the contract in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 each claim/aggregate.
- The attorney and/or firm must be equipped with adequate technology and data connection to conduct virtual court.
- The City will provide copies of the discovery to the Public Defender at no cost. Police reports will be provided electronically. Occasionally, discovery must be picked up in person at the Prairie Village Municipal Court.
- The Public Defender will be notified of new appointments via e-mail.
- The Public Defender will work closely with the Prosecutors to resolve cases as appropriate.
- The Public Defender may also be required to attend and participate in meetings with the Judge, Prosecutors, and Municipal Court staff as needed.

Selection Criteria

- General qualifications of the candidate(s) for the position.
- Previous Public Defender experience.
- Previous experience working with individuals that may experience mental challenges and require unique attention.
- Criminal defense experience.
- Timeliness, responsiveness, and follow-through.
- Minimal conflicts of interest with appointments.

Proposal Content

- Cover Letter: Provide a brief description of your experience with providing criminal defense services, philosophies when addressing indigent individuals and their unique situations, and experience working with defendants with mental challenges.
- Resumes: Include the resumes of individuals who will provide services for the City.

- References: Provide at least three professional references (including names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses).
- Insurance: Provide proof of professional liability insurance.
- Certificate: Provide a Certificate of Good Standing from the Kansas Attorney Registration Office for everyone submitting a resume.

Review

Following review and selection of a Public Defender, appointment is expected to take place at a City Council meeting in the middle of the year 2024.