

# NEW MEXICO JUDICIAL BRANCH

## BACKGROUND INVESTIGATOR (CLASSIFIED)

*This job description is ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY and is not a comprehensive listing of all functions performed.*

### **SUMMARY:**

Under general supervision, conduct background investigations on persons charged with criminal offenses and present appropriate recommendations to the court regarding conditions of release. Strive to ensure the safety of the community and the defendant while reasonably assuring the defendant's appearance in court. This is a full performance job classification.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Education:** Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice, social sciences, counseling or a related field from an accredited college or university.

**Education Substitution:** None.

**Experience:** Three (3) years experience conducting background investigations or a related field.

**Experience Substitution:** None.

**Other:** Completion of a stringent post offer background investigation may be required (i.e. work history, criminal record, driving record, etc.). Must obtain and maintain National Crime Information Center (NCIC) certification within six (6) months of hire.

**Knowledge: Broad** knowledge of the state statutes, rules and constitutional rights governing release and bail eligibility for defendants; third party releases; community safety concerns; recidivism; safety, security and confidentiality practices; criminal behavior patterns and profiles; investigative techniques utilizing national, state and local investigative resources; interviewing procedures; New Mexico law, civil and criminal procedure and sentencing guidelines; court rules, policies and procedures, operations and structure; misdemeanor and felony arraignment proceedings; bail and bond processes; court supervision programs; case management; legal terminology; substance abuse and mental health counseling and treatment; drug screening methods and equipment; mediation techniques and conflict resolution; proper English usage, grammar and punctuation; computer software applications (i.e., word processing, spreadsheets, databases, court case management system, e-mail and Internet); NCIC procedures and processes; Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA); and general office practices and equipment (i.e., filing systems; telephone, printer, copier, fax, and scanner).

**Skill & Ability: Demonstrated skill in** working independently and managing time effectively while handling a high-volume workload in an environment subject to frequently changing priorities and high stress; assessing criminal behavioral patterns and profiles; communicating effectively both orally and in writing with diverse parties; report writing; maintaining confidentiality; establishing priorities and meeting deadlines; active listening; dealing with people diplomatically; maintaining accurate files and records; being organized and detail oriented; utilizing good judgment in making decisions and recommendations; maintaining professional ethics, demeanor and composure; collaborating with other agencies and staff; speaking publicly while presenting information clearly and concisely; recognizing and appropriately responding to safety and security issues; maintaining patience, while working effectively with diverse and sometimes difficult clientele or individuals under the influence of alcohol or drugs; using conflict resolution or verbal de-escalation techniques; recognizing important

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case facts and information that need to be documented in case file or may need further action; acting as a liaison to provide clear, accurate and timely information to all interested parties. **Ability to** be empathetic, impartial, fair and objective with all involved parties and provide services regardless of the race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, mental and physical abilities or socioeconomic status; receive and follow directions and apply relevant policies and procedures to assigned work; establish effective and cooperative working relationships in a complex and rapidly changing environment; read, comprehend and compile documentation regarding criminal background investigations; learn quickly and retain information; work as a team member; utilize a computer effectively to word process, develop spreadsheets, utilize court case management systems and other software; be resourceful and perform multiple tasks.

### EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED

**Background Investigations** - Interview offenders to obtain and verify necessary background information to conduct a thorough criminal history background investigation in order to provide detailed reports to the court including recommendations for release; recognize patterns of drug, alcohol and anger issues and make appropriate recommendations for referrals to community treatment providers; assess offenders threat level to self and others; complete a detailed offender behavioral profile by contacting references and verifying information provided by offenders regarding employment, home, work, and school status; contact and interview victims; and make appropriate recommendations for release and bonds based on criminal history. **Court Proceedings** - Attend court proceedings as necessary and present defendant profile and criminal history information and conditions or release recommendations to the court; defend developed release or program recommendations and challenges to those recommendations; provide release information and options to judges, involved parties and community members. **Administrative** - Document all interactions with defendants in the case management system; maintain current case files; prepare precise written reports including detailed chronological criminal history, conditions of release, treatment referrals and future recommendations; participate and provide input during meetings with court staff and others; communicate with defense and District Attorneys; and compile and report statistical data. **May** - Determine and verify actual identities of offenders in court or in custody; participate and attend conferences, training and community outreach or educational programs related to court programs; serve as the Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) and ensure compliance with security requirements; after completion of required training and utilizing Supreme Court approved statewide policies and procedures for fieldwork (safety equipment, drug screening, field protocol); perform scheduled and unannounced site visits (home, work, school or other location) to obtain or verify background information.

### WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The following functions are representative of the work environment and physical demands an employee may expect to encounter in performing the tasks assigned to this job.

Work is performed in an office, court, jail setting or detention facility and may be performed in a field setting. Work is performed in an often fast-paced and stressful work environment. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate to noisy. The employee may be exposed to hostile or violent situations that may arise when dealing with individuals involved or associated with court cases, disturbing or hazardous court exhibits and contagious health conditions. Frequent exposure to unpleasant situations in jails and when interviewing defendants who are experiencing significant stress, are mentally unstable, hostile, or intoxicated, or have infectious diseases.

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The employee must regularly interact positively with co-workers, clients and the public; work under severe time constraints and meet multiple demands from several people.

The work requires prolonged use of computers. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to perform repetitious hand, arm and finger motions as well as use manual/finger dexterity, sit for long periods of time, stand and walk often; kneel and stoop; and talk and hear. The employee is frequently required to read typed and/or hand written material; and lift and/or move, push, pull or carry up to 40 pounds.

The employee is expected to be punctual and to adhere to assigned work schedule. As assigned the employee may be required to work nights, weekends and holidays; overtime may be required. Travel may be required. Valid driver's license may be required. The employee may be exposed to fluctuating outdoor and building temperatures.

Pre-Trial Background Investigator Rev: 3/23/98, 9/1/09, 4/24/15