



HIGH PLAINS REGIONAL PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE
500 BROADWAY STREET, PLAINVIEW, TX 79072
HR@HPRPDO.ORG WWW.HPRPDO.ORG

RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENT: INVESTIGATOR

Post Date: December 5, 2025

Salary: \$60,000-\$68,000 range per year based on experience plus benefits with Hale County, TX

Job Type: Investigator

Closing Date: Open Until Filled, preferred start date - 12/29/2025.

The High Plains Regional Public Defender's Office is Texas' newest public defender office and the first ever, full-time public defense organization dedicated to serving rural communities in the Southwest Texas Panhandle. Composed of thirteen counties spanning 11,682 square miles, a combined population of 116,050, and possessing the rare combination of stunning natural attractions, all manner of cultural activities, affordable cost of living, and easy access to high quality medical care, shopping, and airports in Amarillo and Lubbock, the Llano Estacado is one of the best kept secrets in Texas.

As an HPRDPO investigative team member you will be presented with a unique and meaningful opportunity of being a significant part of a holistic, client-centered public defender office built from the ground up.

General Summary

This position provides a full range of investigator services in the assigned felony and misdemeanor cases. A HPRPDO Investigator's primary responsibilities are to assist public defender attorneys and gather evidence for use in hearings, negotiations and criminal trials. Additional responsibilities include assisting on felony caseload, trial preparation and trials, as directed.

Job Responsibilities

Under the supervision of the Chief Public Defender and Lead Investigator, this Investigator position is crucial in supporting the defense team and ensuring effective representation for clients. Some of the most important functions of an investigator in a public defender's office include:

- **Case Investigation:** Investigators gather and analyze evidence related to the client's case. They conduct interviews with witnesses, gather documents, review police reports, perform surveillance, and collect any other relevant information. Through thorough investigation, they aim to uncover facts, inconsistencies, or alternative narratives that can support the defense strategy.
- **Witness Interviews:** Investigators are responsible for conducting interviews with potential witnesses. They seek to obtain statements, clarify details, and gather any additional information that may assist in building the defense. They may also identify and locate witnesses who can provide crucial testimony in support of the client.

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- **Evidence Collection and Preservation:** Investigators are tasked with locating, collecting, and preserving physical evidence relevant to the case. This can involve coordinating with forensic experts, photographing crime scenes, collecting DNA samples, or ensuring proper chain of custody for evidence. By effectively managing evidence, investigators contribute to the integrity and strength of the defense's case.
- **Background Research:** Investigators delve into the background of the case and the individuals involved. They conduct research on the alleged crime, potential witnesses, victims, and even law enforcement officers involved. They search for any relevant information that may impact the defense strategy, including prior convictions, inconsistencies in statements, or biases that could affect witness credibility.
- **Expert Witness Assistance:** In cases that require expert testimony, investigators assist in identifying and engaging expert witnesses who can provide specialized knowledge or opinions relevant to the case. They collaborate with experts, gather supporting documentation, and facilitate communication between the expert and the defense team.
- **Trial Preparation:** Investigators play a crucial role in trial preparation. They work closely with public defenders to develop case theories, identify potential weaknesses in the prosecution's case, and assist in the preparation of witness testimony. They may also help prepare exhibits, visual aids, or demonstrative evidence to present during trial.
- **Mitigation Investigation:** In cases where mitigation is a key defense strategy, investigators delve into the client's background to gather information that can humanize them and present a comprehensive picture to the court. This may involve conducting interviews with family members, friends, and other individuals who can provide insight into the client's history, struggles, or mitigating factors.
- **Trial Support:** During trial proceedings, investigators provide valuable support to the defense team. They may assist in locating and coordinating witnesses, gathering additional evidence, and helping with the presentation of exhibits or visual aids. They may also observe witnesses' testimonies and provide real-time feedback or suggestions to the defense team.
- **Collaboration with Defense Team:** Investigators work closely with public defenders, support staff, and other members of the defense team to ensure effective coordination and communication. They provide regular updates on the progress of investigations, share findings, and collaborate on case strategy. Their insights and investigative expertise contribute to a well-rounded defense approach.
- **Court Testimony:** In some cases, investigators may be called upon to testify in court. They may present findings, explain the investigative process, or provide expert opinion on matters within their area of expertise. Their testimony can strengthen the defense's position and help in presenting a compelling case to the judge or jury.

OTHER responsibilities:

- Communicate with the Lead Investigator and legal teams including the Chief Public Defender, as needed.
- Ensure that office duties and special projects, if any, are timely completed.
- Assist in preparing reports regarding assignments and other HPRPDO matters.
- Assist in maintaining accurate, confidential records documenting services and representation provided.

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- Obtain and review discovery and documents provided by the prosecution.
- Research and investigate issues and cases.
- Meet with clients as necessary.
- Prioritize and organize workload to meet deadlines.
- Maintain awareness of new court decisions, laws, rules and regulations.
- Meet with investigator(s) and attorney defenders to monitor the progress of investigations.
- Provide narrative and descriptive entries in client files of opinions, impressions and facts collected.
- Perform related tasks consistent with skills, abilities, and general responsibilities as assigned to support HPRPDO.

Overall, the functions of an investigator in a public defender's office are multifaceted and essential. They support the defense team by conducting thorough investigations, gathering evidence, interviewing witnesses, and providing critical insights that contribute to building a strong defense strategy. By fulfilling these functions, investigators help ensure that clients receive effective and diligent representation throughout the criminal justice process.

Supervision

- **Received:** Will be supervised by the Chief Public Defender.
- **Given:** None.

Minimum Qualifications

- **Required:** Candidates should possess: A high school diploma or equivalent.
- **Preferred:** Associate degree or Bachelor's degree from accredited college or university in criminal justice or related field or equivalent experience.

Preferred Qualifications

Priority will be given to candidates who meet or exceed the criteria listed below:

- **Required:** Two years of substantial criminal investigative experience or related education and training.
- **Preferred:** Three plus years of experience working in criminal investigations related to criminal defense. Specialized experience in homicide investigations, sex crimes, crimes against persons, narcotics, and/or property crimes is preferred.

Certificates, Licenses, Registrations and Other

- Valid driver's license
- Must possess reliable transportation
- Note: This is a non-law-enforcement investigator position. The Public Defender's Office is not a law enforcement agency. The PDO Investigator cannot serve as law enforcement or carry a peace officer license on a reserve basis in any County HPRPDO represents.

Knowledge, Skills, & Abilities

- Knowledge of investigative and surveillance techniques.
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- Basic knowledge of constitutional law as it applies to law enforcement and civil rights, the Texas Rules of Evidence, criminal procedure, penal code, and drug offenses.
- Knowledge of appropriate interview and interrogation techniques used in criminal investigations.
- Knowledge of surveillance techniques and equipment.
- Knowledge of handling, safety, use and maintenance of firearms.

Physical Demands

Typical activities common to an office environment such as walking, sitting, use of computer equipment, creating and moving paper files, operating a copy machine, walking to and from court as needed. Some driving to multiple counties will be necessary.

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; bend and kneel; and talk and hear. The employee frequently is required to stand and walk. The employee must frequently lift and/or move objects weighing up to 20 pounds, such as books and stacks of records, and occasionally must lift and/or move objects weighing 100 pounds or more. The employee may be occasionally called upon to perform acts of intense physical exertion during emergency situations. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, color vision, and ability to adjust focus.

Work Environment

The physical and environmental demands of this job are those typical to a general office environment. Any member of the HPRPDO team is expected to use professional courtesy, discretion and sound judgment when engaging in contact with co-workers, clients, prosecutors, judges, other county employees and members of the public. Attorney and Non-attorney staff are also responsible for maintaining confidentiality of client information and business knowledge.

Application

HPRDPO is delighted to visit with you if you would like to devote your time and talent to being part of a team that provides top notch criminal defense representation in the best rural public defender's office in Texas.

To Apply: Please email your resume and letter of interest to hr@hprpdo.org with the subject line, "HPRPDO Investigator Position – <Last Name>, <First Name>."

HPRPDO is an equal opportunity employer. We offer a welcoming and inclusive environment in service to one another, the diverse clients we represent, and the communities we call home. We are committed to, and our work is animated by, the belief that everyone is deserving of kindness, empathy, and respect.