



JOB POSTING AND POSITION DESCRIPTION

Van Buren County Courts Vision Statement:
We will lead and deliver the highest measure of justice,
with integrity and innovative thought

POSITION: Attorney Referee (Full Time – 37.5 hrs/week)

POSTING DATE: 12/14/2020

DEPARTMENT: 36th Judicial Circuit Court

POSTING DEADLINE: Until Filled

GRADE RANGE: \$32.96/hr. R32 Court Association

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

PURPOSE

The referee conducts hearings as authorized by the Chief Judge to ensure due process. The matters assigned to the referee include domestic relations, juvenile delinquency, and child protective proceedings. The referee provides legal information and advice to staff in interpreting policies, statutes, and court rules. The referee participates in the development, implementation, and coordination of policy, programming, and services for the court.

ABILITIES, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS

- Must possess excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Must be able to operate office equipment including PC, keyboard, calculator, printer, multi-line telephone, and courtroom recording equipment.
- Must be proficient in the use of Microsoft Office programs and must possess excellent keyboarding skills.
- Must be able to learn and use industry specific software and all other software applications used in the course of performing all job-related functions.
- Must possess and maintain expert level of knowledge of Michigan Court Rules, statutes and case law relating to domestic relations, juvenile delinquency and child protective cases, and Michigan Rules of Evidence, and must be able to keep abreast of all changes in court rules, case law, and statutes.
- Must possess and maintain expert level of knowledge of the Michigan Child Support Formula and keep abreast of any changes in the Formula.
- Must be able to accurately perform addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and calculate percentages and decimals.
- Must be able to analyze, appraise, and organize testimony and other evidence.
- Must be able to assess the reliability and credibility of evidence and witnesses.
- Must be able to read and analyze, appraise, and organize court orders, statutes, procedures, and court rules.
- Must be able to exercise judicial independence. Must always possess appropriate judicial demeanor.
- Must communicate professionally and respectfully with litigants, attorneys, counselors, judges, co-workers, and others.
- Must be able to identify and apply appropriate statutes, rules, case law, and guidelines.
- Must be able to maintain confidentiality of court records including confidential case data and federal tax information.
- Must be able and willing to stay current with technology changes including the use of new software, hardware, and any related updates.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND/OR WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed primarily in a hearing room and an office setting. Must be able to lift/carry up to 25 pounds. May involve sitting for long periods of time. The referee is on-call during non-business hours on a rotating schedule.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Conduct motion and evidentiary hearings, contempt hearings, settlement conferences, preliminary hearings, progress reviews, emergency removal hearings, and all other hearings as designated by the court.
2. Review pleadings, orders, and reports.
3. Administer oaths.
4. Conduct legal research, both as needed for referee recommendations and as directed by the court.
5. Listen to and evaluate testimony.
6. Rule on the admissibility of testimony and other evidence.
7. Determine and apply appropriate burden of proof.
8. Analyze facts and apply appropriate guidelines, statutes, and case law.

9. Produce written findings of fact and recommendations for orders and orders.
10. Provide advice to staff regarding legal issues involved in domestic relations, juvenile delinquency, and child protective cases.
11. May be assigned to represent the court in the absence of the Friend of the Court or Family Court Administrator.
12. Participate in the development of policy, programming, and services for domestic relations, juvenile delinquency, and child protective cases.
13. May direct the day-to-day work of staff providing administrative support to the referee.
14. May be assigned to work in any court location, as needed.
15. May be required to work flexible hours which could include early mornings or evenings.
16. May be assigned to occasionally work from home, as feasible, with reliable internet and personal computer.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Graduation from an accredited law school, licensed to practice law in the State of Michigan and must continue to remain a member in good standing of the State Bar of Michigan. Must have a minimum four years of experience as a practicing attorney, preferably in the area of domestic relations or family division matters, or two years of experience as a referee or magistrate, preferably in a domestic relations or family court setting. Will consider other legal experience that provides comparable knowledge and experience.

SUPERVISION

For administrative matters, this position reports to the Family Division Administrator who reports to the Trial Court Administrator. For adjudicative matters, this position reports to the assigned Family Division Judge.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

In addition to conducting hearings, the referee acts as the hearing room bailiff and court recorder. The referee is responsible for preparing all Referee Recommendations for Orders and Orders following hearings. All Recommendations for Orders and Orders must be prepared consistent with the Michigan Court Rules.

Must be able to work with people who may be experiencing financially and emotionally stressful situations. Must be able to maintain neutrality and objectivity when working with litigants. Must be able to perform job responsibilities and provide customer service without bias. Must be able to work independently, but also be a contributing team member. Must be willing and able to travel for training and professional development, including multiple overnight stays. Travel is primarily in Michigan but may involve out-of-state locations and air travel.

Van Buren County Courts are dynamic, and candidates for this position must be able to adapt and thrive in a changing environment. Must be able to work with people who are operating in financially and emotionally stressful situations. Must display appropriate decorum and professionalism with attorneys and with self-represented litigants. Must comply with the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct and the Michigan Code of Judicial Conduct. Must be able to work independently and be a contributing team member. Must be willing and able to attend ongoing training both in the workplace and at out-of-office locations, possibly involving overnight stays.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

The referee is an at-will employee and serves at the pleasure of the Chief Judge.

Employment is dependent on background check, criminal history and fingerprint check, and drug screen. Applicant must complete County application form and submit a resume, legal writing sample, and letter of interest outlining the applicant's qualifications for the position.

Send application and attachments to:

Van Buren County Administration Building
219 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 201
Paw Paw, MI 49079

Applications are available from Human Resources Division
Phone: (269) 657-8253
Website: www.vbco.org/humanresources.asp

Van Buren County Government is An Equal Opportunity Employer