



CAAP Senior Social Worker

Job Description

December 2021

General Description

The Alameda County Bar Association (ACBA) is a nonprofit that offers educational and social opportunities to the legal community, as well as running a pro bono program offering free legal services to low income communities. The ACBA also has a contract with the County of Alameda to provide attorneys to indigent adults and minors charged with crimes when the Public Defender is unable to take the case. Our criminal Court Appointed Attorney Program (CAAP) uses independent contractor attorneys, and also has two staff social workers who work with juveniles charged with crimes. Utilizing a holistic model of indigent defense services, the Senior Social Worker plays an important role on the defense team, providing CAAP juvenile panel attorneys with social history assessments, mitigation for disposition, and means to advocate and achieve the best outcomes for their minor clients. The CAAP Social Work Program aims to reduce recidivism among juvenile clients by addressing their social and behavioral needs, and efficiently connecting youth and their families to stabilizing support services in the community.

Overall, the Senior Social Worker works as part of the defense team by addressing the youth's underlying and contributing social and behavioral health needs. This person:

- Works with individuals who are incarcerated, on a placement order, and/or currently on juvenile probation or parole and who are returning to the community.
- Assesses and evaluates the risks and behavioral needs of clients who are incarcerated at the Juvenile Justice Center for referral to appropriate services including education, clinical wraparound services, substance abuse and/or mental health treatment, vocational training programs, or appropriate placement options.
- Conducts ongoing psychosocial assessments and collateral interviews with clients and their families.
- Prepares and writes reports and recommendations to the Court, and may also be required to testify in Court.

Specific duties include:

- Establish and maintain effective case work relationship with the client, their family and the assigned attorney. Conduct interviews and assessments of minor clients in custody at juvenile hall, group homes, at Camp Sweeney and in the community.
- Identify the multiples needs of clients, including mental and behavioral health, substance abuse, special education, safety and gang involvement, family issues, and adolescent development, and provide psychosocial assessments, mitigation, social histories and/or release or safety plans in collaboration and partnership with the defense attorney.
- Interview and visit caretakers and others, including home, school and community based and governmental agency visits, in order to obtain a complete understanding of the client's case.
- Demonstrate independence of action and perform a full range of duties and participate fully in multidisciplinary team consultations.
- Appear in Court when scheduled, and provide input on client and client's progress if necessary.
- Keep detailed notes of interviews and other critical information about, including but not limited to noting any services that have not been implemented, need to be implemented or are requested by client or caretaker.
- Review probation reports and information provided by the attorney. Communicate with probation officers about clients as necessary.
- Provide crisis intervention and support to clients and their families to ensure that clients are in compliance and successful on their probation.
- In consultation with the Social Work team and defense attorney, prepare written reports to provide culturally competent assessments, recommendations or release plans to the Court.
- Evaluate and recommend the need for further or different services than those suggested by the probation department.
- Prepare and submit timely written reports of observations and recommendations to the case-carrying attorney, court and/or probation department often within time sensitive constraints.
- Communicate regularly with attorneys regarding status of assignments.
- Manage and maintain caseloads and records in a high pressure environment.
- Maintain detailed case notes and files on the ACBA virtual platform.
- Visit minor clients who are housed in group homes throughout the state and at the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).
- Attend bi-monthly staff meetings at the ACBA.
- Maintain current and accurate mileage and time logs.
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

The position requires a highly motivated person who is committed to working in partnership in a legal setting, and with a strong interest in working with juvenile-justice-involved youth who are incarcerated or on probation. The successful candidate must have experience working as a social worker in a legal environment. The Senior Social Worker should be highly motivated and have a demonstrated commitment to working with high-risk youth and their families. This person must be able to work collaboratively and professionally with representatives of the various juvenile system stakeholders (Court, Probation, District Attorney, Mental Health, Education, Social Services, youth employment agencies, and Community Based Organizations), and to develop strong partnerships and collaborations with community based organizations that provide services to youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system. The position may expand in the future to provide social services to adults charged with criminal offenses.

Supervision:

This position will be primarily responsible for working on the most serious juvenile cases, including cases in which a 707(b) Motion to Transfer has been filed by the District Attorney and cases that are eligible for a Secure Track disposition. The Senior Social Worker will supervise the other social worker in the program, who handles less serious juvenile cases. This position may also train and provide supervision to youth advocates or social work interns. The Senior Social Worker reports to the Director of CAAP.

Specific qualifications:

- Education: Masters of Social Work or MFC license required. Minimum 3 years of experience of working with children and practicing social work in legal setting, juvenile delinquency system or criminal justice system.
- Preferred experience: working locally in Alameda County with the Superior Court, service providers, attorneys, social workers in dependency, delinquency, and/or criminal proceedings.
- Demonstrated interest, experience and ability in working with justice involved youth, cultural sensitivity and experience serving low-income, diverse ethnic communities.
- Extensive knowledge of adolescent and brain development of children in the juvenile delinquency system. Knowledge of triggers and pathways leading high risk youth into the delinquency system. Requires knowledge of juvenile delinquency law and procedure. Knowledge of the juvenile probation system and ability to interact with systems stakeholders which include the Courts, District Attorney, and defense attorneys.
- Strong writing ability, (including persuasive writing) analytical ability, and excellent interpersonal skills.
- Appropriate decision making.
- Knowledge of gang involvement, prevention, and intervention with youth and families.

- Knowledge in treatment of sexual abuse and victimization of youth who are in the juvenile justice system.
- Knowledge of violence prevention and principles of restorative justice for youth in the juvenile justice system.
- Knowledge of youth in special education and learning disabilities amongst high risk youth.
- Knowledge of high crime areas in Alameda County and the ability to work with diverse populations. Knowledge of youth and adolescent community based organizations and agencies that serve high risk and probation youth.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently.
- Demonstrated ability to adapt and be flexible with tight deadlines and unexpected case assignments.
- Ability to drive with valid California driver's license, auto insurance, and access to use of an automobile as needed.
- Fluent Spanish desirable but not required.

The position is full-time (37.5 hours/week), and is exempt. The schedule is flexible, and involves traveling to children's homes, attorneys' offices, and the Juvenile Justice Center. Mileage is reimbursed at the federal rate. The CAAP Social Work team will be working in the office at least part time (at 11th and Broadway, in Oakland) beginning in January 2022. Employees must show proof of vaccination; accommodations will be made for those for whom religion or disability makes vaccination impossible.

To apply, please submit a resume AND a cover letter to Andrea Zambrana at andrea@acbanet.org. The position will remain open until filled.

Salary: \$80,000 - \$90,000/year, plus benefits.