

CAAP YOUTH SOCIAL WORKER

**General Description**

The Criminal Court Appointed Attorneys Program (CAAP) Youth Social Worker (YSW) position at the Alameda County Bar Association (ACBA) is an exempt position reporting to the CAAP Director. Utilizing a holistic model of indigent defense services, the CAAP YSW plays an important role on the defense team, providing CAAP juvenile panel attorneys with the means to advocate for alternatives to incarceration and plans for release. The ACBA seeks highly motivated candidates who show a commitment to working specifically with juvenile justice involved youth who are incarcerated or on probation.

The Youth Social Worker works as part of the defense team by addressing the youth’s underlying and contributing social and behavioral health needs. The YSW will assess and evaluate 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.  The Social Worker will aim 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. The YSW must understand adolescent development, be passionate about juvenile justice, and have a working knowledge of delinquency law and the stages of delinquency court proceedings (detention, jurisdiction, disposition, post-disposition placement, AB12).

The Youth Advocate Social Worker will work collaboratively with other agencies to ensure that appropriate services are provided to the client.  This will involve contact with multi-disciplinary systems such as the Court, Probation, District Attorney, Mental Health, Education, and youth employment agencies. The YSW is expected to develop strong rapport with all system partners including community based organizations that provide services to youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system.

This position is funded by a contract with the County of Alameda to provide conflict indigent legal defense services when the Alameda County Public Defender is unable to provide representation due to a conflict of interest or other valid reason. The position may expand in the future to provide social services to adults charged with criminal offenses.

**Duties**

* 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, gang involvement, family issues, and adolescent development, and provide social work assessments.
* Identify community services for clients when applicable.
* Follow the direction of and assist attorneys by interviewing and visiting clients, 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.
* During client contact, note any services that have not been implemented, need to be implemented or are requested by client or caretaker.
* Review of 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.
* Prepare reports to provide culturally competent and safe structured release plans to the Court, and work closely with the clients and families to monitor and assure compliance with the plans.
* Evaluate and recommend the need for further or different services than those suggested by probation report.
* 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 logs.
* Attend weekly and monthly staff meetings at the ACBA.
* Maintain current and accurate mileage and time logs.

**Qualifications**

* BA degree from an accredited college or university in a Social Service field and minimum of two years of direct professional experience working with children in a related field or equivalent experience. A Master’s Degree in a related field (e.g. MSW, MFT, etc.) is highly preferred. Professional case management experience in the field desirable.
* Demonstrated interest, experience and ability in working with justice involved youth, cultural sensitivity and experience serving low-income, diverse ethnic communities.
* Experience in the adult or juvenile criminal justice system.
* 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.
* Fluent Spanish desirable but not required.
* 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 of 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.

Position is 37.5 per week, though the schedule is flexible, and involves traveling to children's homes, attorneys' offices, and Juvenile Hall. Mileage is reimbursed at the federal rate. To apply, please submit a resume AND a cover letter to Andrea Zambrana (andrea@acbanet.org).

**Salary**: $68,000-$70,000 per year. Medical, dental, and vision benefits available.