County of Santa Cruz

INVITES YOU TO APPLY FOR:



PUBLIC DEFENDER - INVESTIGATOR III

Supplemental Questionnaire Required

Open and Promotional
Bilingual (English/Spanish) Encouraged to Apply

Job # 26-DJ8-01
Salary: $10,244 – 13,090 / Month
Closing Date: Friday, December 4, 2026

County Equity Statement

Equity in action in Santa Cruz County is a transformative process that embraces individuals of every status, providing unwavering support, dignity, and compassion.
Through this commitment, the County ensures intentional opportunities and access, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive and belong.

THE OPPORTUNITY: The Santa Cruz County Public Defender's Office is seeking an experienced Public Defender Investigator to play a vital role in ensuring that every client receives a thorough, independent, and effective defense. This is an opportunity to put your investigative expertise to work in a meaningful way, contributing directly to the pursuit of justice and the protection of individual rights.

Working on interdisciplinary defense teams with attorneys and social workers, you will lead and conduct investigations involving complex, sensitive, and high-profile criminal and civil matters. From interviewing witnesses and locating evidence to analyzing investigative findings and developing compelling courtroom presentations, your work will help uncover the full story and ensure that important facts are not overlooked in both misdemeanor and felony cases.

THE REQUIREMENTS: Any combination of education and experience which would provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Two years of college course work in accounting, criminal justice, system analysis or related field **AND** One year of experience performing duties comparable to the Santa Cruz County Public Defender Investigator II class that included investigation of difficult and sensitive felony and misdemeanor cases referred to the Public Defender's Office.

OR

Two years of college course work in accounting, criminal justice, system analysis or related field **AND** five years of experience in law enforcement or investigative work that included the investigation of suspected criminal activities.

Possession of a California Private Investigator License is highly recommended.

Special Requirements/Conditions: License/Certification Requirement: Possession of a valid California Class C Driver License.

Fingerprint/Background Investigation: At a minimum, this process will include fingerprinting and is subject to additional background standards established by appointing authority.

Special Working Conditions: Possibility of exposure to bodily injury, heights *(such as roofs of buildings)*, areas containing free silica or asbestos dust, toxic fumes, offensive odors, explosives, electrical hazards, infections which may cause chronic disease or death, and hostile and/or combative persons.

Other Special Requirements: Availability to work a flexible schedule, including evenings, weekends, holidays and on an emergency, as needed basis.

To see the full job specification, including knowledge and abilities, please click below: https://www.jobapscloud.com/SCRUZ/specs/classspecdisplay.asp?ClassNumber=DJ8

THE EXAMINATION: Your application and supplemental questionnaire will be reviewed to determine if you have met the education, experience, training and/or licensing requirements as stated on the job announcement. If you meet these criteria and are one of the best qualified, you may be required to compete in any combination of written, oral and/or performance examinations or a competitive evaluation of training and experience as described on your application and supplemental questionnaire. You must pass all components of the examination to be placed on the eligible list. The examination may be eliminated if there are ten or fewer qualified applicants. If the eligible list is established without the administration of the announced examination, the life of the eligible list will be six months and your overall score will be based upon an evaluation of your application and supplemental questionnaire. If

during those six months it is necessary to administer another examination for this job class, you will be invited to take the examination to remain on the eligible list.

HOW TO APPLY: Apply online at **www.santacruzcountyjobs.com** or mail/bring an application and supplemental questionnaire to: Santa Cruz County Human Resources Department, 701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. For information, call (831) 454-2600. Hearing Impaired TDD/TTY: 711. Applications will meet the final filing date if received: 1) in the Human Resources Department by 5:00 p.m. on the final filing date, 2) submitted online before midnight of the final filing date.

Women, people of color and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply. If you have a disability that requires test accommodation, please call (831) 454-2600.

To comply with the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, Santa Cruz County verifies that all new employees are either U.S. citizens or persons authorized to work in the U.S.

PUBLIC DEFENDER INVESTIGATOR III - SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The supplemental questions are designed specifically for this recruitment. Applications received without the required supplemental information will be screened out of the selection process. **Employment experiences referred to in your response must also be included in the Employment History section of the application.**

NOTE: Please answer the questions below as completely and thoroughly as possible, as your answers may be used to assess your qualifications for movement to the next step in the recruitment process.

1. Describe your work experience interacting with the public. Include interviewing and record keeping experience.

2. Describe your experience working in investigative work. Please include your role and the number of years of experience in each area.

3. Describe the most difficult and sensitive felony and/or misdemeanor case you have investigated.

4. How many misdemeanor cases have you investigated?

5. How many felony cases have you investigated?

6. Do you possess a Private Investigator License?

7. Describe your lead worker experience and specifically include details about any lead worker experience as it relates to investigation work.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

ANNUAL LEAVE - 22 days first year of service, increasing to 37 days after 15 years of service. Available for vacation and/or sick leave.

HOLIDAYS - 14 paid holidays per year.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE – Employee can take 5 days- County pays 3 days in California, 5 days paid out-of-state.

MEDICAL PLAN - The County contracts with CalPERS for a variety of medical plans. For most plans, County contributions pay a majority of the premiums for employees and eligible dependents.

DENTAL PLAN - County pays for employee and eligible dependent coverage.

VISION PLAN - County pays for employee coverage. Employee may purchase eligible dependent coverage.

RETIREMENT - Pension formula 2% at age 60 or 2% at age 62 as determined based on provisions of the CA Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013(PEPRA). Pension benefit determined by final average compensation of three years. County participates in Social Security.

LIFE INSURANCE - County paid $20,000 term policy. Employee may purchase additional life insurance.

DISABILITY INSURANCE - Employees in the General Representation Unit participate in the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program. This program is funded 100% by employee payroll deductions.

DEPENDENT-CARE PLAN - Employees who make contributions for child or dependent care may elect to have their contributions made utilizing "pre-tax dollars."

H-CARE PLAN - Employees who pay a County medical premium may elect this pre-tax program.

HEALTH CARE FLEXIBLE SPENDING ALLOWANCE (HCFSA) - Employees may elect this pre-tax program to cover qualifying health care expenses.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION - A deferred compensation plan is available to employees.

NOTE: The provisions of this bulletin do not constitute an expressed or implied contract.

County of Santa Cruz

www.santacruzcountyjobs.com

LIVE Here **WORK Here** **PLAY Here**

EM 11/26