

VICTIM/ WITNESS SERVICES SPECIALIST I/II**Definition:**

Under direction, performs specialized work in providing a variety of supportive services to victims and witnesses of crime through the Kern County Victim/ Witness Program.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The Victim/ Witness Services Specialist I/II classification incorporates entry-level through journey level specialists who work with minimum supervision. Incumbents perform outreach and advocacy services; needs assessments; assist with completing and submitting forms; make referrals for services; and manage a caseload. Advancement between levels I and II is considered on a merit basis and is subject to recommendation of the Department Head and approval by the Director of Personnel.

Victim/ Witness Services Specialist I: This is the entry level of the Victim/ Witness Services Specialist classification series. Victim/ Witness Services Specialist I incumbents provide entry-level supportive services to victims and witnesses of crime through the Kern County Victim/ Witness Program. Incumbents work with less independence and discretion than Victim/ Witness Services Specialist II's and are not expected to perform at the same skill level.

Victim/ Witness Services Specialist II: This is the journey level of the Victim/ Witness Services Specialist classification series. The Victim/ Witness Services Specialist II is distinguished from the Victim/ Witness Services Specialist I by its program interpretation knowledge and lead level responsibilities.

Essential Functions:

- Provides crisis intervention and emergency assistance by making immediate assessment of needs and makes referrals to other community resources.
- Assists with applications for State victim assistance compensation by obtaining necessary information and documents, filling out and processing necessary forms and following the case through payment of bills; coordinates with victims, services providers, and the California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board.
- Orients victims and witnesses to the criminal justice system by explaining procedures and status of criminal proceedings or cases; provides court support to victims and witnesses.
- Acts as an advocate for victims and witnesses to ensure their needs are addressed within the community and criminal justice system; confers with law enforcement officials and prosecutors on the status of cases; assists with the preparation of temporary restraining orders, reimbursement claims, and other processes designed to assist and protect the rights of victims and witnesses.
- Provides support to victims, witnesses, and family during interviews with law enforcement officers, attorneys, and court personnel; explains criminal justice system and victim rights.
- Provides victims and witnesses with follow-up contacts relating to case status/disposition information such as charge filed, status of criminal proceedings, terms and conditions of probation, parole hearings, and release date.

- Initiates and maintains case logs, documents case activities, maintains computer and other record keeping systems.
- Assists with the design and production of informational fliers, brochures, and posters relating to the Kern County Victim/ Witness Program.
- Work with law enforcement and community groups to educate them on the Kern County Victim/ Witness Program and to develop resources for use within the program.
- Compiles narrative and statistical data and summaries.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Employment Standards:

Level I: Completion of 30 semester or 45 quarter units of college course work in psychology, sociology, criminal justice, criminology, victimology, child development, human relations or a related field.

OR One(1) year of experience in a field related to victim services, community social service programs/ projects, or criminal justice related work.

Level II: 60 semester or 90 quarter units of college course work with an emphasis in sociology, psychology, criminal justice, victimology, or a related field, AND one (1) year of experience as described above.

OR Three (3) years experience of the stated experience.

OR One (1) year of experience as a Kern County Victim/ Witness Specialist I.

Qualifying related work experience may include: verifying documents to determine eligibility for benefits, social services or employment; conducting needs assessments; making referrals for services; interviewing clients; and providing program information to the public.

Volunteer experience may be qualifying if confirmed in writing from a recognized organization.

Additional Requirements:

Possession of a valid California Driver's License.

Employment is conditional on the successful completion of a background investigation performed by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

Knowledge of: criminal justice system, crisis intervention practices, interviewing, community resources, violent crime victimization, victims' rights and advocacy techniques; basic case record-keeping practices.

Ability to: communicate effectively with victims, defendants, witnesses, and the public; coordinate and maintain effective working relationships with various agencies and individuals; identify and seek out people who may qualify for victim assistance; interpret and explain procedures and processes; maintain confidentiality of sensitive information; work in an environment providing support to victims and witnesses of various and/ or violent crimes; work effectively in crisis situations; provide crisis intervention to victims of various crimes; prepare and make public presentations; use a computer and related software applications; and collect, interpret, and evaluate case-related data.

All Kern County employees are designated “Disaster Service Workers” through state and local laws (CA Government Code Sec. 3100-3109 and Ordinance Code Title 2- Administration, Ch. 2.66 Emergency Services.) As Disaster Service Workers, all County employees are expected to remain at work, or to report for work as soon as practicable following a significant emergency or disaster.

New
June 2013
0894/0893
JS0894