

**UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM  
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

**CLASS CODE: 99-22-61**

**POSITION PURPOSE**

Manages the Court Improvement Program (CIP) grant and activities to accomplish grant objectives and the CIP strategic plan to facilitate continuation of the program which has significant relevance to the state court system and the child welfare system, and has national implications.

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURE**

The Court Improvement Program Coordinator is accountable for the successful completion of CIP grant applications which benefits the Unified Judicial System (UJS), child welfare communities, state agencies who are related to the foster care system, and Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

**MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

Note: The duties listed are typical examples of work performed by positions in this job classification. Not all duties are included, nor is the list exclusive.

1. Writes the CIP grants – basic, training, and data – along with a budget and a strategic plan in accordance with grant instructions and requirements, and oversees implementation of strategic plan goals.
  - a. Hosts UJS-sponsored conferences and trainings for judges, attorneys, and child-welfare community members.
  - b. Collects and analyzes data from UJS, Departments of Social Services and Education, and CASA programs as it relates to children in the foster care system.
  - c. Uses data analyses to determine areas of the court to improve safety outcomes for children in foster care and to improve timeliness to permanency.
  - d. Processes CASA grant applications for CIP basic funds annually, and CIP training and data grant funds on an ongoing basis.
  - e. Processes CASA grant applications for annual SD CASA Commission grants.
  - f. Prepares agendas, participates in, and maintains minutes for the CIP Committee meetings and SD CASA Commission's annual meeting and any subsequent meetings.
  - g. Attends annual CIP grantees' meeting and other meetings, trainings, and conferences.
  - h. Conducts annual case file reviews and CASA program site visits, and submits reports on findings.
  - i. Stays current with federal and state child welfare laws and applies them to CIP-sponsored materials, e.g., professional reference guides, brochures, and SD Guidelines for Judicial Process of Child Abuse and Neglect Cases.

## **COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

2. Serves as the state liaison for national CASA and local CASA programs by providing organization, training opportunities, technical assistance, and support.
  - a. Organizes and leads meetings with local CASA programs.
  - b. Attends the annual national CASA conference state director meeting and monthly state director conference calls.
  - c. Conducts on-site quality assurance visits to local CASA programs and board meetings.
  - d. Collects, reviews, reports, and distributes programmatic data, reports, and publications for use in strategic planning, grant writing, community awareness, and volunteer recruitment.
  - e. Assists local programs with volunteer recruitment and training efforts.
  - f. Provides technical assistance in local program expansion and new program development.
  - g. Provides information on potential grant opportunities and local program grant applications.
3. Serves as a central point of contact for clerks of court conducting record searches and record merges, and provides technical support to clerks in performing their duties and providing accurate service to the public.
  - a. Answers clerks' questions with regard to record searches and merges.
  - b. Sets up new search firm accounts and maintains search firm account information.
  - c. Conducts no-fee record searches as needed to assist clerks with backlogs, and maintains own customer accounts.
  - d. Answers questions from search firms and sends them information if requested.
  - e. Sends recommendations to search firms for streamlining search processes.
  - f. Sets rotation calendar for merge center folder.
  - g. Conducts record merges, as needed.
  - h. Meets with clerks to discuss concerns and brainstorm solutions.
4. Serves as the contact for Public Access Record Search (PARS) support folder.
  - a. Ensures emails to the PARS support folder are answered in a timely manner.
  - b. Ensures clerk staff assigned to PARS support folder are available to reply to emails, in the PARS support folder.
  - c. Identifies and submits issues or concerns with the PARS system to the UJS IT department.
5. Provides the Information and Technology (IT) department information on child abuse cases to improve and adjust the system.
  - a. Identifies statistical reports in the case management system in conjunction with the I/T staff and Policy and Legal Services.
  - b. Finds work-around reports to meet statistical reporting needs.
  - c. Tests newly built reports.
  - d. Follows up on reporting issues, test cases, and system functions and reports accordingly on the fixes and issues.
  - e. Assists UJS I/T help desk with abuse and neglect case-specific issues in the case management system.
6. Performs other work as assigned.

## **COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

### **SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS**

This position does not supervise staff.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS REQUIRE**

General physical functions of sitting, standing, lifting, and driving; attendance in accordance with rules and policies; travel to attend meetings, trainings, and conferences; use of office equipment such as computers, telephones, etc. The incumbent must understand and interpret complex grant guidelines and integrate them into a strategic plan and annual report; analyze data from various sources and use the results to improve program effectiveness; fairly evaluate applications for, and award, grant funds; organize meetings, trainings, and conferences; understand and apply record search procedures; and understand and apply community-based voucher processes.

### **PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES**

Challenges include remaining current on grant mandates, standards, and opportunities; program instructions; and required timelines for reports. This is challenging because of the diversity of the grant, the broad scope of activities and stakeholders involved, and the potential for loss of funding for failing to comply with guidelines. Further challenged to understand how computer systems are developed and programmed to ensure that system processes and tools accommodate the business reporting requirements of case management.

Problems encountered include setting committee meetings to meet the majority of the members' schedules; securing quality presenters for conferences and trainings; identifying and resolving issues between search firms and clerks of court; and quickly changing thought processes from CIP grant duties to case management computer system duties to record search duties.

### **DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY**

Decisions include whether CASA grant applications meet requirements and whether to accept or reject them; daily working decisions on the CIP grant program; resolving record search issues such as assigning search firms to search centers, changing a search firm's search center, etc.; advising firms to streamline search processes; instructing clerks of court in solving ongoing search problems; determining whether records should be merged into one record; determining whether converted case data information is accurate, if converted case data information is not converted correctly, what should the converted case data information look like, and reporting errors and noting priority levels for correction.

Decisions referred include CIP program policy; other policy and legal issues; final approval to move search firms; system programming; and complex issues related to record searches processes.

### **CONTACT WITH OTHERS and PURPOSE**

## **COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

Regular contact with federal program specialist, Circuit Judges and staff, Tribal Court Judges and staff, state department secretaries, state program directors and staff, national CASA program staff, local CASA program directors and staff, State's Attorneys and staff, and community members and stakeholders regarding the CIP grants, goals, and reports; with clerks of court, deputy clerks of court, and circuit court administrators regarding search issues; and with the I/T director and staff regarding case management system development and testing.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

The incumbent works in a typical office environment; in-state and out-of-state travel is required to attend meetings, trainings, and conferences.

### **COMPETENCIES/QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT**

#### **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

Knowledge of:

- grant management - application, planning, allocation, monitoring, reporting, etc.;
- the court system in general;
- policies and procedures relating to record searches;
- child welfare systems;
- business practices recorded and reported electronically.

Skill in:

- problem-solving;
- multi-tasking;
- diplomacy.

Ability to:

- plan and organize activities, both short- and long-term, to reach established goals;
- establish and maintain effective working relationships with a wide range of people;
- research and analyze available information and make difficult decisions;
- make daily informed decisions based on knowledge acquired and ongoing;
- communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

#### **Education:**

Bachelor's degree in human services, criminal justice, psychology, or a related field.

#### **Experience:**

Two (2) years of experience in legal or court systems, child welfare, or a related field; or an equivalent combination of related education and experience.