

**UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM  
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**COURT CLERK MAGISTRATE III**

**CLASS CODE: 99-12-13**

**POSITION PURPOSE**

Supervises or provides team leadership to Deputy Court Clerks I and II, and Deputy Court Clerk Magistrates I and II who may supervise by providing expertise in South Dakota Codified Laws (SDCL), Supreme Court protocols, and circuit court procedures; interpreting laws and monitoring their implementation; planning for work load distribution; coordinating and assigning work; and evaluating progression and completion of work to ensure compliance with applicable laws and rules, and processes and timeframes.

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURE**

The Court Clerk Magistrate III is distinguished by the consistent progression of successful work through assigned teams of judicial and non-judicial employees.

**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. Ensures consistency and continuation of professional customer service are maintained, and fosters successful working relationships with the public, multiple types of agencies and offices, defendants and their families, Judges, attorneys, the media, etc.
2. Supervises staff, ensures completion of workloads, organizes staff meetings, and communicates via telephone and e-mail.
  - a. Interviews and recommends new hires.
  - b. Trains new employees and provides ongoing training for staff.
  - c. Assigns work and oversees daily tasks.
  - d. Prepares for and evaluates performance.
  - e. Authorizes leave and assumes responsibilities of staff when absent.
  - f. Addresses staff conflicts.
3. Manages caseloads by setting priorities, reviewing work and monitoring progression, and ensuring compliance with laws and rules and procedural guidelines.
4. Manages receipt and disbursement of money collected by the court according to established accounting procedures and protocols.
5. Establishes operational procedures, coordinates facility needs, provides necessary supplies and equipment, oversees technology issues and updates, and monitors file and records management to ensure the work of the unit and the court is accomplished according to applicable procedural guidelines and protocols.

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6. Oversees implementation of jury management procedures to ensure adequate numbers of jurors are available for scheduled and pending hearings.
7. Supervises and performs clerk magistrate duties to assist the circuit court in disposing of civil actions and to provide direct court contact for average citizens.
  - a. Solemnizes marriages and administers oaths.
  - b. Issues summonses and warrants.
  - c. Appoints counsel.
  - d. Conducts preliminary hearings, fixes bonds, or takes personal recognizance of persons charged with certain offenses.
  - e. Accepts defaults for petty offenses, tries contested cases involving certain petty offenses.
  - f. Takes pleas of guilty, not guilty, or nolo contendere for any criminal offense or for violation of any ordinance, bylaw, or other police regulation of a political subdivision in accordance with applicable statutes.
8. Performs other work as assigned.

### **SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS**

This position supervises judicial positions that supervise or are team leaders; and supervises procedural operations typical to a clerk magistrate's office such as customer services, jury management, magistrate duties, court support, financial management, case management, etc.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS REQUIRE**

Ordinary physical activities such as sitting or standing (sometimes for extended periods of time); operating a variety of office machines proficiently; proficiency in technical systems used by the court; attendance in accordance with rules and policies; stooping, bending, lifting, carrying, and moving boxes of files, paper, books, etc.; handling and storing exhibits properly; and moving between workstations on different levels in the same building or in different locations. The incumbent is also expected to get along with coworkers and the public, remain calm with upset litigants, manage stress, think clearly, meet deadlines, explain simple and sometimes complex procedures, answer the telephone clearly and in a helpful manner, and portray a positive image of UJS and its purpose.

### **PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES**

Challenges include professionally and appropriately handling an intense workload within definite and limiting timelines and with available staff. This is challenging because it requires maintaining knowledge of ever-changing codes, rules, and job requirements that apply to a broad variety of cases brought before the court; and having the training and experience needed to handle all types of situations. Further challenged to ensure completion and correctness of case processing, challenging because there are so many components and participants to monitor.

Problems include dealing with litigants who are upset, the general assumption that working for the court means you can answer all questions and assist with all problems, communication

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difficulties, finding and fixing accounting errors, and the extent of incompleteness and incorrectness that can happen throughout case processing.

### **DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY**

Decisions include the most appropriate way to handle situations without giving legal advice; if fines are past due and if further action is required; most appropriate way to find and fix accounting errors; who is allowed to access case files according to circuit rules; priority of workload; what should be filed in case files and what should not if manual guidelines are not clear; approval of employees' leave and flex time, and changing positions to accommodate work flow.

Decisions referred include final approval of new hires; resolution of staff issues and work improvement plans; handling extremely difficult individuals and credible threats toward self and other UJS staff; directions for dealing with shortages of funds; legal questions which are referred to the Circuit Court Administrator; when a court order is required for access to certain case types; protocols for equipment repair or replacement; and solutions to programming and technical issues.

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

Daily contact with staff to organize, prioritize, and monitor workload assignment and accomplishment; routine contact with the public, non-judicial agencies, attorneys, defendants and their families to provide customer service; with public, staff, bank staff, sheriffs' offices, state's attorneys' staff, defendants, attorneys, victims, Department of Corrections (DOC) staff, court services, Judges, and finance staff regarding financial management and distribution; with all parties involved in actions involving case processing to collect missing information, money owed, etc.; with Judges, staff, attorneys, abstract companies, the public, and defendants regarding access to stored records; with Judges, staff, attorneys, State's Attorneys, jail staff, public, court services, defendants and family members during courtroom proceedings; with UJS help desk staff, IT personnel, accounting staff, and repairmen regarding technical assistance and computer maintenance; and with Judges, attorneys, State's Attorneys, plaintiffs, defendants, sheriffs' offices, police departments, court services, DOC, parole officers, jail staff, other clerks and deputies, inmates, and pro se litigants regarding calendar scheduling of hearings.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

The incumbent works in a typical office and/or court environment; transports case files and pertinent materials to and from court, which may involve travel; and deals with people who are distraught, angry, and want assistance.

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

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

Knowledge of:

- the organization, rules, and procedures of the Unified Judicial System
- South Dakota Codified Laws;

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- Supreme Court protocols;
- policies and procedures of circuit districts and local circuit courts;
- principles and practices of case management and processing;
- computer codes and software programs used by the UJS;
- civil fees and costs required or authorized by the law;
- policies and practices of human resources management;
- general office practices;
- accounting principles and practices;
- policies governing legal information and legal advice;
- legal terminology.

### Skill in:

- data entry and word processing;
- critical thinking;
- organizing and prioritizing work;
- time management;
- perseverance.

### Ability to:

- remain neutral and objective while providing information and assistance to a wide variety of agencies and individuals;
- work with irate and unhappy litigants and recognize and defuse unacceptable behaviors;
- manage stress;
- adapt and work effectively in changing situations and with varying individuals;
- acquire and analyze information from various sources and draw conclusions;
- assess procedures and recommend improvements;
- pay attention to details and recognize and resolve errors;
- speak in public.

### **Education:**

High school diploma or possession of a GED certificate.

### **Experience:**

Four (4) years of applicable experience; supervisory experience required; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Certification in a Court Management Program (CMP) or Court Executive Development Program (CEDP) through the National Center for State Courts is preferred.