



SUFFOLK COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE DISTRICT ATTORNEY KEVIN R. HAYDEN

JOB TITLE: Victim Witness Advocate in District Court/Div. of the BMC **DATE:** March 2024

REPORTS TO: Chief of Victim Witness Program, Unit Chief/Supervisor, and Supervising VWA

COMPENSATION: \$45,500 annually; commensurate with experience

**PLEASE SUBMIT APPLICATION MATERIALS (RESUME AND COVER LETTER) TO
SCDAOVWAHIRING@MASS.GOV.**

POSITION PROFILE:

The primary goals of the Victim Witness Assistance Program are to: (1) assist victims in their recovery from victimization and restoring a sense of safety; (2) reduce the level of re-victimization associated with the aftermath of crime and participation in the criminal justice system; and (3) assist in the prosecution of criminal cases by ensuring that victims, witnesses, and families are afforded the rights and services mandated by the Massachusetts Victim Bill of Rights (M.G.L. Chapter 258B) and by providing support, information, and advocacy throughout the court process pursuant to office policy.

Victim Witness Advocates (VWAs) are primarily responsible for the facilitation of crisis assessment and intervention, information and referrals, supportive counseling and court advocacy services to victims, witnesses, and their families throughout the criminal justice system. Advocates also offer referrals, education, and resources to individuals looking to connect to social service agencies. They provide emotional support and information about the criminal court process in the event of a criminal prosecution and provide consistent updates to families. VWAs must ensure victims receive the rights and services to which they are entitled under the Victim Bill of Rights.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Orient and explain to victims, witnesses, and family members the court process and their rights throughout that process
- Court accompaniment for victims, witnesses, and family members
- Crisis intervention for victims, witnesses, and family members who are in need as a result of their victimization
- Provide written and verbal notification to victims and witnesses regarding arrests, arraignments, pre-trial conferences, motions, hearings, grand jury appearances, trials, defaults, dispositions, restitution hearings, sentencing, and appellate proceedings
- Assess and evaluate victim needs and assist with referrals for appropriate services such as: community resources (housing, education, job training programs), emergency financial assistance, protection, and relocation; assistance with Victim Compensation applications; bail notification, and if applicable: arranging meetings, line-ups and housing interviews
- Provide formal and informal education and training to criminal justice and community agencies regarding victim rights and victim witness services
- Work collaboratively within a multi-disciplinary team throughout investigation and all court proceedings
- Safety plan with victims and families
- Build and maintain relationships with agencies and resources that support victims

OTHER DUTIES:

- Attend required training and other trainings relevant to Office functions.
- Attend required supervision and staff meetings regularly.
- Become familiar with and follow the provisions of the Office Personnel Policies.
- Become familiar and model conformance with the Massachusetts Rules of Professional Conduct.
- Exercise respectful and professional behavior and communication with the public, judicial and law enforcement personnel, and office staff.
- Complete work assignments in a timely, accurate and efficient manner.
- Other related duties as assigned.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:**Required:**

- Minimum of Bachelor's Degree in victim services, criminal justice system, or related social service field.
- Experience in trauma, crisis intervention, case management, and safety planning.
- Excellent attention to detail and organizational skills.
- Ability to handle sensitive and confidential information.
- Strong desire to work in a collegial and team-focused environment.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills and workplace etiquette.
- Ability to work well in a high pressure environment with multiple deadlines while maintaining a high level of quality.
- A sincere interest in the public sector, the work of the SCDAO, an overall understanding of the Criminal Justice System.
- Strong personal character, integrity, judgment, and maturity.
- A general knowledge of office practices and legal principles.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.

Preferred:

- Experience in trauma, crisis intervention, case management, and safety planning
- Working knowledge of resources and providers in Suffolk County.
- Proficiency in a second language, preferably Spanish, Haitian-Creole, Portuguese, Cape Verdean Creole, Cantonese or Mandarin Chinese, or Vietnamese.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

- Ability to lift boxes weighing 10-20 pounds.
- Ability to sit and stand for extended periods of time.

TRAVEL: Frequent travel to the Supreme Judicial Court, Appeals Court, and Superior Court, as well as occasional travel to other trial courts within Suffolk County and the Commonwealth required. Travel to homes and work places of victims and witnesses and their families, as well as to other community partners is required.

EEO STATEMENT: We are an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, or any other characteristic protected by law.