Virginia Indigent Defense Commission
Northern Virginia Capital Defender Office
Mitigation Development Specialist
(VIDC administrative position: Investigator II)
Starting Salary $48,183

The Virginia Indigent Defense Commission is accepting applications for the position of **Mitigation Development Specialist** in the Northern Virginia Capital Defender Office, which is located in Arlington, Virginia across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. The office represents poor persons charged with capital murder and facing the death penalty throughout Northern Virginia in the state courts. The Mitigation Development Specialist will investigate all aspects of a client’s development and assist in formulating and presenting the value of the client’s life and the client’s humanity to the prosecutor, judge, members of the jury, and other relevant decision makers.

The office delivers capital defense services through a staff of dedicated attorneys, mitigation specialists and investigators, and office manager, as well as contracting with outside fact investigators, mental health professionals, and other experts. The office emphasizes team-based defense and a holistic approach to questions of culpability and mitigation. All members of the office are committed to the following values:

- Excellence in the provision of capital defender services for indigent defendants, accepting that the *ABA Guidelines for the Appointment and Performance of Counsel in Death Penalty Cases* set a high, yet still minimum, standard in the field;
- Client-centered and relationship-based work that respects the humanity and dignity of all involved in the criminal justice system; and
- Innovation and creativity in the provision of capital defense services.

**Duties:**
The Mitigation Development Specialist’s primary function is assisting in the representation of indigent defendants facing capital charges and a possible sentence of death at the trial level through the development of evidence relevant to lessening the possible punishment. The responsibilities of the mitigation investigator include developing and maintaining positive and productive working relationships with clients and significant other case participants; investigating the facts and circumstances of the alleged offense and the client’s background; developing personal, family, and social histories; locating and interviewing potential witnesses for court proceedings; traveling to correctional institutions within and without the state to visit with incarcerated clients and witnesses; requesting, reviewing, analyzing, and summarizing records and information; organizing and administering the case file; providing support for attorneys preparing for, and in, litigation and court proceedings, including but not limited to serving subpoenas, witness relations, and the development of demonstrative exhibits; assisting in the identification, selection, preparation, and presentation of expert witnesses; researching and writing on a variety of related subjects; and providing additional services and duties as the needs of the office dictate.
The Mitigation Development Specialist will attend and participate in in-house and external trainings directed to improving and enhancing the investigator’s skill set in the provision of capital defender services.

**Minimum Qualifications:**

- College degree from a four-year, accredited institution;
- Post-graduate qualification in relevant area, such as social work, psychology, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, counseling, education, theology, or divinity;
- Commitment to working with clients in poverty;
- Commitment to excellence and success in the provision of capital defense services;
- Highly developed interpersonal skills;
- An organized and precise work practice with attention to detail;
- Clear written and oral expression;
- Strengths in teamwork, client relations, and relationship building; and
- Valid driver’s license, with the ability and willingness to travel at length within and without the state and internationally where necessary.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- Experience in interviewing clients and their family members;
- Professional experience with key areas related to the position, such as mental health needs, medical, mental, and educational disabilities, prisoners and institutional settings from an advocacy perspective; data collection, management and analysis; and the impact of culture, race and poverty;
- Experience in indigent criminal defense investigation;
- Technology literacy, including but not limited to, the use of Microsoft Office applications, as well as spreadsheet, Dropbox, database programs, case management software, and new media research; and
- Spanish language, Russian language, or other relevant foreign language fluency.

The investigator reports to the Capital Defender of the Northern Virginia Office and is employed at will. The successful candidate will be subject to a fingerprint based criminal background check.

**How to Apply:**
Applicants should apply online via the Virginia Jobs website and submit (1) a completed state application, (2) cover letter with an attached professional writing sample, (3) resume (“curriculum vitae”), and (4) references. All qualifications should be addressed in cover letter.

Equal Opportunity Employer