



## **Paralegal**

Salary Range: \$39,500 - \$47,000

Kalamazoo Defender is a non-profit organization that will represent the adult indigent population charged with a crime within Kalamazoo County—it is the County's first Public Defender office.

Kalamazoo Defender's mission is rooted in the conviction that poverty and various forms of discrimination put our clients on inequitable footing within and beyond our criminal justice system. Our job is to be their compassionate and zealous defender in the face of these systemic barriers.

### **THE JOB:**

Paralegals perform case preparation and investigative and information gathering tasks necessary for providing effective assistance of counsel. The paralegal may communicate with a wide network of court officials, law enforcement, legal and social agencies, jail and prison officials as well as clients and their family members.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Review cases, investigate facts and underlying issues; review legal documents, technical data and all other relevant information in a case.
- Notify/inform witnesses, attorneys and other parties on case status; coordinate parties and witnesses for hearings or trials; schedule interviews with attorneys, victims and witnesses; set administrative hearings.
- Perform legal research of statutes and cases; gather facts, analyze data and review cases; research changes in state laws and local ordinances that affect bail schedules. Conduct conflict of interest checks in cases assigned.
- Interview parties and make recommendations in preparation of hearings or trials; explain various legal programs, policies, procedures and ramifications.
- Draft correspondence, pleadings, motions and discovery devices; prepare hearing or trial exhibits; prepare case files.
- Process and serve legal documents/subpoenas. Obtain documents by subpoena and other investigations and discovery method.
- Develop and maintain caseload and case assignments tracking system and database. Provide support in the maintenance and updating of computerized case-management system.
- Assist at trials and hearings.

- Serve as liaison with prosecutors, probation officers, bailiffs, judges, criminal justice agencies, other agencies, jurisdictions and clients.
- Support attorney time record keeping and assist in the submission of hours for purposes of additional case credit awards.
- Prepare and process invoices for professional mitigation services and experts.
- Collaborate and confer with defense investigators and mitigation specialists; monitor progress of the case.
- Assist with answering, tracking and processing requests under the Public Disclosure Act; ensure timely processing in compliance with statutory requirements; define/redefine scope of request as required and within the spirit of the law; research necessary documentation, files and reports; prepare documents in response to request redacting information as required from source material.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Strong commitment to Kalamazoo Defender's mission and values.
- High levels of professionalism, collaboration, integrity, and compassion.
- Outstanding organization and detail orientation.
- Excellent verbal and written communication.
- Certification from a nationally accredited paralegal training institution and three years related experience or any combination of experience/education/training that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the work.
- Knowledge of the performance Guidelines for Criminal Defense adopted by the State Bar of Michigan.
- Knowledge of the role of the attorney-client relationship and the requirement to adhere to the Michigan Rules of Professional Responsibility.
- Knowledge of civil and criminal law and terminology, court rules and procedures.
- Knowledge of legal research methods and practices, and interviewing techniques.
- Ability to provide support in the building of a strong attorney/client relationship.
- Knowledge of general office procedures, equipment and administration, bookkeeping principles and banking procedures.
- Advanced skills in writing pleadings, motions and briefs.
- Ability to ensure work performed conforms with prevailing professional standards and applicable statutes and county policy.
- Skill in handling multiple competing priorities, sensitive situations and crisis situations and functioning well under time pressure.
- Skill in interpreting complex legal documents, instruments, regulations and laws.
- Skill in working with a variety of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

**BENEFITS:**

- Competitive salary, excellent health care coverage, and generous retirement contributions.
- An opportunity to work within—and help define—a dynamic, innovative legal program, backed by a County capable of maximizing Kalamazoo Defender’s mission.
- If you choose to enroll your children in Kalamazoo Public Schools, your children will have access to the Kalamazoo Promise, which provides free and reduced college tuition.

**How to Apply:**

Please send your resume, a cover letter, and your references to [Jobs@KalamazooDefender.org](mailto:Jobs@KalamazooDefender.org) or the following address:

Kalamazoo Defender  
277 South Rose Street, Suite 5000  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007