

CHILD SUPPORT AGENT I

Work in this class involves the initiation and organization of Child Support Enforcement (IV-D) duties. These duties include: interviewing new Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) clients, and some non-public assistance clients, to explain the program and to obtain data regarding the absent parent; determining the course of action; locating the absent parent; and establishing voluntary paternity and/or support obligations through the court system. Work at this level may involve gathering evidence for suits, drafting the proper papers, evaluating testimony and evidence, and determining the necessity of court action. Employees in this class work in intake, location, or establishment of paternity, and do not go into court unless called as a witness.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Work assignments may emphasize one of the following areas: intake, location, or establishing voluntary paternity and/or support; however, agents do provide case services and rotate in all three of the above areas.

Intricacy - The agent must be able to: analyze and prioritize cases based on the information gathered in intake; attempt to locate the absent parent through a variety of available resources; present absent parents with the guidelines for establishing voluntary paternity and/or support; prepare the proper documents for the court; gather evidence for suits; evaluate client and absent parent testimony; and determine the necessity for criminal action.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires considerable knowledge of the Child Support Enforcement Program and procedures and applicable legal procedures.

Guidelines - These include the Child Support Enforcement manual, (state and/or local) office procedural guidelines, the applicable N.C. General Statutes, applicable courtroom procedures, and other reference manuals.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employees function independently in all areas, and in deciding how to pursue an individual case.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed at the time a case is in court, by the staff attorney and judge for technical accuracy. Decisions are reviewed after the fact by a program supervisor or regional consultant. In this class, consultation may be sought from a co-worker, attorney or supervisor on a specific case or procedure. Consultation is always sought where a rule or policy change is evident, or when all resources and attempts to handle a problem/case have been exhausted.

Scope of Decisions - Employees' work directly affects the client and absent parent in establishing paternity and support, and the children of these parents. The work also affects the general public since support obligations pay back the tax fund used to pay Public assistance.

Consequence of Decisions - Decisions could result in the wrong absent parent/defendant being taken to court, and the threat of a law suit. If a case is not properly prepared or information is incorrect, there is the potential for waste of court and administrative time, reduced support state and local collections, and credibility problems. The children involved in cases may be determined eligible for state and federal benefits.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Work brings agents in contact with clients, absent parents, offices of the Clerk of Court, Magistrates, District Attorney, Sheriff, other court officials, private attorneys, and location resources.

Nature and Purpose - Employees gather information necessary to locate absent parents, to establish paternity and support, and to determine the course of action of a case. An agent will direct, motivate, negotiate and compromise with a client or absent parent to be truthful regarding the establishment of paternity and support.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Employees work in an office setting.

Hazards - Employees have frequent contact with hostile clients and absent parents, some who are potentially dangerous.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of the Child Support Enforcement Program and applicable legal procedures; considerable ability to interview clients, absent parents and related sources, and to investigate cases; considerable ability to organize, analyze, and summarize case information; basic math skills; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients and absent parents, location resources, offices of the Clerk of Court, Magistrates, District Attorney, Sheriff, other court officials, and private attorneys.

Minimum Education and Experience - Graduation from high school and two years of experience in eligibility, investigative, judiciary, or legal work that provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the work; or an associate degree in business administration, human resources, law enforcement or closely related degree and one year of experience in eligibility, investigative, judiciary, or legal work that provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the work; or a four year degree; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.