SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MERCED

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT
#15-9

Court Investigator/Child Custody Recommending Counselor
Open Recruitment

Filing Deadline:	June 11, 2015 4:30pm Actual Receipt	Annual Salary Range:	$57,200 - $70,220.80

DEFINITION:
Under general direction, the Court Investigator/Child Custody Recommending Counselor performs independent work, conducts investigations for probate conservatorships, guardianships and cases involving child custody disputes. Also attends hearings, as necessary, to provide reports to the court; consults with judicial officers, attorneys, and parties involved in assigned cases; prepares reports and recommendations for the court.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:
This classification encompasses a variety of investigator roles, including investigations.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS
The following duties are normal for this position. The omission of specific statements of the duties does not exclude them from the classification if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment for this classification. Other duties may be required and assigned.

1. Conducts personal interviews with and evaluates individuals involved in matters before the court. Some interviews require home visits to assess health and living conditions

2. Reviews filings in court divisions for protective or restraining orders, or other safety issues for any relevant party. Reviews custody and visitation orders in family law cases and notifies the probate judge in guardianship matters when appropriate

3. Analyzes data, interprets directions, procedures and regulations, and develops appropriate comprehensive and factual responses; prepares memos and reports to the court, along with written or verbal recommendations; prepares orders appointing Guardianship and Letters of Guardianship

4. Assists parties in probate and conservatorship cases, explaining legal rights and scope of services; informs parties of laws, regulations and procedures of the court

5. Mediates disputes concerning parenting arrangements in cases involving divorce, separation, paternity, guardianships and temporary restraining orders

6. Interviews and makes recommendations for pre-age marriages

7. Interviews, investigates, and makes recommendations in Custody Evaluations, Guardianships and Step-Parent Adoptions

8. Examines financial accounts filed by guardians and conservators to ensure that estates are properly managed and that investments are in compliance with the law

9. Acts as liaison between the court and relevant agencies related to investigations; provides information and resources regarding divorce related matters to the public, attorneys, and agencies who seek assistance or counsel

10. Appears in court to provide details of investigations as needed

11. Works flexible hours as necessary, and occasionally outside business hours

12. Cooperates with other government agencies, such as Child Protective Services, law enforcement agencies, the Public Defender's office and the District Attorney's office on a regular basis when working on cases

13. Maintains current knowledge and monitors changes to probate law and recommends changes in policy, rules, and procedures required for compliance; executes modifications after approval

14. Conducts education classes for the public dealing with the issues of divorce, separation, child custody, visitation and child development as directed

15. Maintains records and statistical information regarding services provided as directed

16. Travels off-site using personal vehicle or arranged transportation to various locations in the county on a regular basis while conducting investigations; in rare occasions some out-of-state travel may be necessary

17. Maintains current knowledge in relevant subject matter, including relevant clinical and mediation literature; Attend staff and other work-related meetings, workshops, seminars, and other continuing education opportunities, as directed

18. May participate in the selection and training of clerical support staff and appraising performance

19. Other duties as assigned

Supervisory Duties:

- May assign work and provide guidance to contracted investigator(s)

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Necessary Employment Standards

Knowledge of:

- Interviewing, investigation, mediation and negotiation methods, techniques and procedures
- California court system including the statutes and procedures used in family law, juvenile and probate court
- Thorough knowledge of Probate law and legislation
- Issues of child abuse or abandonment, elder abuse, drugs and alcohol
- Common medical and psychiatric terminology and conditions
- Individual and family counseling techniques
- Public and private community resources and referral agencies
- Psychology, child development, and family systems
- Modern office methods and technology including the use of a personal computer and related software such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, case management systems, and scheduling programs

- Written and oral communication standards, including correct usage of grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- Basic accounting and auditing practices
- Organizational and administrative methods and procedures of the Court is desired

Skill/Ability to:

- Gather and analyze data, evaluate facts and evidence, interpret directions, procedures and regulations, and develop appropriate comprehensive and factual responses
- Understand legal/judicial procedures, laws and local rules, legal terminology, documents and procedures related to case evaluation and processing
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with all levels of Court staff, judicial partners, elective and appointive bodies and members of the general public; work effectively with and assist individuals of various ages and diverse cultural backgrounds; deal tactfully and courteously with all
- Work independently and prioritize work with excellent organization skills
- Work well under pressure, meeting multiple and sometimes conflicting deadlines. Must be available to work weekends and overtime as directed
- Communicate effectively, both written and oral to and/or with members of the public, attorneys, vendors, co-workers, supervisors, managers, and judicial officers
- Maintain confidential information in accordance with legal standards and/or other regulations
- Train, oversee and evaluate the performance of staff including contracted investigators
- Follow Court Rules and Regulations/Personnel Policies, Safety Procedures, Court Code of Ethics and Court Harassment Prevention Policy.
- Demonstrate cooperative behavior with co-workers and management.
- Maintain a professional appearance and demeanor as defined in the Court Code of Ethics.
- Successfully complete fingerprinting and criminal record check with the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Education:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Master's Degree or equivalent in social work, psychology, marriage, family and child counseling or related behavioral science substantially related to marriage and interpersonal relationships

Experience:

- (2) Two years of experience in family and divorce counseling or psychotherapy

License, Certification and/or Special Requirements:

- A valid class C California driver's license may be required. The requirement will be reviewed on a position basis in accordance with ADA regulations.

Desirable License or Certificate:

- Possession of a valid Licensed Clinical Social Worker or Marriage, Family and Child Counselor license as issued by the State of California.

ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS

Performance Aptitudes

Data Utilization: Requires the ability to review, classify, categorize, prioritize, and/or analyze data. Includes exercising discretion in determining data classification, and in referencing such analysis to established standards for the purpose of recognizing actual or probable interactive effects and relationships.

Human Interaction: Requires the ability to apply principles of persuasion and/or influence over others in coordinating activities of a project, program, or designated area of responsibility.

Equipment, Machinery, Tools, and Materials Utilization: Requires the ability to operate, maneuver, and/or control the actions of equipment, machinery, tools, and/or materials used in performing essential functions.

Verbal Aptitude: Requires the ability to utilize a wide variety of reference, descriptive, and/or advisory data, and information.

Mathematical Aptitude: Requires the ability to perform addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; the ability to calculate decimals and percentages; the ability to utilize principles of fractions; and the ability to interpret graphs.

Functional Reasoning: Requires the ability to apply principles of influence systems, such as motivation, incentive, and leadership, and to exercise independent judgment to apply facts and principles for developing approaches and techniques to resolve problems.

Situational Reasoning: Requires the ability to exercise judgment, decisiveness, and creativity in situations involving the evaluation of information against sensory, judgmental, or subjective criteria, as opposed to that which is clearly measurable or verifiable.

Physical Ability:

- Strength, dexterity, coordination, and vision to use a keyboard, computer monitor, and other office equipment on a daily basis and for extended periods of time
- Fine finger manipulations, dexterity, and coordination to handle files and single pieces of paper
- Forceful and repetitive gripping, grasping, and pinching
- Occasional lifting and carrying of objects weighing up to 20 lbs.
- Frequent reaching for items on shelves, above, at, and below desk/shoulder level
- Exert up to 20 lbs. of force occasionally, and/or up to 10 lbs. of force frequently, and/or negligible amount of force constantly to move, torque, twist, push, and pull objects
- Frequently sit for extended periods; frequently stand for extended periods; and frequently walk, move, bend, stoop, lift, and stretch
- Able to move to different locations such as, but not limited to: courtrooms, clerk's office, various departments, other court facilities, and desk assignments based on the operational needs of the Court
- Able to traverse inside and outside over uneven ground and pavement
- Perform repetitive writing, typing, copying
- Employees are regularly required to verbally communicate both in person and by telephone
- Corrected hearing and vision to normal range

Sensory Requirements: Some tasks require the ability to perceive and discriminate colors or shades of colors, sounds, and visual cues or signals. Some tasks require the ability to communicate orally.

Environmental Factors: Essential functions are regularly performed without exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications may be obtained from and submitted to:
Merced Superior Court
Human Resources
627 W. 21st St., Room 20
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 725-4103

Or visit our website at www.mercedcourt.org

All applications for employment must be made on an official application form and must be filed with Human Resources on or prior to the closing date and time for receipt of applications. Postmarked and faxed applications will not be accepted. A resume may be included with the application as

supplemental information, but will not be accepted in lieu of an official application. All information on the application must be completed – "see resume or see attached" is not acceptable. Applications must be legible, signed and complete (including copies of licenses, certificates, transcripts, Supplemental Questionnaire, etc. if required). All information is subject to investigation and verification.

The selection process is subject to change. Applications will be accepted on a continuous basis until a sufficient number are received at which time the recruitment will be closed or the filing deadline has occurred. In order to insure proper evaluation of employment qualifications, it is suggested that applicants read the directions carefully and fill out the application COMPLETELY. Those applicants meeting the minimum qualifications and possessing the most relevant experience as shown on the application may be invited for an interview. The screening of applications will be done by Human Resources who will determine the most qualified to be referred for interviews.

If you require accommodations in the application or interview process, contact Human Resources at the number listed above before the deadline posted on the job announcement.

Merced Superior Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Posting Date: 5/28/15

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Conditions of Employment

Successful completion of fingerprinting and a criminal record background check is required prior to appointment and is a condition of employment.

All employees of the court who operate a vehicle on court business must certify they possess a valid California Driver's License and required levels of automobile insurance. A Department of Motor Vehicles search will be done and employee must have an acceptable driving record in order to operate a vehicle on court business.

Convictions

Felony and misdemeanor convictions MAY BE disqualifying for employment with the court.

Drug Free Workplace Policy

The use of illicit drugs and alcohol is not permitted in the workplace. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary procedures which include termination.

Employment Eligibility

In accordance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, all persons hired after November 6, 1986, are required to present to the Court, at the time of appointment, original documents which show satisfactory proof of: 1) identity and 2) U.S. Citizenship or a legal right to work permanently in the United States.

Introductory Period

Individuals accepting regular appointments must successfully complete an introductory period.

Union Representative

Merced County Trial Court Employees (MCTCE), Local 1, is the negotiating agent for some Merced Court job classifications. As of 2/6/06, MCTCE Local 1 is an Agency Shop. Management, Supervisory and Confidential positions are not represented.

Benefits Include (for Regular Status employees only, prorated for variable shift part time employees):

Vacation:

10 days paid vacation each year for the first 5 years of employment
15 days accrual during the second 5 years
20 days accrual after 10 years
25 days accrual after 20 years

Sick Leave:

Unlimited sick leave accumulation

Holidays:

14 paid holidays

(Accrual is based on work hours. 5 years = 10,400 regular scheduled work hours; 10 years = 20,800 regular scheduled work hours; 20 years = 41,600; 25 years = 52,000 regular scheduled work hours.)

Employee Assistance Program:

6 free visits per incident per year. Available to qualifying dependents.

Health Insurance:

Major group medical, dental and vision currently paid for by the Court for the employee and medical, dental and vision care for eligible dependents with 50% of the premium paid by the Court.

Life Insurance:

Represented employees - $10,000 with premium paid by Court.

Management employees - $5,000 with premium paid by Court PLUS additional life insurance provided by Court ($30,000 to $80,000 depending on position).

Retirement:

Court employees are covered by the Merced County Employees' Retirement Association (MCERA), a Defined Benefit Retirement System governed by the County Employees' Retirement Act of 1937.

Recruitment Reviews

Applicants who are not court employees and contend that the Court has misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated the recruitment policies may file a written notice with Human Resources for reconsideration of his or her qualifications within ten (10) days of the date the non-qualification notice was mailed, and a reply will be mailed to the applicant. Human Resources' decision shall be final.

If an employee contends that the Court has misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated the recruitment policies, notification must be filed with the Court Executive Officer, whose decision will be final. Any such request must be filed within ten (10) days of the date on which notification of non-qualification was received by the employee. If notice is provided by mail, the notice shall be deemed to have been received five days after the date of mailing. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, recruitment and selection issues are excluded from the grievance procedure.

The above information is a general summary of benefits for this position. This information is not legally binding, nor does it serve as a contract.