



**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF MERCED**

**JOB ANNOUNCEMENT  
#14-08**

**Court Investigator  
Open Recruitment**

**Filing Deadline:** September 5, 2014      **Annual Salary Range:** \$52,332.80 to \$63,668.80  
4:30 p.m. Actual Receipt

**DEFINITION:**

Under general direction, the Court Investigator performs independent work, conducts field investigations for probate conservatorships and guardianships. The Court Investigator 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.

**EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL:**

The Court Investigator classification is established as an "at-will" position and, as such, the incumbent serves at the direction of the Court Executive Officer. The Court Executive Officer has the right to terminate the employment of any incumbent in the position of Court Investigator at any time, with or without advance notice or cause.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

This classification encompasses a variety of investigator roles, including investigations in probate areas. This class is distinguished from the Child Custody Recommending Counselor (CCRC) class because, although the latter may conduct investigations, investigation activities are performed to assist in mediating disputes or provide counseling, which are the CCRC's primary duties.

**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. Review custody and visitation orders in family law cases and notify 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. Examines financial accounts filed by guardians and conservators to ensure that estates are properly managed and that investments are in compliance with the law.
6. Acts as liaison between the court and relevant agencies related to investigations.
7. Appears in court to provide details of investigations as needed.
8. Works flexible hours as necessary, and occasionally outside business hours.
9. Maintains current knowledge and monitors changes to probate law and recommends changes in policy, rules, and procedures required for compliance. Executes modifications after approval.
10. 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.
11. May participate in the selection and training of clerical support staff and appraising performance
12. Travels off-site using personal vehicle or arranged transportation to various locations in the county on a regular basis while conducting investigations. Some out-of-state travel may be necessary in rare occasions.
13. Attends training as offered and/or directed.
14. Other duties as assigned.

**Supervisory Duties:**

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

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

**Necessary Employment Standards**

Knowledge of:

- Interviewing and investigation methods and procedures
- California court system and 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
- 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
- English Language Arts: correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- Organizational and administrative methods and procedures of the Court is desired
- Basic accounting and auditing practices

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 terminology, documents and procedures related to case evaluation and processing; laws, legal/judicial procedure and local rules
- 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, in person, over the telephone and in writing with 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 Court Code of Ethics.
- Successfully complete fingerprinting and Criminal Record Background Check

## **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

### **Education:**

- Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Social Work, or other behavioral science from an accredited four (4) year college or university

### **Experience:**

- Two (2) years employment experience performing casework and interviews or investigations in a legal, law enforcement, or social service setting

OR

- Five (5) years of responsible work experience in legal/judicial, social work, or other environment which requires handling a caseload pertaining to family, children, the elderly, or mental health issues

### **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.

## **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:** Tasks require the ability to exert very moderate physical effort in light work, typically involving some combination of stooping, kneeling, crouching and crawling, and which may involve some lifting, carrying, pushing, and/or pulling of objects and materials of moderate weight (12-20 pounds).

**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. 21<sup>st</sup> St., Room 20  
Merced, CA 95340  
(209) 725-4103

Or visit our website at [www.mercedcourt.org](http://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.

**Posted 08/21/14**



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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

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.

Sick Leave:

Unlimited sick leave accumulation

Life Insurance:

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

Holidays:

14 paid holidays

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

(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.

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.**