

CHILD SUPPORT SPECIALIST

FUNCTION OF THE JOB

Under supervision, to work to establish a legal determination of paternity for children; to affect the collection of financial and health insurance support for children; to modify court-ordered support obligations on local and intergovernmental cases; and to perform other duties as required.

CHARACTERISTIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Contacts parents, employers, insurance companies, hospitals, attorneys, responsible parties, and/or other public and private entities to investigate facts needed to establish, enforce, or modify support obligations.
2. Conducts manual and/or computer based searches to locate absent parents to establish, modify, or enforce a support obligation; verifies information and determines location to be used for service of process and formal notification of proceedings.
3. Answers inquiries from parents and attorneys on the establishment process, disputed account balances, and the modification process.
4. Interprets and explains the legal authority and State policy utilized to calculate the support obligation and/or the actions taken to collect the debts.
5. Initiates verbal or written communication with a parent to affect payment of court-ordered child support obligations, debts assigned to the County or State, and court-related costs.
6. Selects the appropriate administrative mechanisms to establish and enforce financial support or health insurance obligations without the need for court hearing.
7. Determines ability to pay support and calculates a recommended obligation by researching confidential financial and public records, such as state and federal income tax filings, Social Security Administration records, records of financial institutions, bankruptcy claims, financial disclosure statements, and credit bureau reports.
8. Prepares cases that are settled prior to litigation by negotiating the terms of the agreements with both parents and/or their attorneys; composes the legal documents setting forth the terms; obtains written consent of all parties and submits the documents to Corporation Counsel attorneys for approval and filing with the court.
9. Prepares cases for litigation by drafting legal pleadings, making legal referrals of the record of the investigation, determining the ability to pay support, and making recommendations as to the issues to be addressed in court.
10. Makes initial assessment of venue and jurisdiction for litigation which includes a determination of where the case should be heard (Family, Probate, Bankruptcy or Juvenile Court) and whether the hearing should be held in Wisconsin or another state.
11. Initiates intergovernmental referrals and responds to referrals made by other states for the full range of child support services.
12. Prepares a legal referral recommending felony prosecution on cases with extensive record of non-payment of support.
13. Appears as a witness in court testifying to actions taken to establish, modify, or enforce financial support and health insurance obligations.
14. Maintains case files in a statewide computer database.
15. Complies with federal time requirements for taking actions and determines if a case is eligible for closure in accordance with federal criteria.
16. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with county departments, State Bureau of Child Support, employers, attorneys, Children First Program, W-2 Agency, other private and public sector entities and agencies, and the general public.
17. Performs other duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential Knowledge and Abilities

1. Considerable knowledge of investigative techniques and procedures used in securing information from legal and financial records, agencies, employers, and other public and private sector entities.
2. Considerable knowledge of the Wisconsin State Statutes and Administrative Codes governing the establishment, assignment, collection, and modification of financial and health insurance support for children.
3. Considerable knowledge of research, recordkeeping, and reporting principles and practices.
4. Considerable knowledge of the principles and practices of the legal process, legal document preparation, and court procedures.
5. Working knowledge of the principles and practices of financial counseling.
6. Working knowledge of human services assistance programs and procedures.
7. Working knowledge of manual and computer-based methods, techniques, and procedures for locating absent parents.
8. Working knowledge of federal regulations regarding requirements and timeliness for a Child Support Program and the Consumer Credit Protection Act.
9. Working knowledge of computerized department program software, internet access, and database, spreadsheet, and word processing programs.
10. Ability to perform mathematical calculations and interpret account statements.
11. Ability to prepare detailed and concise written records and reports.
12. Ability to organize and prioritize work activities within required timelines.
13. Ability to conduct interviews, interpret court orders, explain laws and procedures, and obtain cooperation in difficult situations to facilitate the compliance of all parties.
14. Ability to conduct research and investigative work, secure, document, and analyze information; and make recommendations based upon this research.
15. Ability to work independently and exercise discretion and judgment.
16. Ability to work with a high degree of accuracy and timeliness in a high volume environment.
17. Ability to communicate effectively by telephone, through correspondence, or personal contact.
18. Ability to locate, update and process information within a statewide computer database system.
19. Ability to answer inquiries from attorneys, private agencies, employers, and public officials regarding the laws, policies and regulations governing the collection of financial and health insurance support for children.
20. Ability to utilize word processing, database, and spreadsheet programs.
21. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with county departments, State Bureau of Child Support, employers, attorneys, Children First Program, W-2 Agency, other private and public sector entities and agencies, and the general public.
22. Ability to effectively interact with sensitivity with persons from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, educational, racial, ethnic, and professional backgrounds, and persons of all ages and lifestyles.

Training and Experience

1. High School Diploma or GED.
2. a. Two years of responsible work experience that involves financial counseling, independent research, investigation, paralegal work, financial collections, or closely related activities.
- OR -
b. Two years of work experience in a Child Support Program, Economic Support Program, or similar function.
3. Post high school education from a recognized college or university in business, accounting or closely related field may substitute for the work experience requirement on a year-for-year basis.