



OVERVIEW OF THE MULTNOMAH COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

INTRODUCTION

This outline was prepared for Deputy District Attorney Applicants. It provides an overview of the internal workings of the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office. If you have additional questions after reading this, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The District Attorney's Office is divided into three divisions: Division I, II, and III.

INITIAL PLACEMENT

A. Generally

Newly hired attorneys are usually assigned to an entry-level position in the Misdemeanor Trial Unit. There are approximately 9 deputies who handle most of the misdemeanor and traffic cases in Multnomah County, along with some felonies. When a person is first hired by the District Attorney's Office, the first few days consist of orientation about the policies of the District Attorney, trial practice, and organization within the District Attorney's Office. Deputies are expected to be familiar with the office policies and procedures. For the first trial, someone usually assists the new deputy. New deputies can expect substantial trial responsibility quickly.

B. Rotations

Within the Misdemeanor Trial Unit there are several rotations. Those rotations include: Arraignments, Intake, trials, DUII screening, Presiding and Gresham. The rotations in these departments will vary from three - six months. New deputies are initially assigned to the trial section to learn the fundamentals of trial.

Generally, deputies alternate between trial and nontrial rotations. Outside the normal rotations, there are other special rotations. Experienced misdemeanor deputies are regularly assigned to other units; the Juvenile section, the Domestic Violence Unit, and temporarily to felony trial teams.

C. Assignments

The misdemeanor cases are assigned on the Friday, one week before the trial date. Generally, one to three cases are assigned to a deputy for any particular trial day.

There are some cases in the Misdemeanor Trial Unit that are specially assigned; i.e., the deputy receives the file well in advance of trial and is expected to have fully prepared the case.

Most deputies stay in the Misdemeanor Trial Unit about two years before they are promoted to level 2. Generally, a deputy will go through several of the Misdemeanor rotations before being considered for promotion. This means that a deputy will most likely be in the Misdemeanor Trial Unit for at least one year before being considered for promotion. It is also the policy of the District Attorney's Office that deputies are promoted on merit rather than seniority.

Because of the volume of cases in all the units, the District Attorney's Office works on a team concept. If you have particular problems as a deputy, there will always be other people upon whom you can rely. Likewise, if other people need your help, you are expected to provide assistance.

After deputies have gained experience, they can be assigned to work with the more experienced felony deputies on homicides or other complex felony cases. This involves investigation, motions, and the trial itself.

D. Training

The District Attorney's Office holds a number of CLEs for both the Misdemeanor Division and the entire office, and attendance is encouraged. These occur regularly throughout the year. In September, the Oregon District Attorneys Association holds a three-day training session for new deputies during which time virtually every aspect of the criminal case is taught.

When lawyers in deputy district attorney Level 1 positions are promoted to Level 2, they generally first go to one of the following units: Unit A (property crimes), Unit B (drug cases), the Pretrial Unit, Juvenile, the Domestic Violence Unit or the Neighborhood DA Unit. Once deputies have demonstrated an ability to try major cases, they will be promoted to other positions in Juvenile, Domestic Violence, Unit C/Gangs or Unit D, when these positions become available. Again, deputies are promoted on merit rather than seniority.

DIVISION I

Division I has approximately 24 Deputy District Attorneys assigned to four units. They are: the Juvenile Unit, the Domestic Violence Unit the Child Support Enforcement Unit, the Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team. The Division also includes the Victims' Assistance Program.

- Juvenile: District Attorney Staff located at the Multnomah County Juvenile Court cover prosecution of delinquency cases and dependency cases aimed at protecting children who have been victims of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Additionally, a contract with the State Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the ongoing termination of parental rights project.
- Domestic Violence Unit: The Domestic Violence Unit was established to provide formal court intervention in crimes of violence, which occur between intimate partners. Deputy district attorneys and victim advocates are available to victims to pursue appropriate legal options along with social services information and referral. It is recognized that successful resolution to problems of domestic violence cannot be achieved by criminal prosecution alone. Successful resolutions require a responsive justice system as well as strong coordination with social service agencies for both the victim and the offender. The Domestic Violence Unit works closely with social service agencies to build that coordination.
- Victims Assistance Program: The Victims Assistance Program advocates for victims throughout the criminal justice process. The Victim Advocate, in concert with the assigned Deputy District Attorney, is responsible for ensuring that the victim is advised of his or her rights and when the victim requests, that those rights are afforded to the victim. Services include such things as information and referrals, court accompaniment, assistance in completing restitution and Crime Victim Compensation applications, and Emergency financial assistance in certain types of cases.
- Support Enforcement Division: The Child Support Enforcement Division establishes paternity and support obligations and enforces payment of child support orders. It also assists in modification of existing support orders. The efficient enforcement of support laws saves taxpayer money and welfare costs as well as the long-range social cost associated with neglected children.

Support Enforcement has responsibility to ensure that child support is paid by the delinquent parent. It is also the responsibility of the District Attorney's Office in

this area to process contempt cases for those parents who fail to pay. In addition, it is the District Attorney's responsibility to monitor and process out-of-state judgments and to establish paternity.

- Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team: The Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team is responsible for the mandatory review and assessment of all child abuse cases in the county. Deputy district attorneys and support staff work with the State Department of Human Services and law enforcement to assure that cases are appropriately addressed by the various involved agencies. This unit works closely with all organizations, which deal with child abuse.

DIVISION II

Division II has approximately 26 deputy district attorneys assigned to four units. They are: the Misdemeanor Intake Unit, the Misdemeanor Trial Unit, the Neighborhood DA Unit and Unit C.

- Misdemeanor Intake and Trial Units: The Misdemeanor Intake and Trial Units handle misdemeanor and traffic crimes and ordinance violations. Thefts, Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants, Assaults, Prostitution, and Driving While Suspended are examples of cases litigated by the Misdemeanor Units.
- Unit C and Gangs: Robbery, burglary of dwellings, arson, and felony weapons charges. Cases where the defendant is a gang member or where the case was handled by a police gang unit;
- Neighborhood Deputy District Attorney/Community Court Programs: The Neighborhood District Attorney Program is operational throughout Multnomah County. The Neighborhood D.A. Program takes the prosecutor out of the courtroom and into the neighborhoods where crimes occur. The prosecutor uses his/her legal skills to work with community policing units and neighborhood and business groups to reduce "quality of life" crimes. The crimes most commonly involved include theft and vandalism, car prowls, and thefts from cars, and street disorder crimes. These kinds of crimes traditionally receive a low priority from the criminal justice system yet they have a significant impact on the "quality of life" in any given geographic area.

The Neighborhood DA Unit was created in 1990 to address quality of life crimes and to solve community crime problems not on an individual case-by-case basis, but by implementing environmental and systemic remedies. There are six deputy

district attorneys in the unit who are assigned to specific geographic areas and two other attorneys who focus on transit related crime and juvenile gang related community safety problems. In collaboration with law enforcement and community and business groups, the Neighborhood DDAs develop and implement long term strategies to combat local crime problems.

- Community Courts: Community Courts have been established in two geographic areas of Multnomah County. These Community Courts provide a swift, effective, and neighborhood-based means to sanction and support low-level misdemeanor and violation offenders. The Community Courts are based upon concept of restorative justice – to reduce quality of life crimes by requiring community service work to be done by the offenders in those same neighborhoods, and by providing social service assistance to offenders when appropriate. Deputy District Attorney roles include arraignments, pleas, status hearings, and working with the Community Court advisory boards and technical operations teams to improve and refine our efforts.

DIVISION III

This division has approximately 22 Deputy District Attorneys assigned to four units. The felony units try the following kinds of cases:

- Pretrial: Pleas, arraignments, motions, and post-conviction cases;
- Unit A: Criminal mischief, welfare fraud, unauthorized use of vehicles, burglary of non-dwellings, felony theft, and forgery cases;
- Unit B: Drug, vice and forfeiture cases;
- Unit D: Aggravated assault, attempted murder, child abuse, kidnaps and sex offenses.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

It is the responsibility of the District Attorney's Office to prosecute the possession, distribution and manufacturing of controlled substance cases. We necessarily have a strong commitment to combating substance abuse. Therefore, it is important for us to

maintain an office free of substance abuse. In addition, the public expects and demands that this office be drug free. Therefore, if you are offered a job with the District Attorney's Office, as a condition of employment you will be asked to take and successfully pass a drug-screening test. When there is cause to believe that any deputy has violated the office policy on substance abuse, the District Attorney may require the deputy to take a drug-screening test. The results of the tests are confidential and will only be known by the applicant or deputy and the District Attorney.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The District Attorney's Office represents all of the citizens of Multnomah County. All citizens regardless of their race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, political affiliation or sexual orientation are entitled to have their claims reviewed professionally and objectively under the applicable laws of this city, county and state. The staff of the District Attorney's Office reflects the diversity of the community it represents. All qualified persons are encouraged to apply and full consideration will be given to their applications based solely on job-related factors. The staff is required to meet this standard of nondiscrimination in their relations with other employees and in their dealings with citizens.

COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The following is a brief summary of the wages and benefits available to deputy district attorneys in Multnomah County. It is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of all the benefits available. Specific work rules, personnel procedures, and wage/salary administrative policies are available to applicants upon request. Candidates for employment in the District Attorney's Office should be aware that salary and benefits are subject to collective bargaining between the County and the Multnomah County Prosecuting Attorneys Association.

A. Wage and Salary Administration

The salary structure of the deputy district attorneys is established through a collective bargaining agreement that is negotiated every two years. Deputies are placed on a "salary matrix" which governs their movement through the various pay grades. Since the exact figures vary, you will be told during the interview what the starting salary is and the average increase one can expect in the first years of employment.

B. Work Hours

As with any professional legal organization, the number of hours in a workweek will vary. It is not unusual for deputies to work in excess of 40 hours per week. In some instances, because of trials or investigations, deputies spend much more time than this on the job. On the other hand, with the knowledge of the senior deputy in charge of your unit, there may be occasions when you would not adhere to a rigid 8 to 5 schedule.

C. Medical/Dental Benefits

The medical and dental benefits provide optional programs. You have a choice of either Moda Health or Kaiser. This applies to both the medical and dental coverage.

D. Vacation

The following schedule outlines the current yearly vacation entitlement for full-time Deputy District Attorneys:

Length of Service Completed	Vacation
Less than 2 years	96 Hours
2 years up to 5 years	136 Hours
5 years up to 8 years	176 Hours
8 years up to 15 years	216 Hours
15 years and up	216 Hours

There are some restrictions as to when these days accrue and when they can be used.

E. Retirement Plan

All full-time County employees are enrolled in the State of Oregon's Public Employees Retirement System (PERS).

F. Bar Dues

Oregon State Bar dues are paid by the County.

CONTACT US

Thank you for your interest in the Multnomah County District Attorney's office. If you have an interest in becoming a prosecutor here, we encourage you to spend a day in the office. Please contact Tom Cleary, Senior Deputy, for further information. You may e-mail him at thomas.cleary@mcdca.us or call him at 503-988-3875.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Our application form can be found online at www.mcdca.us. Once you have completed it and returned it to our office we will request the following:

A current resume;

Certified copies of your grades from college and law school with your class standing; and

Written recommendations from three individuals, two of whom are members of the legal profession.

Please call Ms. Jamila Williams, our employment coordinator, at 503-988-5706 if you have any questions.

Please note: We encourage our Deputy District Attorneys to live within Multnomah County.

If you have further questions after the interview, please contact our Don Rees (Division III), 503-988-3134, Charles Sparks (Division I), 503-988-3717 or Kirsten Snowden (Division II), 503-988-3177.

Thank you for your interest in employment with the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office.

ROD UNDERHILL
District Attorney