City of Bellingham
Classification Specification

CLASS TITLE	**Court Clerk**
DEPARTMENT	**Municipal Court**
UNION:	**1937**
SG:	**108**
CS:	**No**
FLSA:	**Y**
EEO/SOC CODE:	**AS/ 43-4031**

NATURE OF WORK:

Courtroom operation functions include scheduling and docketing; coordinating cases with the law and justice community and the public; and arrangements for bench and jury trials. Probation tracking functions include acting as the judge's liaison and compliance officer for court-ordered probation or evaluation processes, pre- or post-trial, involving misdemeanor offenders. Accounting functions include booking and adjusting court and parking fines, fees, time payment agreements, collection accounts, and Department of Licensing releases. Mail and counter receipting of cash, credit cards, and checks; daily reconciliation and preparation of bank deposits; intake of bail bonds and trust fund deposits. The Court Clerk works to minimize errors in court processes and procedures or identifies ethical breaches which may impact case disposition and involve substantial liability and judicial consequences for the citizen, City, or Court Clerk. The specialist ensures compliance with Washington State and local court rules and procedures by following designed procedures, processes and systems.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The Court Clerk job is a highly specialized position requiring the technical knowledge and judgment to coordinate court processes, including working with confidential or sensitive information in a volatile environment. It requires the skill and knowledge to maintain the records associated with a municipal court setting.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Positions report to the Chief Deputy Court Clerk or the Court Administrator. The Court Accounting Technician may assign work. Positions assigned to the classification function independently under general supervision and with comprehensive knowledge of complex applicable City, state and municipal court codes, regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Prepares file for use in court which, depending on particular cases, may include police reports, original citations, treatment data, correspondence, and other confidential information. Takes appropriate action to correct deficiencies. Determines appropriate reporting from the court to the various entities involved in the case as well as outside agencies and electronic data systems.

2. Assists the Municipal Court judge at all courthouse and jail hearings to ensure the integrity of court operations by recording proceedings, maintaining logs, marking exhibits, documenting findings, and processing orders of the court. Composes the narrative for the court docket. Establishes receivable accounts for fines and other court costs. Sets case tracking for order compliance.

3. Provides a full range of customer services to the public at the lobby counter. Receipts parking and court payments. Assists with completion of time payment and community service documents. Explains court findings, directives and collection procedures to defendants. Accepts warrant surrenders and notifies the court staff and/or law enforcement as needed. Reconciles cash drawer on a daily basis, clears the credit card reconciliation, prepares and seals the bank deposit documents. Verifies internal audit checks with other cashiers.

4. Exercises judgment in taking appropriate remedial action for recalling warrants, no contact orders, driver's license suspensions, or collection actions in situations that are in error or with unusual circumstances. Responsible for final verification and release of no contact orders, firearm orders, and arrest warrants to various law enforcement, state, and local agencies.

5. Acts as bailiff for jury trials. Assists judge in the jury selection process, records proceedings, marks and safeguards all exhibits and evidence. Responsible for set-up and maintenance of audio-visual equipment used in the proceedings.

6. Assists in scheduling hearings, pre-trial motions, bench and jury trials. Analyzes schedule for recommended modifications and resolves schedule conflicts with the attorneys, pro se defendants and law enforcement.

7. Under the guidance of applicable City, state, and municipal codes, regulations, policies and procedures, assists with coordinating day-to-day activities, including making appropriate decisions for distribution of reports, hearing notices, and pertinent correspondence to the prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, and various other entities and individuals. Issues summonses and witness subpoenas. Assists in monitoring probationers to assure compliance with court orders. Corresponds with community agencies regarding probationers.

8. Responsible for the accuracy of the records pertaining to case dispositions and convictions. Certifies and enters judgments into the state and federal judicial information systems as permanent records. Issues driver's license suspension orders to the Department of Licensing and vehicle impound releases.

9. Screens and assigns individuals for indigent defense counsel by interviewing the defendant for personal financial data and analyzing the individual's ability to pay.

10. Researches and compiles defendant criminal and infraction histories and other ad hoc statistical reports from a variety of state and local electronic databases to support judicial hearings, decisions and public disclosure requests.

11. Prepares documents and digital recordings for response to individual or agency subpoenas. Testifies and certifies the authenticity of documents in municipal, district, or superior courts.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Telephone responsibilities, including responding to questions from the public and providing information on Municipal Court procedures or schedules, parking citations, or public disclosure requests.
2. Assists with organizing, updating, maintaining, purging and archiving databases, files, records and other documents.
3. Assists with training assignments for new specialists and/or on new legislative or procedural changes.
4. Assists other staff with assignments during peak workloads or during absences.
5. Performs similar related duties.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES):

Knowledge of:

- Working knowledge of Revised Code of Washington, Municipal Code, Municipal Court procedures and processes, state and local court rules.
- Working knowledge of cash control and basic accounting procedures.
- Proper English usage, spelling, punctuation, grammar, formatting and proofreading.

Skill in:

- Problem solving, organization, interpersonal sensitivity, adaptability, stress tolerance, and time management.
- Strong oral communication skills to interact, in person and on the telephone, with diverse individuals including employees, other City departments and citizens, especially in stressful situations.
- Strong skills in data entry, ten-key, and computer software operations to include word processing and spreadsheet applications.

Ability to:

- Complete detailed work accurately and with minimal supervision in an atmosphere of frequent interruptions.
- Learn and retain Municipal Court procedures and keep current with changes in legislation. Ability to understand and assist in the implementation of new rules and practices.
- Utilize the Washington State Judicial Information System (JIS) software system or equivalent.
- Maintain a problem-solving approach while dealing with interpersonal conflict or hostility.

- Handle emergency situations and determine the appropriate level of response as they arise in the courtroom, jail or at the customer service counter.
- Articulate policies and procedures to citizens and others in the criminal justice system.
- Work as part of a team and serve as the liaison to officers of the court.
- Accurately interpret and apply written and oral court procedures.
- Willingness and ability to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information accessed through working with court cases.
- Maintain reliable and punctual attendance.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical ability to perform essential functions of the job including:
    - Frequently operate a computer and read a computer screen or typewritten page;
    - Frequently communicate verbally;
    - Move between work sites;
    - Occasional lifting of boxes or equipment weighing up to 40 lbs.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in a courtroom environment and in a congested, fast-paced office environment. Some assignments require working in the county jail and exposure to pathogens. Possibility of exposure to hostile, offensive language and the risk of physical harm associated with the emotional climate of court proceedings. Position may be exposed to graphic evidence of offenses and potentially hazardous physical and chemical evidence. Counter assignments routinely include interactions with angry, volatile or mentally ill individuals who may be verbally abusive and/or threatening.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Two years of clerical experience working in a court, probation, police record services or legal environment.

OR

- Three years progressively responsible clerical experience with a focus on complex data entry, scheduling, recordkeeping and bookkeeping including two years of experience providing support directly to the public or external customers. Two years of college level education in criminal justice, sociology, paralegal, business administration/accounting may be substituted for two years of general clerical experience.

- Ability to type 45 wpm NET

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Employment contingent upon passing a criminal convictions and local background check.

- Some assignments may require access to law enforcement databases. Access to these databases requires fingerprinting and a more extensive examination of an individual's criminal history.
- Must be willing to sign confidentiality agreements with the State of Washington and the Court in regard to ethical standards and database access and use.
- May be required to work overtime as required for jury trials or to process materials with legal deadlines.

PREPARED BY: L. Storck

REVIEWED BY: _____
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Court Administrator

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4/12

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4/13