



Request for Qualifications

Blake Attorney(s) in Skagit County, Office of Public Defense (OPD)

- Title:** Skagit County Blake Attorney, RFQ23011
- Expected Contract Period:** January 1, 2022 through up to June 30, 2023.
- Application Due Date:** Rolling. Applications will be reviewed as they are received, and positions are open until filled. *Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials as soon as possible.*
- Submit Applications by Email to:** Blake Defense Program
blake@opd.wa.gov
- Background:** On February 25, 2021, in *State v. Blake* 197 Wn.2d 170, 481 P.3d 521 (2021)), the Washington State Supreme Court ruled that Washington’s simple drug possession law was unconstitutional and void. Consequently, thousands of simple drug possession convictions need to be vacated, including convictions of currently incarcerated people. Public defenders across the state are working to deliver Blake relief to individuals under DOC control and/or individuals who have already served their sentences. A need remains in some counties for defense counsel to provide Blake relief to people serving DOC sentences, as well as for people who are no longer serving a sentence but need to obtain a vacation of their conviction.
- Position Summary:** OPD will enter into a contract or contracts with solo practice attorneys and/or multi-attorney organizations to will provide legal services to indigent clients potentially eligible for *Blake* relief from Skagit County convictions. Such services will include: coordination and communication with criminal justice stakeholders in the county; regularly reviewing DOC data provided by OPD to prioritize relief for incarcerated individuals; and client representation on resentencings and vacations. Contractors may be expected to coordinate in delivery of services with other Blake contractors in their county. Contractors will identify a minimum number of clients contractor expects to serve each month for vacation and/or resentencing. However, Contractor will not be guaranteed a minimum number of hours each month under this contract; hours available under this contract will vary month-to-month depending on local factors.

This RFQ is open to solo practice attorneys or multi-attorney offices.

Compensation:

Each contract will be compensated \$100.00 hourly, with a contract cap as applicable. The number of hours per week or month that will be available under the contract will vary depending contractor capacity and on local circumstances.

Required Qualifications:

OPD is seeking attorneys with the following qualifications:

- Licensed member in good standing with the Washington State Bar;
- Carries malpractice insurance;
- Is Class B felony-qualified under the WA Supreme Court Standards for Indigent Defense;
- Knowledge of Washington State criminal law;
- Experience with sentencing and offender scoring under the Washington's Sentencing Reform Act.
- Experience with criminal practice in Skagit County Superior Court.

Desired Qualifications:

In addition, the following qualifications are preferred:

- Class A felony-qualified
- Experience working with incarcerated people;
- Experience practicing law as a public defense attorney;
- Experience litigating CrR 7.8 motions; and
- Experience working with marginalized communities.

How to Apply:

Questions regarding applications and completed applications can be sent to blake@opd.wa.gov Please include the following information.

- **Cover Letter** describing how you meet the qualifications listed above
- Your **Resume** or Resume of Attorneys who would participate in delivery of these services
- 2 Professional **References**
- Answers to following questions:
 1. Please specify how many hours per week or month you expect to devote the contract.
 2. Please describe your current workload/practice, and how you would fit this contract into your existing workload.
 3. Please describe what efforts you would make to proactively coordinate with local criminal justice stakeholders, and fellow contractors, to create efficient and equitable Blake relief in county(ies) for which you are applying.
 4. Please describe what process you would use to ensure communication with incarcerated clients.

OPD reserves the right to amend this Request for Qualifications and reserves the right to refrain from contracting with any and all applicants. This Request for Qualifications does not obligate the state of Washington or OPD to contract for the services specified here.

The Washington State Office of Public Defense vigorously pursues diversity in the work force. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ, persons with disabilities, formerly incarcerated individuals, and military veterans are encouraged to apply.