

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MICHIGAN SENTENCING COMMISSION
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

THIS POSITION DESCRIPTION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT.

POSITION: Staff Counsel

AGENCY: Michigan Sentencing Commission

SALARY SCHEDULE RANGE: K

STATUS: Full-time

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE MICHIGAN SENTENCING COMMISSION:

The Michigan Sentencing Commission (MSC) was created in the Legislative Council by Public Act 273 of 2024. The duties of the MSC, which are described in MCL 769.34b, include making recommendations for modifications to the sentencing guidelines and conducting research on the sentencing guidelines and state and local sentencing and release policies. Additionally, the MSC has the authority to “recommend modifications to any law that affects sentencing or the use and length of incarceration.”

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE POSITION OF STAFF COUNSEL:

The Staff Counsel will provide legal and policy expertise to the Sentencing Commission, its staff, and the Michigan Legislature concerning sentencing guidelines issues and other sentencing policy questions.

This position reports to the Chief of Staff of the Michigan Sentencing Commission and will support the Chief of Staff’s work. The Staff Counsel may also be asked to assist the Research Director with research projects, including drafting reports.

EXAMPLES OF WORK:

- Consults regularly with the Chief of Staff of the Sentencing Commission on Commission priorities, operations, and emerging policy issues.
- Supports the Commission’s research and policy work and helps produce reports, memoranda, policy briefings, and other knowledge products to inform Commission members, staff, and other Commission stakeholders.
- Provides information, briefings, and analysis to sentencing commissioners, legislators, legislative staff, and Executive Branch officials.
- Engages stakeholders, including state agencies, courts, prosecutors, defense organizations, and advocacy groups, in the development of sentencing policy recommendations, and helps respond to stakeholder inquiries and questions.
- Represents the Commission in meetings, presentations, and public forums as assigned.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

MISSION STATEMENT PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

- Displays a team-oriented attitude toward co-workers and other Legislative Council staff.
- Provides high-quality services and products to members of the Commission, the Legislature, and other customers.
- Acts in a professional manner.
- Takes initiative in improving one's knowledge, skills, and judgments to better serve the Commission and the Legislature.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES THE EMPLOYEE SHALL EXHIBIT IN THE POSITION:

- **Knowledge of Michigan's Criminal Justice System:**
 - The Staff Counsel must have a comprehensive understanding of Michigan's felony sentencing system and Michigan's sentencing guidelines, as well as knowledge of the criminal justice system in Michigan more generally.
 - Staff Counsel will be the Commission staff expert on Michigan's Sentencing Guidelines, the felony sentencing process, and related policy questions.
- **Strong Communication Skills:**
 - Communicate effectively, verbally and in writing, with legislators, government leaders, commission stakeholders, and the public.
 - Experience drafting reports and other knowledge products in a government or academic setting preferred.
 - Experience presenting to government and public audiences a plus.
- **Familiarity With Commission's Stakeholder Groups:**
 - The Staff Counsel must have familiarity with the stakeholder groups represented on the Commission, and work well with these constituencies, as well as with legislators and staff.
 - Prior experience in a legal or policy-oriented government staff role is preferred.
- **Other Necessary Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**
 - Organize projects and workflow, manage competing deadlines, and (as needed) supervise staff, contractors, and interns effectively.
 - Confidently use standard hardware, operating system, and print functions of a PC, as well as email and electronic timekeeping systems.

- Confidently use Microsoft Office Suite software applications to compose documents and presentations.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POSITION:

- A juris doctor degree, an active license to practice law in Michigan, and previous professional experience in criminal law are requirements for applicants.
- Availability to work from the Michigan Sentencing Commission's offices in Lansing during business hours is required. A hybrid schedule can be negotiated, but the expectation is that most workdays will be in-person at the office.
- Must be willing and able to work overtime as required.

Approved February 27, 2026