

My name is Dwaine Chase; I am an Investigator II for the Public Defender Service assigned to the Hartford JD Office I have been working for the division for over two years. Prior to joining the division I was a Police Officer for the City of Meriden, I retired in my fourteenth year of service due to an injury. As we are well aware the job as a Police Officer can be very dangerous and is rightfully included as a hazardous duty position.

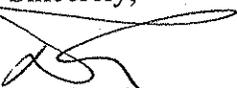
When I joined the division I was surprised to find that Investigators were not included under hazardous duty, although Investigators are not first responders or emergency responders the job of an Investigator is similar in many ways to that of Police work, we are required to work in dangerous environments; investigating and canvassing in and around buildings and areas where homicides, robberies, shootings, and other violent crimes occur. Many residents in these buildings and neighborhoods have been victims of some sort of violent crime and the possibility for us to become victims is very real as well.

Other hazards we face are residents some times feel threatened by our presence; we are required to attempt to find and speak with independent witnesses, listed witnesses, family members and friends of our clients, and at times family members and friends of victims. At times some of the above listed people are very displeased because of the situation and can become aggressive toward us.

We are required to meet with clients in correctional facilities who are accused of very violent crimes; some of them are very unhappy with the way their case is going and turn their hostilities toward us. Some of our clients are diagnosed with HIV and other diseases which also creates hazards to Investigators.

I feel that because of these reasons Public Defender Investigators deserve to be and should be classified under hazardous duty.

Sincerely,



Dwaine Chase
Investigator II