



Assistant City Attorney

Purpose of the role:

Under general direction, provides expert legal counsel for the City on a wide variety of complex legal matters; functions as a principal assistant to the City Attorney; investigates, evaluates and resolves complex legal matters for the City; represents the City in litigation; receives and reviews claims and lawsuits against the City and recommends settlements; conducts legal research and drafts legal documents; assists in training, motivating, and evaluating less experienced attorneys; and performs related duties as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

An Assistant City Attorney assists the City Attorney in the management and supervision of the City Attorney's Office. The incumbent may assign and oversee the completion of legal work by other attorneys. An incumbent in this class provides legal services and counsel on a wide range of legal issues for City departments, City Council, City Planning Commission and other boards, commissions and committees. While expertise may be gained in a specialized area of municipal law, the incumbent assumes responsibility for legal matters in any area as assigned by the City Attorney.

An Assistant City Attorney is distinguished from a Deputy City Attorney in that the former class is responsible for assisting in the management of the City Attorney's Office and is responsible for the more complex cases involving a higher degree of sensitivity and greater risk and consequences for the City.

The following duties are typical for this classification. Incumbents may not perform all of the listed duties and/or may be required to perform additional or different duties from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assist in planning, organizing, controlling, integrating and evaluating the work of the City Attorney's Office; develops, implements and monitors long-term plans, goals and objectives focused on achieving the City's mission and City Council priorities; participates in managing and directing the development, implementation and evaluation of plans, policies, systems and procedures to achieve annual department goals and work standards.
- Participates in the selection, training, motivation and evaluation of assigned personnel; provides or coordinates staff training; works with employees to correct deficiencies; implements discipline and termination procedures.
- Plans and evaluates staff performance; establishes performance requirements and personal development targets; regularly monitors performance and provides coaching for performance improvement and development; makes decisions on compensation and other

rewards to recognize performance; takes disciplinary action, up to and including termination, to address performance deficiencies, in accordance with the City's Personnel Rules and Regulations.

- Provides leadership and works with staff to develop and retain highly competent, customer service-oriented staff through selection, compensation, training, and day-to-day management practices that support the City's mission and values.
- Provides legal advice to City departments, City Council , City Planning Commission and other boards and committees on a wide range of municipal law; conducts research and provides opinions and advice regarding the duties, powers, functions and obligations of City departments and related bodies.
- Researches legal issues and statutory and case law; drafts and reviews opinions, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, leases, deeds and other legal documents and instruments; approves ordinances, resolutions and contracts as to form and legality.
- Represents the City in civil and criminal litigation, including performing all phases of pretrial, trial and appellate work; develops strategy, prepares briefs, drafts pleadings, motions and arguments, and conducts discovery and depositions in preparation for presentation of the City's case; files motions and briefs; represents the City in court.
- Attends meetings of and provides advice to the City Council, Planning Commission and other official boards and commissions as requested by the City Attorney; represents the City in administrative hearings before City bodies and state and federal agencies; represents the City in negotiations to resolve issues involving litigation risk.
- Monitors and prepares comments on proposed federal and state legislation and regulations; recommends changes in City policies and practices in order to comply with legal requirements.
- Conducts legal review of all claims filed against the City; makes determinations regarding assignment of cases to outside counsel.
- Assists other attorneys, whether City staff or outside counsel, in all phases of legal work on complex litigation.
- Recommends selection of and performs case management on legal work assigned to outside counsel; serves as liaison between outside legal counsel and City officials on specialized legal issues.
- Responds to correspondence and public inquiries on legal matters related to City business.
- Provides staff assistance to the City Attorney; completes special projects as assigned; represents the City at various meetings and events; prepares and presents staff reports and other necessary correspondence.
- Maintains effective relationships with a variety of community

organizations, groups and individual to promote positive public relations; coordinates assigned activities with those of other departments and outside agencies and organizations.

- Maintains current knowledge of legal issues and precedents, in particular related to civil and administrative law; attends and participates in professional group meetings; participates in professional development activities; reads publications relevant to area of assignment
- Performs related duties as required.

The following generally describes the knowledge and ability required to enter the job and/or be learned within a short period of time in order to successfully perform the assigned duties.

Knowledge of:

- Operations, services, and activities of a City Attorney's office.
- Advanced legal principles, practices, and procedures of civil, criminal, constitutional, and administrative law.
- Advanced methods and techniques of legal research.
- Duties, powers, and limitations of a city government.
- Legal principles and developments.
- Appellate practices.
- Judicial procedures and rules of evidence.
- Legal precedents and court decisions impacting assigned litigation area.
- Pleadings and effective practices and techniques in the presentation of court cases.
- Municipal government organization, structure and functional responsibilities.
- Office procedures, methods, and equipment including computers and applicable software applications.
- Principles and techniques of public relations.
- Principles and practices of management, supervision, training, and performance evaluation.
- Pertinent federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations.

***Desired
Minimum
Qualifications:***

Ability to:

- Provide significant managerial assistance in directing the operations of a City Attorney's office.
- Exercise sound, expert independent judgment within general policy guidelines.
- Identify and respond to sensitive community and organizational issues, concerns, and needs.
- Plan, organize, direct, and coordinate the work of lower level staff.
- Delegate authority and responsibility.
- Select, supervise, train, and evaluate staff.
- Provide expert legal advice to City departments.
- Properly interpret and make decisions in accordance with laws, regulations and policies.
- Read, understand, interpret, apply and explain codes, regulations and other written materials.
- Prepare clear and concise legal documents, including but not

limited to, briefs, ordinances, resolutions, correspondence and supporting documents.

- Conduct research on legal problems and prepare sound legal opinion.
- Present statements of fact, law and argument clearly and logically.
- Represent the City effectively in hearings, courts of law and meetings.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Respond and perform assigned duties in the event of a City-declared emergency.

Competencies:

- Effective Communicator
- Strategic Thinker
- Results Oriented
- Problem Solver and Decision Maker
- Planner and Organizer
- Skill and Career Development Coach
- Technically Knowledgeable

Any combination of education and experience that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Education/Training:

Graduation from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association with a Juris Doctorate degree.

**Education and
Experience
Guidelines:**

Experience:

Seven years of experience in the practice of civil law and civil litigation defense, preferably in a municipal setting.

Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:

Current membership in the State Bar of California.
A valid Class C California driver's license is required.

The conditions herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential job functions.

**Physical and
Environmental
Conditions:**

Physical: Sufficient physical ability to work in an office setting; sit, stand, walk, reach, twist, turn, kneel, bend, squat, and/or stoop for prolonged periods of time; perform duties requiring grasping, repetitive hand movement, and fine coordination; and operate office equipment. **Vision:** See in the normal visual range with or without correction; vision sufficient to read computer screens and printed documents and to operate office equipment. **Hearing:** Hear in the normal audio range with or without correction.

Environment: Standard office setting; occasional court room environment.

Class specifications are only intended to present a descriptive summary of the range of duties and responsibilities associated with specified positions. Therefore, specifications **may not include all** duties performed by individuals within a classification. In addition, specifications are intended to outline the **minimum** qualifications necessary for entry into the class and do not necessarily convey the final qualifications of incumbents within the position.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 3100, all public employees are required to serve as disaster service workers subject to such disaster service activities as may be assigned to them by their supervisor or by law.

Date Adopted: 7/5/03

Date Revised: