



## City Attorney

### ***Purpose of the role:***

Under general administrative direction, plans, organizes, and directs the operations, programs, and services of the City Attorney's Office; represents and advises the City Council and City officials in all legal matters pertaining to their offices; prosecutes criminal cases arising from violations of applicable laws and ordinances; represents the City in all actions or legal proceedings; coordinates assigned activities with other departments and outside agencies; provides highly responsible and complex administrative support to the City Manager's Office; and performs related duties as required.

### ***Distinguishing Characteristics:***

The City Attorney is a department head with responsibility for policy development, program planning, fiscal management, administration, and operational direction of all departmental functions. The incumbent is responsible for developing and accomplishing department objectives and goals within guidelines established by the City Council and City Manager. Assignments are broad in scope and allow for a high degree of administrative discretion in their execution.

***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:***

- Plans, organizes, controls, integrates and evaluates 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; manages and directs the development, implementation and evaluation of plans, policies, systems and procedures to achieve annual department goals and work standards.
- Selects, trains, motivates, and evaluates 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.
- Establishes, within City policy, appropriate service and staffing levels; monitors and evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of

service delivery methods and procedures; allocates resources accordingly.

- 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.
- Directs the development of and monitors performance against the annual department budget; approves the forecast of funds needed for staffing, equipment, materials, and supplies; approves expenditures and implements budgetary adjustments as appropriate and necessary.
- Oversees and represents the City in litigation cases; handles all aspects of assigned cases/claims including investigation, pleading preparation, discovery, law and motion, court appearances, settlement negotiations, legal research, witness preparation and trials.
- Performs legal research and prepares legal opinions on various legal problems for City departments, City Council, and City Boards and Commissions; studies and interprets the constitution, laws, court decisions, ordinances, and other legal authorities to give legal advice or prepare opinions.
- Researches, reviews, and prepares proposed ordinances, resolutions, policies, and other legislation.
- Oversees and/or investigates claims by or against the City and recommends action to be taken; assists in or prepares cases for hearings; represents the municipality in hearings; prepares cases for trial; tries cases in court as necessary.
- Ensures City Council actions are legally supportable by providing legal advice and services to the Council; assures City Council's actions are in accordance with City policies and City Charter.
- Provides legal services to City Officials and employees as required by City Charter; Responds to inquiries and complaints from citizens, government officials, and City Department Heads.
- Provides staff assistance to the City Manager; 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 new trends and innovations in the field of municipal law; attends and participates in professional group meetings; participates in professional development activities; reads publications relevant to area of assignment.
- Explains, justifies, and defends department programs, policies, and

activities; negotiates and resolves sensitive and controversial issues; responds to and resolves difficult and sensitive citizen inquiries and complaints.

- 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.
- Principles and practices of program development and administration.
- 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 municipal budget preparation and administration.
- Principles and practices of management, supervision, training, and performance evaluation.
- Pertinent federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations.

***Desired  
Minimum  
Qualifications:***

Ability to:

- Manage and direct the operations of a City Attorney's office.
- Develop and administer departmental goals, objectives, and procedures.
- Exercise sound, expert independent judgment within general policy guidelines.
- Analyze and assess programs, policies, and operational needs and make appropriate adjustments.
- 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.
- Perform difficult and complex analysis and research, identify alternative solutions, project consequences of proposed actions, and implement recommendations in support of goals.
- Exercise sound, independent judgment within general policy guidelines and legal parameters.

- Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods and techniques.
- 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.
- Prepare and administer large and complex budgets.
- Prepare clear, concise, and comprehensive administrative and technical reports.
- Read and interpret complex data, information, and documents.
- Work on multiple, concurrent projects with strict deadlines and with frequent interruptions.
- Utilize standard office equipment including computers and related software applications.
- Understand, interpret, explain and apply applicable federal, state and local policies, laws and regulations.
- 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.

*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:**

Ten years of increasingly responsible experience in the practice of law including trial experience and at least three years as a City Attorney or Assistant City Attorney in a small municipality.

**Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:**

Requires admission to practice law in California.

Possession of a valid class C California driver's license.

*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:** Sufficient physical ability to work in an office setting; sit, stand, walk, reach, twist, turn, kneel, bend, squat, and/or stoop for prolonged

**Physical and  
Environmental  
Conditions:**

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.

*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: