

Senior Legal Assistant

<p>Purpose of the role:</p>	<p>Under general direction supervises, assigns, reviews, and participates in the work of staff responsible for providing office administrative and legal assistant support for the City Attorney's Office; performs a full range of varied difficult, sensitive, complex, highly responsible, and confidential legal, office administrative, secretarial, and technical support functions of a general or specialized nature in support of the City Attorney's Office with only occasional instruction or assistance; exercising judgment and initiative; relieves assigned staff of clearly defined and delegated administrative or technical detail; serves as liaison with other City departments, staff, outside agencies, and the general public; ensures work quality and adherence to established timelines, policies, and procedures; and performs related duties as assigned.</p>
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Distinguishing Characteristics:

The Senior Legal Assistant classification is distinguished from other assistant and office support classes in that incumbents in the Senior Legal Assistant class perform highly specialized tasks for the City Attorney's Office and assume responsibility for supervising and overseeing the work of office support staff and legal interns for the City Attorney's Office. Incumbents in the Senior Legal Assistant class perform the more difficult, complex, sensitive and responsible legal assistant and administrative and office support functions in a rapidly changing environment, requiring a thorough knowledge of legal procedures, terminology, court procedures, and precedents. This is the lead-level class in the Legal Assistant series in support of the City Attorney and legal staff which requires a significant degree of independent judgment.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

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.

- Plans, organizes, supervises, and evaluates the work of assigned staff; develops, implements, and monitors work plans to achieve goals and objectives; supervises and participates in developing, implementing, and evaluating plans, work processes, systems, and procedures to achieve annual goals, objectives, and work standards.
- Plans, organizes, directs, and evaluates the performance of assigned staff; establishes performance requirements and personal development targets; regularly monitors performance and provides coaching for performance improvement and development; recommends compensation and provides other rewards to recognize performance; recommends disciplinary action, up to and including termination, to address performance deficiencies, in accordance with the City's Personnel Rules and Regulations.
- Participates in the selection of assigned law office support staff; provides or coordinates staff training; works with employees to correct deficiencies.

- Establishes schedules and methods for providing law office support services; identifies resource needs; reviews needs with appropriate management staff; allocates resources accordingly.
- Provides leadership and works with staff to ensure a high performance, customer service-oriented work environment that supports achieving the department's and the City's mission, objectives, and values.
- Assists in developing and compiling the annual budget for the City Attorney's Office; monitors preparation and distribution of budget and financial reports; participates in the development of the assigned program budget; forecasts funds needed for staffing, equipment, materials, and supplies; monitors and approves expenditures; recommends budgetary adjustments as necessary.
- Performs a wide variety of complex and responsible legal secretarial and administrative duties in support of staff in the City Attorney's Office; independently plan and coordinate assigned administrative support functions and services including investigating and answering complaints and providing assistance in resolving operational and administrative problems, and participates in developing, implementing, and evaluating plans, work processes, systems, and procedures to achieve department annual goals, objectives, and work standards.
- Processes court filings for pleadings, and other matters; serves discovery documents; sets-up and calendars court appearances and depositions; serves legal documents on outside counsel; mails and sets-up appropriate service of process; sends legal and related materials to outside counsel, insurance adjusters, and related agencies.
- Receives, processes, and monitors liability claims filed against the City; reviews claims and department responses to claims, processes response to the claimant and monitors for filed litigations within the statute to ascertain that proper documents are present; sets up new claim files and add the claim to annual claim report; sends information to the City's insurance adjuster for reserve purposes; requests investigative reports from various City departments; requests reports from outside agencies including law enforcement departments; calendars and monitors claim procedures deadlines.
- Submits agenda transmittals for City Council meetings with the City Attorney's recommendations; maintains logs to ensure deadlines are met.
- Drafts memoranda, correspondence, City Council transmittals, ordinances, resolutions, and other documents and reports; ensures materials and reports for signature are accurate and complete. Reviews, verifies, and proofreads documents and other material for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with City standards, requirements, policies, and procedures as well as court requirements. Finalizes deeds, contracts, complaints, and a full range of documents related to area of assignment; keeps current on filing and various deadlines; responds to requests for production of legal documents; copies, mails, emails, faxes, and arranges delivery of documents; prepares proof of service for the serving of legal documents; determines the priority of and routes incoming correspondence.
- Composes and distributes correspondence to claimants, attorneys, insurance companies, and related agencies; draft releases according to facts of the claim; maintains active files and closes and

purges inactive files in accordance with the City's records retention schedule.

- Proofreads documents for attorneys; checks for proper format; makes any necessary corrections as to spelling and/or grammar; provides suggestions for content changes if wording is unclear.
- Serves as liaison between the City Attorney's Office and the general public, City staff, and outside groups and agencies; provides general and specialized information and assistance regarding assigned function that may require the use of judgment, tact, and sensitivity and the interpretation of policies, rules, and procedures as appropriate; explains programs, policies, and activities related to specific program area of assignment; receives and screens office and telephone callers; responds to complaints and requests for information relating to assigned responsibilities; refers callers and/or complaints to appropriate City staff for further assistance as needed and/or takes or recommends actions to resolve the complaint.
- Maintains the master calendar for the City Attorney's Office including calendar of activities, meetings, and various events for assigned staff; logs and controls assignments, deadlines, and requests; coordinates activities and meetings with other City departments, the public, and outside agencies; coordinates arrangements and sets up meeting rooms; notifies participants; prepares and/or assembles meeting materials; verifies and monitors timelines for all legal filings, appearances, and deadlines; logs all Summons and Complaints, schedules response dates and routes to assigned staff; sets up litigation files; sends complaint, legal documents, and materials to counsel; monitors all active litigation files; interacts with City's insurance adjuster/risk management consultant on claims and lawsuits.
- Maintains the law library; reshelves materials; orders and updates legal reference materials including computer research services.
- Drafts litigation documents; and arranges for service of process; assigns and monitors the completion of discovery requests; reviews responses and transmits information to counsel.
- Performs on-line legal research requested by attorneys and other City Staff.
- Drafts contracts; prepares budget appropriation and purchase orders; pays invoices and maintains files for cost accounting.
- Coordinates, makes, processes, and confirms staff travel arrangements; prepare itineraries, requests travel advances; compiles expense reports.
- Attends to a variety of office administrative details such as establishing and maintaining subject, project and tickler files, directing and implementing records management systems, arranging for the repair of equipment, ordering and maintaining an inventory of office supplies, transmitting information, and maintaining up-to-date reference materials.
- Proofs and enters timesheet information in the City's payroll system; distributes timesheets; maintains attendance and time off record.
- Receives and distributes department mail; tracks materials from other departments for review and/or signature.
- Serves on special City committees and task forces.

- Maintains current knowledge of new trends and innovations in the field of law office practices; attends and participates in professional group meetings; participates in professional development activities.
- 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 law office administrative support program.
- Legal office management principles, practices, methods, procedures, terminology, and documents.
- Court rules and procedures.
- Standard legal references and their contents.
- Government liability claim requirements and procedures.
- Statutory deadlines for responding to and/or filing pleading documents.
- Organization, operation, and services of the City and of outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities.
- Principles of supervision, training, and performance evaluation.
- Pertinent federal, state, and local laws, codes and regulations.
- Functions of public agencies, including the role of an elected Council and appointed boards and commissions.
- Rules and procedures governing the notice and conduct of public meetings.
- Organization, operation, and services of the City and of outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities.
- Office procedures, methods, and equipment including computers.
- Computer applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, and databases.
- Principles and practices of sound business communication.
- Principles of business letter writing and report preparation.
- Records management principles and procedures including record keeping and filing principles and practices.
- Methods and techniques of proper phone etiquette.
- Mathematical principles.
- English usage, spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Customer service and public relations methods and techniques.

***Desired
Minimum
Qualifications:***

Ability to:

- Supervise, coordinate, and direct law office administrative and secretarial support functions for the City Attorney's Office.
- Select, train, supervise, organize, and review the work of assigned staff involved in providing law office administrative and secretarial support functions.
- Recommend and implement goals, objectives, policies, and procedures for providing law office administrative and secretarial support functions.
- Perform a full range of varied complex, sensitive, highly responsible, and confidential legal secretarial and office administrative support functions of a general or specialized nature

in support of the City Attorney's Office with only occasional instruction or assistance.

- Understand the organization and operation of the City and of outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities.
- Understand, interpret, and apply general and specific administrative and departmental policies and procedures.
- Interpret and apply applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations.
- Operate office equipment including computers and supporting word processing, spreadsheet, and database applications.
- Learn and effectively utilize various software applications.
- Learn and apply new information and skills.
- Establish, organize, maintain, and research complex, specialized, and extensive legal office files, records and calendars.
- Type or enter data at a speed necessary for successful job performance.
- Participate in researching, compiling, analyzing, and interpreting data.
- Independently compose correspondence and prepare standard legal documents from brief instructions.
- Prepare clear, accurate, and concise records and reports.
- Organize, research, and maintain legal and office files and calendars.
- Organize, set priorities and exercise sound independent judgment within areas of responsibility.
- Perform mathematical calculations.
- Work under steady pressure with frequent interruptions and a high degree of public contact by phone or in person.
- Plan and organize work to meet needs, expectations and rapidly changing priorities and deadlines of elected and appointed officials.
- Understand and carry out oral and written directions.
- Respond tactfully, clearly, concisely, and appropriately to inquiries from the public, press, or other agencies on sensitive issues in area of responsibility.
- Exercise good judgment and maintain confidentiality in maintaining critical and sensitive information, records, and reports.
- 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:

- Strategic Thinker
- Results Oriented
- Customer-Focused
- Flexible/Adaptable
- Planner and Organizer
- Interpersonally Effective
- 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 and Experience Guidelines:

Education:

Equivalent to completion of the twelfth grade. Supplemental specialized college level coursework in business administration, office management or legal secretarial science or related coursework

Experience:

Six years of increasingly responsible office administrative and/or secretarial experience including three years of experience in a law office or legal department. Experience in a municipal government setting is highly desirable.

Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:

A valid Class C California driver's license is required.

Possession of, or ability to obtain, Legal Assistant Certification is desirable.

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; lift, drag, and push/pull files, paper, and documents weighing up to 25 pounds; 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; frequent interaction with City staff, outside legal staff, litigants and claimants and the public.

*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: 3/22/11
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