



County of El Dorado  
June 1990

## PARALEGAL I/II

### DEFINITION

Under immediate or general supervision, performs paraprofessional legal support work including legal research and writing, interviewing clients, preparing standard documents, and assisting in case preparation; and performs related duties as assigned.

### DISTINGUISHING SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives immediate or general supervision from assigned supervisory or management personnel.  
Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

### CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Paralegal I: This is the entry-level ~~class in this~~ paraprofessional classification in the Paralegal series. Initially under ~~close~~immediate supervision, incumbents ~~with well developed legal office skills or with a sound educational background~~learn and perform the ~~more~~ routine support duties while learning the more skilled and complex work. ~~This class is alternately staffed with Paralegal II, and incumbents may advance to the higher level after gaining paralegal duties. As experience and/or certification is gained, assignments become more varied, complex, and demonstrating proficiency, which meet the qualifications of the higher level class.~~

~~difficult; close supervision and frequent review of work lessen as an incumbent demonstrates skill~~  
Paralegal II is the journey level of the series, fully competent to perform a wide range of client interviewing and complex legal support ~~the~~ work. Responsibilities may include directing the work of or training others in work procedures and techniques. The emphasis of the work may vary, depending upon which legal area incumbents are assigned; ~~however all~~ independently. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions ~~are characterized by a knowledge of legal processes and by at the II-level, but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less~~ independent ~~decision-making within~~ discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established guidelines. ~~This class is distinguished from Legal Analyst, which performs the most complex legal research and writing duties.~~ structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise.

Paralegal II: This is the fully qualified journey-level paraprofessional classification in the Paralegal series. Positions at this level are distinguished from the I-level by the performance of the full range of duties as assigned, working independently, and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit.

Positions in the Paralegal class series are flexibly staffed and positions at the II-level are normally filled by advancement from the I-level, after gaining the knowledge, skill, and experience which meet the qualifications for and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work of the higher-level class.

### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES/TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)**

- Prepares a variety of legal documents such as motions, appeals, and briefs; completes and files documents, following established procedures.
- Interviews various clients, witnesses, and others to obtain information regarding cases, eligibility, determinations, ~~conservator ships~~conservatorships, and other activities and functions related to the department to which assigned.—
- Explains procedures, regulations, and policies to those interviewed and the public; refers individuals to other sources of information and assistance as appropriate.
- Performs legal research under the direction of an attorney; gathers ~~information~~information regarding laws, ordinances, regulations, court decisions, and similar materials related to assigned support area.—
- Screens calls, visitors, and incoming mail; provides information to the public by phone or in person requiring an understanding of department services and County policies and procedures; listens to questions and interprets and applies regulations, policies, procedures, systems, rules, and precedents according to existing guidelines; responds to citizen and staff inquiries and complaints; refers citizens to the appropriate department source; coordinates or resolves problems of a moderate nature when appropriate.
- Researches and downloads confidential data from varying systems.
- Reviews and scans various documents received from internal and external sources.
- Organizes, indexes, and summarizes research results, including opinions, testimony, police and probation reports, and other documents.—
- ~~Prepares a variety of legal documents such as motions, appeals and briefs; completes and files documents, following established procedures.—~~
- Confers with investigators regarding evidence and facts.
- Responds to inquiries and provides information as appropriate to the public, other County divisions or departments, other public agencies, outside counsel, and defendants regarding cases or legal matters handled by the work unit.
- Prepares a variety of correspondence and general written materials.
- ~~Organizes own work, sets priorities, and meets critical deadlines.—~~
- May direct the work of others on a project basis; may train others in work procedures.—
- May perform the duties of a ~~legal secretary~~Legal Secretary on a relief basis.
- ~~Attendance and punctuality that is observant of scheduled hours on a regular basis.—~~
- Performs related ~~work~~duties as assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

**NOTE:** ~~The level and scope of the knowledge and skills listed below are related to job duties as defined under Distinguishing Characteristics.~~  
Some knowledge and abilities may be gained by employees at the entry (I) level while in a learning capacity.

### **Knowledge of:**

- ⇒ ~~Legal research~~ Methods and techniques of legal research, discovery, fact investigation, and standard legal reference materials.
- ⇒ ~~Legal~~ Principles and practices of legal office terminology, processes, procedures, and the format for legal documents.
- ⇒ Techniques of investigative interviewing, ~~often when relations may be strained.~~
- ~~Record keeping~~ Criminal law and legal processes.
- The judicial structure.
- ⇒ Recordkeeping, report preparation, and filing methods.
- ~~Correct English usage, including spelling, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary.~~
- ⇒ Business arithmetic, including percentages and decimals.
- ~~Office administrative practices and procedures,~~ Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including filing, business letter writing and the operation of common office ~~the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.~~
- ⇒ Modern equipment— and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.

### **Skill in:**

- ~~Performing basic~~ Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

### **Ability to:**

- ⇒ Perform legal research and writing from varied sources—; identify more complex legal issues for further study.
- ~~Interviewing individuals of various socio-economic backgrounds in difficult situations.~~
- Preparing Prepare a variety of legal documents. Using
- ⇒ Use initiative and sound independent judgment within established guidelines.
- ~~Organizing and maintaining~~ Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, ordinances, statutes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- ⇒ Organize and maintain accurate records and files.
- ~~Organizing~~ Conduct investigative interviews.
- ⇒ Independently organize work, setting set priorities, meeting meet critical deadlines, and following

follow-up on assignments.

- ~~Establishing and maintaining~~ Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Effectively represent the department and the County in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- ⇒ Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of ~~the~~-work.

### **Other Requirements**

~~Specified positions may require possession of a valid driver's license. Certification as a Paralegal is desirable at the II level.~~

### **Education and Experience:**

*Any combination of the required experience, education, and training that would provide the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying.*

#### Paralegal I: **-EITHER**

Possession of certificate of completion from an accredited paralegal program or institution;

OR

Equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university, which includes a minimum of fifteen (15) semester units of coursework in law, paralegal studies, criminal justice, government, political science, or other closely related field;

OR

Fifteen (15) units of college level coursework in law, paralegal studies, criminal justice, government, political science, or other closely related field, and two (2) years of journey-level experience as a legal secretary or in providing responsible legal office assistance, **OR** completion of a paralegal studies program or equivalent college-level education experience in a classification equivalent to the County's class of Legal Secretary II.

Paralegal II: -In addition to the above, two (2) years of paralegal experience at a level equivalent to the County's class of Paralegal I.

**~~NOTE:~~ The above qualifications are typically accepted ways of obtaining the required knowledge and skills.**Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment and a satisfactory driving record.
- Possession of a paralegal certificate issued by an accredited paralegal program or institution is highly desirable.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various County and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with members of the public or with staff under emotionally stressful conditions while interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.