



DEPUTY ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Performs professional legal work in one of several specialized legal areas, including criminal prosecution, public defense, child support enforcement, civil litigation, or elder law. Provides strategic legal counsel and representation to County departments, employees, and the public on legal rights, obligations, and procedures. Handles high-stakes legal matters, including litigation, policy development, and multi-agency coordination. Assignments require advanced expertise and independent judgment and are focused within a single functional area, such as the District Attorney, Public Defender, Child Support Services, or Senior Citizens' Services.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

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

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the journey-level classification in the attorney series. Incumbents are fully capable of performing a broad and complex range of legal services and assignments with minimal supervision, exercising a high degree of independent judgment, discretion, and strategic decision-making. Positions in this class are distinguished from Associate Attorneys by the greater scope, complexity, and impact of the cases handled, which often require innovative solutions or involve significant implications.

EXAMPLE OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Performs the full range of routine to complex legal activities
- Represents the County in moderate to high-profile and multi-jurisdictional legal matters, including trials, hearings, and appeals with far-reaching implications.
- Leads negotiations, mediation, and resolution of cases with significant financial, operational, or policy impacts.
- Serves as a subject-matter expert and provides technical direction on specialized legal projects, offering mentorship and strategic oversight.
- Drafts and reviews legal documents.
- Conducts legal research and prepares opinions and strategies for cases involving complex or novel legal issues.
- Participates in negotiations and mediation to resolve legal disputes.
- May serve as a lead on legal projects or cases.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

Functional Area Duties

District Attorney

- Handles complex criminal prosecutions, including felonies and specialized caseloads.

- Prosecutes high-stakes felony cases, including homicide, major fraud, or organized crime.
- Directs investigations related to high-profile cases, providing oversight to law enforcement.
- Provides strategic oversight to law enforcement investigations, ensuring legal compliance in sensitive or multi-agency operations.
- Negotiates plea agreements and resolves cases through mediation.
- Interviews witnesses and victims; reviews and analyzes evidence, police reports, and other materials related to pending cases.
- May be assigned warrant review.

Public Defender and Alternate Public Defender

- Defends clients in complex felony and appellate cases, including capital crimes or constitutional law challenges.
- Manages complex defense cases, including high-stakes felonies and appeals.
- Manages cases involving mental health commitments and conservatorships.
- Supervises legal research and case preparation for intricate or precedent-setting litigation.

Child Support Services

- Handles cases requiring expertise in interstate and international child support enforcement.
- Oversees multi-jurisdictional child support cases and compliance with regulations.
- Represents the department in multi-jurisdictional child support cases.
- Prepares legal briefs and motions for appellate court proceedings.

Senior Citizens' Services

- Advocates in high-stakes cases involving complex elder abuse, large estates, or class-action disputes.
- Leads development of legal resources and community education programs tailored to senior legal issues.
- Provides legal representation in disputes involving senior housing and care facilities.
- Drafts detailed trusts, estate plans, and guardianship documents for elderly clients.
- Navigates multi-jurisdictional elder abuse cases in collaboration with external agencies.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Advanced principles and practices of civil, criminal, and administrative law.
- Judicial procedures and courtroom techniques.
- County government operations and functional responsibilities.
- Laws and regulations related to functional assignment areas, including federal and state codes.
- Professional ethics and standards of legal practice.
- Effective written and oral communication techniques.
- Techniques for interacting effectively with the public, government officials, and legal professionals.

Ability to:

- Develop innovative legal strategies to address unprecedented or evolving legal challenges.

- Define issues, perform legal research, analyze problems, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.
- Handle multiple cases and assignments simultaneously under tight deadlines.
- Serve as a trusted advisor on matters with significant legal, financial, or reputational consequences for the County.
- Work collaboratively within a team and with external stakeholders.
- Draft clear and persuasive legal documents and arguments.
- Represent the County effectively in legal proceedings.
- Communicate complex legal concepts to non-legal audiences.
- Present statements of fact, and law, and argue clearly and logically.
- Build and maintain positive relationships within the department and with external partners.

Education and Experience:

Possession of a Doctorate (J.D.) or Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) degree from an accredited law school;

AND

Active membership in the California State Bar;

AND

Five (5) years of increasingly responsible professional legal experience as a licensed practicing attorney, preferably with demonstrated expertise in the assigned functional area (e.g., criminal prosecution, public defense, child support enforcement, or elder law).

Licenses and Certifications:

Possession of, or ability to obtain and maintain, a valid California or Nevada Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; stamina to sit for extended periods of time and conduct detailed legal research; vision to read printed materials and computer screens; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in public forums. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in an office and courtroom environments with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Travel to various County locations, courts, and meeting sites is required. Employees may interact with upset or emotional individuals in the course of their duties.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Incumbents may be required to work extended hours, including evenings, weekends, and holidays, as needed to meet critical deadlines or respond to emergencies. Travel to attend court proceedings, meetings, and other work-related events is expected.