



SR. PARALEGAL

DEFINITION

Under direction, leads, trains, and performs the more complex and specialized paraprofessional legal support work, including legal research and writing, interviewing clients, supporting death penalty cases, writs, and appeals, and assisting in case preparation; provides lead direction and training and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives direction from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises technical and functional direction over lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the advanced/lead-level paraprofessional classification in the Paralegal class series. Incumbents work under direction and exercise a high level of discretion and independent judgment in performing the full range of routine to complex technical specialized (e.g., death penalty cases, complex writs, and appeals) paraprofessional paralegal duties. Incumbents also provide lead direction and training to a group of lower-level paralegal staff.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Provides lead direction, training, and work review; provides input into employee selection, evaluation, discipline, and work procedures.
- Sets work priorities, coordinates and schedules assignments, and establishes goals and objectives.
- Prepares a variety of complex and sensitive legal documents such as writs, motions, appeals, and briefs.
- Completes and files documents, following established procedures.
- Interviews various clients, witnesses, and others to obtain information regarding cases.
- Develops and explains procedures, regulations, and policies to those interviewed and to the public; refers individuals to other sources of information and provides assistance as appropriate.
- Assists with modifying, amending, and developing various letters, motions, and template wording.
- Performs complex legal research; gathers 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.
- 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.
- 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 material.
- May provide training to Attorney staff consistent with the areas of assignment.
- May perform the duties of a Legal Secretary on a relief basis.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles of providing functional direction and training.
- Methods and techniques of legal research, discovery, fact investigation, and standard legal reference materials.
- Principles and practices of legal office terminology, processes, procedures, and the format for legal documents.
- Techniques of investigative interviewing.
- Criminal law and legal processes.
- The judicial structure.
- Recordkeeping, report preparation, and filing methods.
- Business arithmetic, including percentages and decimals.
- 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 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.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

Ability to:

- Plan, organize, and coordinate the work of paralegal staff.
- Provide staff leadership and work direction.
- Train staff in work procedures.
- Coordinate multiple projects/assignments to meet critical deadlines.
- Perform legal research and writing from varied sources; identify more complex legal issues for further study.
- Prepare a variety of legal documents.
- Use initiative and sound independent judgment within established guidelines.
- 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.
- Conduct investigative interviews.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- 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 work.

Education and Experience:

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

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 a closely related field.

OR

Fifteen (15) units of college level coursework in law, paralegal studies, criminal justice, government, political science, or a closely related field; and

Three (3) years of journey-level paralegal experience equivalent to the County's class of Paralegal II.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain and maintain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment 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; 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.