



LEGAL SECRETARY I/II

DEFINITION

Under immediate or general supervision, performs varied and responsible specialized and confidential legal secretarial duties; composes and prepares correspondence; provides legal administrative support to attorneys, court officers, or other sworn department staff; assists with calendaring and scheduling; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

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

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Legal Secretary I: This is the entry-level classification in the Legal Secretary series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents learn and perform routine secretarial support to attorneys, court officers, or sworn law enforcement personnel requiring knowledge of terminology, formats, and procedures. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied, complex, and difficult; close supervision and frequent review of work lessen as an incumbent demonstrates skill to perform the work independently. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the II level, but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise.

Legal Secretary II: This is the fully qualified journey-level classification in the Legal Secretary 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. General procedures and guidelines are normally established by the secretarial lead or the attorneys, court officers, or sworn law enforcement personnel to which assigned. Responsibilities include regular contact with County staff and outside agencies in situations where tact and discretion are important. 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. Incumbents may be asked to provide training.

This class is distinguished from Sr. Legal Secretary in that the latter provides technical and functional direction to legal secretaries and/or administrative support staff and is responsible for the more complex work.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Performs general and legal secretarial duties related to the assigned functional area and department.
- Drafts pleadings, subpoenas, contracts, ordinances, and other legal document correspondence, memoranda, and reports, depending upon the office to which assigned, from notes, brief instruction, dictated tapes, or printed materials.
- Calendars and schedules court dates, meetings, and appointments for attorneys; files or arranges for the filing of legal briefs and other necessary paperwork with the court.
- Processes a variety of legal agreements, contracts, etc., following attorney's instructions.

- Initiates specified correspondence such as transmittal letters for signature by appropriate staff; reviews finished materials for completeness, accuracy, format, compliance with policies and procedures, and appropriate English usage.
- Collects information from a variety of sources pertinent to area of assignment; compiles data as necessary and prepares routine reports as required.
- Types and drafts a wide variety of finished documents, including both general and legal-related correspondence and documents; may use word processing equipment to input or retrieve data, and prepare reports using an on-line computer system.
- Receives and screens visitors and telephone calls, providing information regarding the particular area of assignment, which may require the use of judgment and interpretation of policies and procedures or taking messages or referring the caller to the proper attorney.
- Organizes and maintains the law library as well as chronological and other files.
- Relieves attorneys of certain administrative matters by following up on projects, transmitting information, keeping informed of pertinent activities, and scheduling and arranging for meetings.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Some knowledge and abilities may be gained by employees at the entry (I) level while in a learning capacity.

Knowledge of:

- Legal office terminology, processes, procedures, and the format for legal documents.
- Administrative office support and secretarial practices and procedures, including filing and business letter writing.
- Court procedures and requirements.
- Operating procedures of a legal office.
- 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:

- Draft a variety of legal documents from stenographic notes, brief instructions, dictated tapes, or printed information.
- Provide routine secretarial and administrative office support to one or more attorneys and/or associated staff.
- Research and analyze situations carefully and adopt effective courses of action.
- Type accurately at a rate of 50 net words per minute from printed copy.
- Perform routine mathematical calculations.
- Organize and maintain accurate records and files.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.

- 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.

Legal Secretary I: Equivalent to graduation from high school and two (2) years of general secretarial and administrative office support experience.

Legal Secretary II: Equivalent to graduation from high school and one (1) year of experience in providing legal secretarial support to one or more attorneys and related support staff; equivalent to the County's class of Legal Secretary I.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, 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.

WORKING CONDITIONS

If assigned to a Law and Justice Department, incumbents must pass a thorough background investigation.