

ASSOCIATE COUNTY COUNSEL

DEFINITION

Under direct supervision, performs legal work of a routine to complex nature in representing the County and providing advice and counsel to the Board of Supervisors and County management staff and commissions and committees; performs related work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Associate County Counsel is the entry level attorney in the County Counsel Department. Initially under close supervision, incumbents perform the more routine legal services for one or more County departments, their associated elected officials and appointed boards and commissions. This class is distinguished from the Deputy County Counsel class in that the latter is considered to be fully capable of working independently in any number of specialist areas.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Illustrative Only)

- Advises County departmental management concerning their respective duties, powers, functions and obligations.
- Performs a wide range of legal work in such areas as civil litigation, public agency law, juvenile, child welfare, public guardian, special districts and mental health.
- Researches legal problems and prepares opinions, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, leases, permits and other legal documents.
- Prepares and tries routine to difficult cases, often involving a specialized body of law.
- Represents the County in administrative hearings before boards, commissions and state and federal agencies.
- Attends County departmental, board and commission meetings to provide legal advice on a variety of matters.
- Investigates and prepares reports regarding claims against the County.
- Reviews ordinances, resolutions, contracts and other documents for legal sufficiency; recommends modifications as required.
- Maintains accurate records, files and compiles reports of work performed.
- Monitors legal developments, including proposed legislation and court decisions; evaluates their impact on County operations and recommends appropriate action.
- Directs the work of professional and support staff on a project basis.

QUALIFICATIONS

NOTE: The level and scope of the knowledge and skills listed below are related to experience, proficiency and complexity of assigned projects as specified under Distinguishing Characteristics.

Knowledge of:

- Civil, administrative law and procedures.

- State, federal laws and constitution provisions affecting County agencies' operation.
- Responsibilities and obligations of public officials and administrative agencies.
- County governmental organization, structure and functional responsibilities.
- Rules of procedure governing the conduct of hearings before administrative bodies.
- Procedures, practices and effective techniques in presentation of court cases.
- Judicial procedures and rules of evidence.
- Principles, methods and techniques of legal research and investigation.

Skill in:

- Defining issues, performing legal research, analyzing problems, evaluating alternatives and making appropriate recommendations.
- Presenting statements of fact, law and argument clearly and logically.
- Exercising sound, independent judgment within the general policy guidelines and legal parameters.
- Interpreting state, federal laws and constitutional provisions affecting County operations.
- Representing the County effectively in hearings, courts of law and meetings with others.
- Preparing clear, concise and legally sufficient resolutions, ordinances, contracts, leases, permits, reports, correspondence and other written materials.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.
- Translating technical/legal concepts into oral and written expressions that connect with the intended audience.

Other Requirements:

Must possess a valid driver's license. Must be a member in good standing of the California State Bar Association.

Education and Experience:

Equivalent to graduation from a college or university plus an appropriate law degree. One year of experience as an attorney engaged in the practice of civil law in the State of California, preferably in a county government setting is highly desirable.

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