



DEPUTY COUNTY COUNSEL

DEFINITION

Under direction, performs professional legal work and representation, as well as provides advice and assistance to County departments, employees, the Board of Supervisors, and various committees or commissions; represents County governmental jurisdictions in legal and business matters; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives direction from the Assistant County Counsel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the fully qualified journey-level classification in the Deputy County Counsel classification series. Under direction, through formal and informal work review, incumbents perform the full scope of duties to represent the County in legal matters. While expertise may be gained in a specialized area, incumbents may assist with legal matters in any area of County law. 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.

This class is distinguished from the Sr. Deputy County Counsel in that the latter performs advanced, complex, and sensitive legal assignments requiring a high degree of independent judgment and discretion; and may provide day-to-day assistance to less experienced staff attorneys.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Provides a variety of professional legal services, including advising and representing County departments, commissions, special districts, and jurisdictions.
- 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.
- Advises County departmental management concerning their respective duties, powers, functions, and obligations.
- Researches legal problems and prepares opinions, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, leases, permits, and other legal documents.
- Represents and advises County personnel in labor and employment matters, including disciplinary appeals and grievance proceedings.
- 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.
- Interviews and prepares witnesses for testimony.
- Reviews and interprets ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other documents for legal sufficiency; recommends modifications as required.

- Maintains accurate records and files; compiles reports of work performed.
- Provides work direction to paralegal, secretarial, clerical, and related office support staff; informally reviews and evaluates their work product.
- Meets and negotiates with outside parties in matters arising out of claims, property transactions, and other County business.
- Monitors legal developments, including proposed legislation and court decisions; evaluates their impact on County operations; and recommends appropriate action.
- May direct the work of support staff on a project basis.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of civil, constitutional, and administrative law and their application.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- 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, practices, and methods of legal principles, statutory law, and legal research.
- Pre-trial, trial, and administrative hearing rules and procedures.
- Legal principles, facts, evidence, and precedents to common government agency legal problems.
- 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:

- Define issues, perform legal research, analyze problems, evaluate alternatives, and make appropriate recommendations.
- Present statements of fact, law, and arguments clearly and logically.
- Exercise sound, independent judgment within the general policy guidelines and legal parameters.
- Conduct effective negotiations.
- Analyze and apply complex legal principles, facts, and evidence to legal problems.
- Follow pre-trial, trial, and administrative hearing rules and procedures.
- Interview and prepare witnesses for testimony.
- Represent the County effectively in hearings and courts of law.
- Prepare clear, concise, and legally sufficient resolutions, ordinances, contracts, leases, permits, reports, correspondence, and other written material.
- Make recommendations and/or determinations concerning the advisability to prosecute, compromise, or dismiss civil litigation.

- Translate technical/legal concepts into oral and written expressions that connect with the intended audience.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- 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.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- 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.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

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

AND

Five (5) years of journey-level professional legal experience, preferably in a local government agency such as a county or city government setting.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain and maintain, a valid California or Nevada Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record.
- Possession of an active membership in good standing with the State Bar of California.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; and to operate a motor vehicle to visit various County and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, 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 15 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 upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.