

COUNTY COUNSEL

DEFINITION & DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Definition:

Under general policy direction of the Board of Supervisors, provides expert legal counsel to the Board and all County departments; plans, organizes, coordinates and directs programs and activities of the County Counsel office: formulates department policies, goals and directives.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

In addition to fulfilling departmental administrative responsibilities, this position acts as chief legal counsel for the Board of Supervisors, County departments, the Board of Equalization and other districts within the County under the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors. Responsibilities include handling sensitive and complex legal matters and involvement in litigation, negotiation and settlement agreements in all California and federal trial and appellate courts.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Attends all meetings of the Board of Supervisors and provides legal advice on a variety of complex matters; researches and provides written opinions to the Board as requested.
- Develops and directs the implementation of goals, objectives, policies, procedures, budget and work standards for the County Counsel's office.
- Work closely with the Chief Administrative Officer, Elected Officials, Appointed Department heads and County Counsel staff in examining potential legal impacts while developing strategies to address a wide range of policy and operational issues as part of the executive management team.
- Plans, organizes, administers, reviews and evaluates the activities of professional, support and contract staff; selects staff and provides for their training and professional development.
- Serves as legal representative for the County, advising management on legal matters and providing instruction in preventive law strategies; attends departmental meetings and meets with management staff to advise on legal issues and problems.
- Provides representation for areas of responsibility at administrative hearings for various public agencies and appeals boards.
- Conducts litigation, including preparation of legal pleadings and memoranda of law, negotiation and settlement of legal proceedings, conduct of trials, legal argument on motions and writs and prosecution and defense of appeal in all California and federal trial and appellate courts.
- Reviews the sufficiency of legal documents to which the County is a party; review agreements, memoranda of understanding and contracts.
- Evaluates legal claims filed against the County and recommends appropriate action; represents the County in collection of claims.
- Prepares drafts and final resolutions and ordinances for consideration and adoption by the Board of Supervisors and various boards and commissions.

- Prepares a variety of periodic and special reports related to County Counsel office activities and legal cases.
- Monitors proposed legislation and court decisions related to County and/or public sector law and activities; evaluate their impact on County operations and recommends appropriate actions.
- Attendance and punctuality that is observant of scheduled hours on a regular basis.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience:

Where college degrees and/or college course credits are required, degrees and college units must be obtained from an accredited college or university. Courses from non-accredited institutions will not be evaluated for this requirement.

Education:

Equivalent to a Bachelor's degree from a four (4) year college or university plus a Juris Doctorate from an accredited school of law and active membership in the State Bar of California,

-and-

Experience:

Seven (7) years of experience in the active practice of public law in the State of California, including management or supervision of a professional staff and budget development. Three (3) years as an Assistant or Chief Deputy County Counsel or Assistant City Attorney or equivalent is desirable.

Other Requirements:

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

Knowledge of:

- Administrative principles and practices including goal setting, budget development and implement and implementation and employee supervision.
- Principles and procedures of civil law, particularly as related to County government.
- Principles, methods, and practices of legal research and investigations.
- Judicial procedures and the rules of evidence.
- Pleadings and practices and effective techniques in the presentation of court cases.
- County government organization, structure and functional responsibilities.
- Responsibilities and obligations of public officials and administrative agencies.
- State and federal law and constitutional provisions affecting County governmental and public agency operations.

Skill in:

- Planning, organizing, administering, reviewing, and evaluating the work of professional, contract and other support staff.
- Training and serving as a technical resource for staff.

- Performing complex legal research, analyzing complex problems, evaluating alternatives and making sound recommendations.
- Preparing clear, concise and complete legal documentation an reports, correspondence and other written materials.
- Developing, implementing and interpreting goals, objectives, policies, procedures, work standards and internal controls.
- Making effective court and hearing presentations.
- Representing the County effectively in meetings with others.

Ability to:

- Analyze and apply legal principles and precedents to specific local government problems.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.

HISTORY

JCN: 1231

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