

PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT COUNTY COUNSEL

DEFINITION

Under general direction, routinely performs specialized and complex legal work, including litigation, with little or no supervision in connection with the more significant legal problems or in a critical specialty area, assists with the creation, implementation and evolution of policy, provides a comprehensive level of legal advice and counsel to the Board of Supervisors, County management staff, commissions and committees; performs related work as assigned. Incumbents in this classification may provide supervision and direction to Sr. Deputy County Counsel, Deputy County Counsel, and Associate County Counsel incumbents. Provides administration and coordination of office functions and legal work for the Office of County Counsel in the absence of the County Counsel and Chief Assistant County Counsel.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This class has responsibility for acting as the principal counsel in the handling of serious, controversial and complex legal matters, including litigation, which results from them. Incumbents in this class are expected to perform their functions with a high degree of independence and minimum supervision. In addition, the Principal Assistant County Counsel provides advice and counsel to the Board of Supervisors, other boards and commissions and County management in areas of legal specialty. This class is distinguished from Sr. Deputy County Counsel in that, upon assignment, it has responsibility for providing direction and coordination of legal work for the Sr. Deputy County Counsels in the department in addition to performing legal work assigned.

This class is distinguished from the Chief Assistant Deputy County Counsel in that the latter has ongoing responsibility for providing administration and coordination of office functions and of legal work for the Office of County Counsel.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Illustrative Only)

- Provides leadership within the department and expert legal advice to the County for a broad range of complex legal issues.
- Assists with the creation, implementation and evolution of County policy.
- Handles complex, difficult legal matters and litigation with minimum supervision.
- May provide legal services in specialized areas and may be required to have or develop expertise in defined areas of the law.
- Confers with and advises County departments and prepares legal opinions concerning their respective duties, powers, functions and obligations; represents the Board of Supervisors and various other entities associated with County government, and various boards and commissions of the County.
- Represents the County in litigation and administrative proceedings encompassing a wide variety of complex legal issues including all phases of pre-trial, trial and appellate work in state and/or federal courts.

- Monitors legal developments including legislation and court decisions related to public agency law and activities and evaluates their impact upon County operations.
- Renders legal opinions for the Board of Supervisors, Chief Administrative Officer and other departments and officials.
- Prepares pleadings, motions, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, leases, permits and other legal documents.
- Attends meetings of the Board of Supervisors and other boards, commissions and committees as required.
- May act as lead attorney on a project or case and provide direction to other attorneys assigned to the matter.
- Directs and evaluates the work of professional and support staff.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- o Principles and procedures of civil law, especially as related to County government and activities.
- o Principles, methods and practices of legal research and investigation.
- o Judicial and administrative procedures and rules of evidence.
- o Pleadings and practices and effective techniques in the presentation of court cases and administrative proceedings.
- o County government organization, structure and functional responsibilities.
- o Responsibilities and obligations of public officials and administrative agencies.
- o State and federal laws and constitutional provisions affecting County operations.
- o Specialized practice areas as required.
- o Supervisory principles and practices including work planning, scheduling, assigning, evaluation, employee training and discipline.

Skill in:

- o Performing complex legal research, analyzing multi-faceted problems, evaluating alternatives and making sound recommendations.
- o Planning, organizing, assigning, supervising, reviewing and evaluating the work of others.
- o Exercising independent judgment within general policy guidelines and legal parameters.
- o Analyzing and applying legal principles and precedents and making effective court and hearing presentations.
- o Representing the County effectively in meetings with others.
- o Preparing clear, concise and complete legal documentation and reports, correspondence and other written materials.
- o Performing independently and with minimal supervision in assigned areas of responsibility.
- o Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.
- o Translating technical/legal concepts into oral and written expressions that connect with the intended audience

Other Requirements:

Must possess a valid driver' 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.

Eight years of experience as an attorney engaged in the practice of civil law in the State of California, six years of which must have been obtained in a county government setting. Demonstrated ability to litigate a wide variety of complex civil lawsuits and to advise County agencies; prior experience acting as lead attorney or otherwise acting in an independent manner are highly desirable.

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