



## CHILD SUPPORT ATTORNEY I/II/III/IV

### **DEFINITION**

Under general supervision (Child Support Attorney I and II), direction (Child Support Attorney III), and general direction (Child Support Attorney IV), performs a variety of professional legal work in child support civil and criminal cases; provides legal advice and assistance in child support issues to Department and law enforcement staff; advises clients and the public on legal procedures regarding child support; may be the attorney of record in all legal actions and proceedings filed on behalf of the Department with the courts and administrative law agencies; and performs related duties as assigned.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general supervision (Child Support Attorney I and II), direction (Child Support Attorney III), and general direction (Child Support Attorney IV) from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff. May provide technical and functional direction to lower-level staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This is a multi-level professional classification series in which incumbents may be assigned to any of four (4) levels, depending upon experience, proficiency gained, and the complexity and sensitivity of assigned cases. Incumbents must be a member in good standing of the California State Bar Association. Positions in these classes are flexibly- staffed and are normally filled by advancement from the lower-level classification.

*Child Support Attorney I:* This is the entry/trainee level classification in the Child Support Attorney class series. Employees at this level receive in-service training, and are given detailed instructions in the performance of routine duties related to legal work in child support civil and criminal cases. As requisite skills and knowledge are developed, greater independence and the full scope of responsibility are exercised. The 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. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence.

*Child Support Attorney II:* This is the fully qualified, journey-level classification in the Child Support Attorney class series. Employees at this level require specific child support legal experience and less supervision and review to complete assignments. Positions may be permanently allocated to level II-level due to the nature of the work. 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. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence.

*Child Support Attorney III:* This is the advanced journey/lead-level classification in the Child Support Attorney class series. Employees at this level are expected to perform assignments that cover the entire range of child support litigation and advice activities, may provide lead supervision over other attorneys, and may assist in training less experienced attorneys. Positions may be permanently allocated to level III-level due to the nature of the work. Assignments are given with general guidelines, and incumbents are responsible for establishing objectives, timelines, and methods to deliver legal services. Work may be

reviewed upon completion for soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence.

*Child Support Attorney IV:* This is the highest, non-supervisory level classification in the Child Support Attorney class series. Employees at this level are subject matter experts who are regularly assigned the most complex child law and child support cases for litigation. Incumbents also perform legal research on complex child law and child support issues, advise on establishing departmental procedures for prosecuting such cases, and perform as lead attorneys on cases requiring more than one attorney. Positions in this classification require extensive experience and judgment to ensure the efficient and effective prosecution of assigned cases. The work involves problem-solving of unique issues or increasingly complex problems without precedent and/or structure. Assignments are given with general guidelines and incumbents are responsible for establishing objectives, timelines, and methods to deliver legal services.

The Child Support Attorney IV is distinguished from the Supervising Child Support Attorney in that the primary duty of the latter is supervision and direction of a unit of Child Support Attorneys.

Positions in the Child Support Attorney class series are flexibly staffed. Positions at the II-level are normally filled by advancement from the I-level; similarly, positions at the III-level are normally filled by advancement from the II-level; and positions at the IV-level are normally filled by the III-level at the discretion of the Department Head. Progression to each higher classification level is subject to all of the following (i) management affirmation that the incumbent is performing the full range of duties assigned; (ii) management approval for progression to the next higher level in the series; (iii) satisfactory work and office performance at the current classification level; and (iv) the incumbent meeting the minimum qualifications for the next classification.

#### **EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)**

- Investigates, researches, and prepares child support cases for litigation or prosecution.
- Interviews and advises complainants, law enforcement personnel, and the public in regard to prosecuting child support cases.
- Litigates or prosecutes cases in all courts of the county.
- Negotiates with attorneys regarding the disposition of civil matters and/or modification of charges in specific cases.
- Assists other attorneys in the investigation, research, and preparation of the more complex cases.
- Advises department staff on questions of law and procedure in particular cases.
- Prepares briefs and opinions concerning the law as applied to matters within the department.
- Assists in preparing filings and prosecuting cases before Appellate Courts.
- May give presentations to law enforcement agencies and public groups on child support legal issues and processes.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

#### **Additional Duties at the Attorney III level:**

- May exercise lead supervision over other attorneys in the investigation, research, and preparation of the more complex cases.
- May assist in training less experienced attorneys.

#### **Additional Duties at the Attorney IV level:**

- Prosecutes cases before Appellate Courts.

- Performs legal research on complex child law and child support issues and advises on establishing departmental procedures for prosecuting such cases.
- Acts as lead attorney on cases requiring more than one attorney.
- Provides training to less experienced attorneys on departmental procedures, changes in law, and regulations and developments in child support litigation.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

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

#### **Knowledge of:**

- California civil and criminal codes related to child law.
- Principles of civil, criminal, constitutional, and administrative law.
- Trial and courtroom procedures and practices.
- Administrative law procedures.
- Legal research methods.
- Rules of evidence.
- Standard legal office practices and procedures.
- Negotiating techniques relative to child law, criminal law, and child support issues.
- Ethical and professional standards of conduct.
- 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:**

- Research, analyze, and apply legal principles, facts, evidence, and precedents to child law and child support issues.
- Prepare and present statements of law and fact.
- Argue clearly, logically, and persuasively in written and oral form on child law and child support issues.
- Prepare and present cases in Municipal and Superior courts.
- Negotiate settlements.
- Manage an assigned caseload and perform quality legal work under pressure of deadlines.
- Maintain confidentiality and objectivity.
- Understand and accept differences in human behavior, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- Prepare and maintain clear, concise, and comprehensive records, reports, and correspondence.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships.
- 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.

*Additional Abilities Required at the Attorney III level*

**Ability to:**

- Train and mentor less experienced attorneys.

*Additional Abilities Required at the Attorney IV level:*

**Ability to:**

- Prepare and present cases at the Appellate Court level.
- Develop and present training sessions on child law and child support litigation to less experienced attorneys.
- Provide lead supervision over other attorneys.

**Education and Experience:**

*A combination of the required experience, education, and training that would provide the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying; however, education may not solely substitute for the required experience.*

*Child Support Attorney I:*

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

*Child Support Attorney II:*

In addition to the education noted in the I-level, one (1) year of full-time experience as a general practicing attorney.

*Child Support Attorney III:*

In addition to the education noted in the I-level, two (2) years of full-time experience as a general practicing attorney.

*Child Support Attorney IV:*

In addition to the education noted in the I-level, three (3) years of full-time experience as a general practicing attorney.

**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; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various County and meeting sites; vision to read printed material 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 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 and court environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees also work in a courtroom environment and may interact with members of the public under emotionally stressful conditions and situations. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

As required by Internal Revenue Service Publication 1075, individuals in positions that have access to Federal Tax Information (FTI), will be subject to a background investigation and a criminal history check. In addition, individuals hired into positions that have access to FTI will be re-investigated at the frequency prescribed in Publication 1075.