

PARALEGAL

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs paraprofessional legal tasks in the Office of the County Counsel, such as conducting legal research; preparing pleadings, answers, orders and other court and administrative hearing documents; drafting ordinances, ordinance summaries, deeds, and other legal documents; assisting in trial preparation (including discovery); and performing related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is a professional classification with incumbents performing a wide variety of journey level, paraprofessional legal duties in support of the County Counsel's office. This class is distinguished from the Legal Assistant series in that the incumbents apply the principles and practices of federal and state law together with the principles, methods and practices of legal research to draft or prepare documents or opinions under the guidance of attorneys.

REPORTS TO

Attorney staff.

CLASSIFICATIONS SUPERVISED

None.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

The following are the duties performed by employees in this classification. However, employees may perform other related duties at an equivalent level. Each individual in the classification does not necessarily perform all the duties listed.

Performs legal research, discovery and writing on a wide variety of legal matters; assists in reviewing legal documents to determine whether they comply with specific requirements set forth in applicable legal codes; reviews a wide variety of legal documents for compliance with applicable statutes and procedures; drafts, or assists in preparing, contracts, deeds, court accountings, motions, judgments, affidavits, orders, procedures and correspondence; monitors and tracks cases and statutes; organizes trial and administrative hearing documents and exhibits; coordinates and manages the discovery process by organizing case files, identifying necessary witnesses and issuing and tracking subpoenas; researches and analyzes law sources such as statutes, ordinances, court and administrative agency decisions, legal documents and articles for use in drafting legal documents such as briefs, contracts, deeds, and opinions for review, approval, and use by an attorney; analyzes case data and provides periodic reports summarizing the procedural status of pending trials and investigations; interviews witnesses, defendants, and others in civil cases for pre-trial or pre-hearing declarations and prepares discovery requests and responses; researches legislative histories; assists in the preparation of rough drafts of complaints and other pleadings; organizes own work, sets priorities, and meets critical deadlines; conducts legal research using codes, statutes, cases and

PARALEGAL – 2

computerized legal research; explains procedures, regulations and policies to the public and to clients, and refers individuals to other sources of information and assistance as appropriate; operates a variety of office equipment (including computers, scanners, telephones, calculators, copiers and fax machines), and performs filing, typing and other tasks related to daily activities; and performs related duties as required.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Ability to sit for extended periods, and frequently stand and walk; sufficient manual dexterity and eye-hand coordination to perform required duties; corrected hearing and vision to normal range; verbal communication; use of office equipment including computers, scanners, telephones, calculators, copiers and fax machine.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed in office, outdoor, and courtroom environments, and involves continuous contact with staff and the public.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic legal concepts, terminology, principles and procedures.
- County government functions and legal responsibilities.
- Basic rules of court with respect to legal processes, timelines and documentation.
- Legal research techniques and standard legal reference materials.
- Methods and techniques of preparing legal documentation.
- Office equipment, including computers and assigned software.
- Methods and techniques used in preparing court exhibits and related materials.

Ability to:

- Perform a variety of comprehensive legal and legislative research tasks and analysis.
- Assist attorney staff with litigation preparation, review and monitoring.
- Interpret applicable federal, state and county codes, regulations and statutes.
- Interview individuals and witnesses of various socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Make effective oral and written presentations.
- Prepare a variety of legal documents clearly and concisely.
- Prepare reports that set forth factual situations, applications of the relevant law, and conclusions clearly and logically, both orally and in writing.
- Conduct legal research in a variety of areas.
- Organize and maintain accurate records and files.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships.

PARALEGAL – 3

Training and Experience: *Any combination of training that would likely provide the required knowledge and experience is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required knowledge and abilities is:*

Education :

Possession of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university supplemented by successful completion of a recognized paralegal studies program approved by the American Bar Association, plus two (2) years of increasingly responsible legal secretarial or legal assistant experience;

OR

Completion of two (2) years of college with an Associate of Arts or Science degree supplemented by successful completion of a recognized paralegal studies program approved by the American Bar Association, plus four (4) years of progressively responsible legal secretarial or legal assistant experience. Emphasis will be given to experience that includes preparation of legal documents and performing basic legal research and analysis.

Special Requirements

Possession of an appropriate, current, and valid California Driver's License issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles.

Evidence of continuing education, such as additional paralegal or legal course work.