



Legal Assistant

Summary

Coordinate administrative operations within the City Attorney's Office; provide responsible, specialized, and confidential administrative and secretarial support to the City Attorney and associated staff; serve as a liaison between the City Attorney, the City Council, department directors, City staff, outside agencies, and the general public.

Class Characteristics

General direction is provided by the City Manager; responsibilities include the direct and indirect supervision of lower level professional, technical, and clerical personnel.

The incumbent in this single-position class works with substantial independence, applying extensive knowledge of legal office processes as well as sound judgment, problem-solving skills, and sensitivity in complex situations. This class can be distinguished from Administrative Assistant because the Legal Assistant oversees day-to-day administrative activities within the City Attorney's Office while providing advanced and specialized legal office and secretarial support directly to the City Attorney and associated staff.

Essential Duties, Skills, and Demands of the Position

The duties, skills, and demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with a disability to perform the essential duties, skills, and demands.

Duties:

Coordinate and facilitate office administrative activities within the City Attorney's Office; receive and evaluate a wide range of questions and information via documents, telephone calls, personal requests, electronic mail, regular mail, and other means; determine the urgency of the action needed; provide information regarding department administrative regulations, policies, and procedures as appropriate; communicate priority concerns to attorney(s) as needed; serve as a liaison on behalf of the City Attorney by coordinating with the City Council, department director, City staff, outside agencies and the general public regarding various issues and activities.

Receive, process, and prepare a wide range of documents; draft pleadings, subpoenas, contracts, Council agenda reports, resolutions, ordinances, correspondence, memoranda, reports, and other documents, both independently and as directed by legal staff; ensure that all documents comply with court, City or other rules, regulations, and procedures; obtain signatures or applies signature stamp if authorized; arrange for filings, agenda placement, document production, and/or personal service; place items on court, City Council, or other calendars; track status; monitor appearances and hearings; notify attorneys of items requiring his/her action and/or response.

Coordinate the City's response to personal service and/or business document subpoenas; review subpoenas for completeness and correctness of form; verify and process payments and fees when applicable; contact employees as needed to confirm court appearance or request that subpoenaed materials be compiled; review subpoenaed materials and redact information in documents that is privileged; monitor and ensure compliance with subpoena deadlines.

Coordinate the City's response to requests for public records and respond to requesting parties as required by law; notify appropriate departments and/or staff of the request; work with departments to ensure delivery of all materials to the City Attorney's Office; review materials for responsiveness and redact privileged information; arrange for copying of materials; arrange and monitor in-house citizen review of information when necessary; collect and deposit fees.

Maintain a variety of department records; ensure proper destruction of records in compliance with state law and City record management policies.

Assist with or coordinate special projects; research and assemble data involving state codes, city ordinances, case law, Attorney General opinions, and other information; verify that data is complete, accurate, and consistent; provide summary reports.

Assist the City Attorney in the implementation of department goals, objectives, strategies, policies, procedures, and work plans.

Maintain conference room and/or attorney calendars; schedule meetings and conference calls; attend meetings on behalf of the City Attorney when requested.

Prepare and monitor the City Attorney's annual budget; develop worksheets and draft narratives for administrative review/approval; track department expenditures during the year.

Prepare and provide informational materials to the City Council, Planning Commission, Site Plan, Architectural Commission, and other City Boards and Committees regarding their legal obligations relative to the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Political Reform Act, and other requirements.

May provide back up assistance for other administrative support positions; may lead or indirectly supervise subordinate staff on a project or ongoing basis.

Perform related duties as assigned.

Skills/Abilities:

Work independently to coordinate and facilitate day-to-day administrative functions within a legal office.

Provide complex administrative and secretarial support to attorneys and associated legal staff.

Prepare and process complex legal documents.

Maintain confidentiality of documents, materials, and information.

Interpret and apply legal administrative rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

Use initiative and sound independent judgment within established guidelines.

Read, understand and interpret law-related documents including case files, professional journals, technical reports, or government regulations.

Organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow up assignments with minimum direction.

Prepare/compose correspondence, reports, and specialized legal materials independently or from brief instructions.

Interpret, comprehend and implement technical instructions that include both abstract and concrete variables.

Interpret City policies and procedures.

Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

Establish and maintain cooperative and effective relationships with those contacted during the course of the work.

Physical Demands and Work Environment:

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; and talk or hear. The employee frequently is required to sit, enter data into a terminal, personal computer or keyboard device; operate office equipment requiring repetitive arm/hand movement; sort, separate, and arrange material in a prescribed manner; and sit for extended periods of time while operating word processing equipment. The employee is occasionally required to stand and walk. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

Qualifications

Knowledge of:

Advanced legal office administrative and secretarial practices and procedures.

Legal office terminology, processes, and procedures; the format for legal documents; and basic law library research methods.

Record keeping, report preparation and filing methods.

Organization, procedures and operations of municipal government.

Rules and regulations governing public meetings, including notification and distribution of meeting materials.

Principles and practices of business letter and report writing.

Policies and procedures governing public agency record keeping.

Methods and techniques of researching and compiling information.

English grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation; basic mathematic principles.

Basic principles and practices of lead supervision, direction, and staff development.

Operational characteristics of office equipment including facsimile machines, photocopiers, computers and associated word processing and spreadsheet applications.

Education and Experience

Any combination equivalent to the education and experience is likely to provide the required knowledge and abilities would be qualifying. A typical way to gain such knowledge and abilities would be:

Education:

An Associate's degree with major course work in business management, public administration or a similar field.

Experience:

Four years of progressively responsible secretarial or office administrative experience, including at least two years in a legal office setting.

Certificates/Licenses:

Possession of a valid California Class C driver's license.

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