

## **CLASS SPECIFICATION**

### **Paralegal**

#### **GENERAL PURPOSE**

Under general supervision, performs a wide range of legal support work in conjunction with the City Attorney's Office; conducts legal research, including state and federal case law, statutes and legislation; prepares legal documents, including all court filings and litigation related correspondence; assists attorneys in litigation of civil and criminal cases; reviews and prepares contracts, agreements and citations for attorney approval; and performs a wide range of paralegal and legal secretarial duties as assigned.

#### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

Paralegal is distinguished from Legal Secretary by their responsibilities of conducting factual or legal research; analyzing situations and recommending an effective course of action; working with a substantially greater degree of skill and independence; communicating effectively both orally and in writing; reading and understanding statutes, court decisions, and legal documents; and obtaining data through interviewing clients.

#### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to this class.

1. Performs legal research; prepares documents for civil litigation and code enforcement; and organizes and maintains litigation and litigation form files.
2. Composes, types and compiles pleadings, including answers, complaints, motions, appellate and trial briefs, affidavits, discovery and other legal documents and related correspondence, case memoranda, reports, and exhibits.
3. Supports in-house staff as needed in coordinating legal activities, such as, assist with depositions, trials and other legal events; inform attorneys of pertinent activities; schedules and arranges meetings for attorneys, calendar, organize, monitors and retrieves all court dates, legal deadlines, meetings and other important dates; arrange, contacts and coordinates investigators and experts; requests subpoenas of records and/or witnesses and review documents; and maintains telephone contact with courts, witnesses and outside counsel.
4. Prepares ordinances and resolutions as assigned. Prepares and maintains a variety of records, reports and files related to the City Attorney's office.
5. Reviews and processes finished materials for completeness, accuracy, format, compliance with local, state and federal rules and policy procedures, and appropriate English usage; reviews contracts and

agreements for compliance with standardized forms; reviews citations of case law, statutes, and City codes.

6. Perform secretarial duties; answering phones, filing, etc.
7. Formulates and implements new and revised office procedures and forms.
8. Participates in budget preparation and administration; Monitors and controls expenditures.
9. Reviews contracts, bonds and insurance certifications.
10. Maintains law library.
11. Perform other duties as assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

1. Legal terminology, procedures and the format for legal documents.
2. Standard office administrative and secretarial practices and procedures as well as local court rules and procedures, pleading practices and litigation protocol.
3. Computer applications used in the course of work, such as, legal research databases, word-processing, spreadsheet and graphical presentation.
4. Correct English grammar, spelling and usage.
5. Basic business arithmetic.
6. Organization, functions and activities of the City Attorney's office and municipal government.
7. Legal office and secretarial procedures and requirements.
8. Federal and State Court rules and procedures.
9. Criminal and civil law functions of the legal office.
10. Modern office practices, procedures and equipment.
11. Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy.
12. City and department organization, operations, policies and objectives.
13. Proper telephone techniques and etiquette.

### **Ability to:**

1. Perform a variety of responsible paraprofessional and legal secretarial duties in support of attorneys.
2. Research and analyze case law, statutes, regulations and legislation.

3. Properly interpret, apply, explain and make recommendations in accordance with laws, regulations, policies, codes and procedures.
4. Operate a computer to enter data, maintain records and generate reports; and utilize software applications, such as, legal research databases, word-processing, legal calendar and file management, spreadsheet, and graphics presentation as required by the duties of the job.
5. Analyze and resolve office administrative situations and problems.
6. Maintain accurate records and files, and calendar court dates and calculate litigation deadlines.
7. Organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines.
8. Perform work with minimal supervision.
9. Provide excellent customer service skills, including phone reception and direction.
10. Communication effectively both orally and in writing.
11. Maintain sensitive and confidential information.
12. Establish and maintain highly effective working relationships with City officials, staff, outside legal staff, litigants and claimants and others encountered in the course of work.

**Education, Training and Experience:**

A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined above is graduation from high school or G.E.D. equivalent, and three years of progressively responsible experience performing journey level paralegal and legal secretarial work in a law office or municipal setting; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

**Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:**

A valid California driver's license and the ability to maintain insurability under the City's vehicle insurance policy.

Possession of a certificate from an approved Paralegal Certification Program.

**PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS**

The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

**Physical Demands**

While performing the duties of this class, employees are regularly required to sit; talk or hear, both in person and by telephone; and use hands to operate, finger, handle or feel office equipment; and reach with hands and arms. The employee is frequently required to stand and walk and lift up to 10 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus.

**Mental Demands**

While performing the duties of this class, employees are regularly required to use written and oral communication skills; read and interpret data; analyze and solve problems; learn and apply new information; perform highly detailed work on multiple, concurrent tasks; meet intensive and changing deadlines and interact with City officials, staff, outside legal staff, litigants and claimants, the public and others encountered in the course of work.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. An employee works under typical office conditions, and the noise level is usually quiet.