

LEGAL SECRETARY

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, to perform a variety of specialized secretarial and administrative support duties for one or more attorneys; to compose, prepare and process a wide variety of legal documents; to answer public and staff contacts and concerns; and to do related work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is the journey level class in the Legal Secretary series. This class differs from the class of Legal Secretary Trainee by increased responsibility for performing a wide variety of legal secretarial work.

Incumbent should expect frequent contact with attorneys, other departments, agencies and the public, which requires knowledge of the courts and other county departments. Incumbents are required to exercise independent judgment and discretion, safeguard the confidentiality of information and demonstrate tact and diplomacy. Accurate word processing and knowledge of legal terminology and legal processes are essential to the satisfactory performance of work for the legal secretary class series.

REPORTS TO

District Attorney and Deputy District Attorneys

CLASSIFICATIONS DIRECTLY SUPERVISED

None

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EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

- Serve as Legal Secretary to attorneys, relieving them of a variety of administrative work.
- Take and transcribes, prepares and proofreads a wide variety of legal notes, correspondence, and documents including briefs, orders, affidavits, petitions, motions, warrants, complaints, subpoenas, abstracts of judgments, etc.
- Process legal documents, records and reports within the department, through the courts or with other agencies.
- Obtain a variety of records and reports required for cases, i.e. drug and alcohol analyses, DMV reports, criminal history.
- Prepare files for attorneys, pulls files for cases scheduled for court and ensures required documents are included.
- Record court events and disposition on the case file and in computerized case tracking system.
- Monitor the progress of documents through the judicial process to ensure their timely and proper processing.
- Schedule appointments and meetings for attorneys.
- Compile data and completes reports required by other government agencies.
- Organize and maintains various administrative, confidential, reference, imaging, and follow-up files; purges files as required.
- Interpret and explains County and department policies, rules, and regulations in response to inquiries; refers inquiries as appropriate.
- Screen telephone calls and mail, provides information requested, takes messages, refers inquiry or request to appropriate staff or other agency, and resolves matters which do not require legal advice.
- Operate word processing equipment and computer terminals to input, access and print data.
- Calendar court appearances and maintain case logs of proceedings.
- Receive case referrals from courts and other agencies, passing them on to appropriate attorneys and/or professional staff.
- Set up materials for meetings and conferences.
- Perform a wide variety of general clerical duties to support departmental operations including typing, copying, filing, entering computer data, faxing, retrieving files, preparing records and monthly reports, maintaining calendars, and ordering and maintaining office supplies and program material.
- Provide backup for other Legal Secretaries in the department.
- Perform other duties as assigned and needed.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Thorough knowledge of office procedures and practices, including preparation of correspondence and reports and filing
- Correct English usage, spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Thorough knowledge of standard formats for business correspondence and reports
- Personal computers and software applications related to office and administrative support work
- Working knowledge of legal terminology forms, documents, court protocol, practices and procedures
- Working knowledge of the forms and formatting for legal documents
- Some knowledge of the organization, services, programs and functions of the legal system

Ability to:

- Work well independently
- Orient and train new employees
- Learn to perform routine legal research
- Perform a wide variety of legal clerical work requiring independent judgment, accuracy and speed; take notes rapidly and accurately transcribe own note
- File materials alphabetically, chronologically, and numerically
- Prepare final legal documents in accepted formats from brief instructions, handwritten, typed or recorded drafts
- Communicate effectively in both oral and written form
- Understand, interpret, explain and apply laws, regulations, policies and procedures
- Learn and understand the organization and operation of the County and of outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships
- Understand and follow oral and written directives
- Maintain records and prepare reports
- Adjust to workload changes, react calmly and professionally in emergency, emotional, and/or stressful situations, and meet deadlines under pressure of legal deadlines
- Screen and prioritize correspondence and phone call
- Exercise sound judgment and discretion, safeguard the confidentiality of information, and demonstrate tact and diplomacy
- Operate word processing equipment and computer terminals to input and access data;
- Deal tactfully and courteously with the public and other staff when explaining the functions and policies of the department and County
- Type legal documents rapidly and accurately at a rate sufficient to perform duties satisfactorily

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Ability to – continued:

- Operate standard office equipment.

Training and Experience:

Qualifications needed for this position:

Two years of responsible legal secretarial experience comparable to a Legal Secretary Trainee with Plumas County or two years of experience which demonstrates possession of the knowledge and abilities listed in this job description,

OR

An AA degree in a related field such as Administration of Justice or paralegal. Course work in legal research, records, management, legal technology, business law, legal writing, business communications, word processing and law terminology is highly desirable.

Special Requirements:

Must possess a valid driver's license at time of application and a valid California Driver's License by the time of appointment. The valid California License must be maintained throughout employment.

All County of Plumas employees are designated Disaster Service Workers through State law (California Government Code Section 3100-3109). Employment with Plumas County requires the affirmation of a loyalty oath to this effect. Employees are required to complete all Disaster Service Work related training as assigned, and to return to work as ordered in the event of an emergency.