



October 2018
FLSA: EXEMPT
CLASS CODE: 90517

LEGAL RESEARCH ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Under general direction, performs various routine to complex professional legal services and provides assistance and advice to San Joaquin Superior Court Judges and the Court related to both civil and criminal cases; conducts legal research and provides legal consultation for Court judicial officers and staff; reviews court documents and filings for compliance with legal mandates; performs related work as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from Legal Research Attorney Supervisor. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a journey level professional attorney classification responsible for performing legal research, preparing tentative decisions and rulings and assisting judges in researching and resolving legal questions. This class is distinguished from the Legal Research Attorney Supervisor by the latter's full supervisory authority in the legal research area, organizing and overseeing day-to-day legal research activities.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the rights to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Performs legal research, identifies and analyzes legal and factual issues presented to the Court by litigants under state and federal case law, statutes, ordinances and regulations; drafts advisory memoranda and recommendations, findings, judgments and orders.
- Reviews Demurrers, Motions to Strike, Motions for Judgment on the Pleadings and Anti-SLAPP Motions, Oppositions and Reply Briefs; analyzes and summarizes arguments and evidence submitted by attorneys and independently researches and identifies legal issues necessary to provide recommendations to the Court.
- Reviews Motions for Summary Judgment and Adjudication, Oppositions and Reply Briefs; summarizes and analyzes arguments and evidence submitted by attorneys
- Prepares recommendations on written evidentiary objections and requests for judicial notice.
- Attends hearings, prepares supplemental analysis and drafts proposed decisions.
- Reviews and assess petitions for Writs of Habeas Corpus, Mandate and Coram Nobis; provides recommendations to the Court.
- Reviews and assesses appeals and responses to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court, including factual and procedural history of cases; analyzes legal points to provide recommendations to Appellate Division.

- Confers with Judges and Court staff on procedural matters; advises the court on legal aspects of administrative and operational issues; prepares memoranda summarizing legislative/judicial actions or trends and other matters not directly related to caseload.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Legal principles, issues, and practices, including specific government operations and relevant legal issues.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures including California Rules of Court, other California codes and court rules.
- Court procedures and rules of evidence.
- Methods of legal research, including computer research.
- Principles and practices of data collection and report preparation.
- Business mathematics and basic statistical techniques.
- Record-keeping principles and procedures.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.

Ability to:

- Analyze legal principles and precedents and apply them to complex legal and administrative problems.
- Conduct research on legal problems and prepare sound legal opinions.
- Prepare accurate and effective reports, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Analyze problems, identify alternative solutions, project consequences of proposed actions, and implement recommendations in support of goals.
- Identify potentially relevant or dispositive issues not addressed by parties and analyze them.
- Present statements of fact, law and argument clearly and logically in written and oral form.
- Draft findings, opinions and ruling(s).
- Research, analyze, interpret and understand conflicting statutory, Constitutional and case law.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Work well under pressure and complete projects for deadlines.
- Write accurate and well-analyzed opinions for the Court which may be relied upon and used by the Appellate and Supreme Courts in decisions which determine new law.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Operate office equipment and computer applications related to the work.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and legal guidelines in politically sensitive situations.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of experience and education/training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Equivalent to possession of a Juris Doctorate degree from an accredited school of law, and five (5) years of increasingly responsible experience in the practice of law.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment.
- Possession of a California State Bar license.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, vision to read printed materials 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.