

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY I/II/ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Under direction, integrates and applies legal knowledge and reasoning to a broad range of legal duties for the Judicial Council, its offices, its committees, and the trial and appellate courts of California; performs related work as assigned.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

In general, incumbents at all levels in this series perform the same broad range of legal duties. Differences between classes are essentially differences in the level of service and the degree of expertise incumbents provide, the complexity and difficulty of the legal subject matter, the sensitivity of the issues and their relative importance to the justice system, and the degree of independence required.

Associate Attorney I/II are the experienced level classes in the legal series. Associate Attorney I is distinguished from Associate Attorney II in that the latter has the equivalent of a minimum of three years of post-bar legal experience and the Associate Attorney I has the equivalent of a minimum of two years of post-bar legal experience. This class is alternately staffed with Attorney, and incumbents may advance to the higher level after gaining experience and demonstrating proficiency that meets the qualifications of the higher-level class.

Attorney is the journey-level class in the legal series, and incumbents are fully competent to independently perform the full range of legal tasks performed in their division. This class is distinguished from Senior Attorney in that the latter provides lead direction and work review to assigned staff and/or performs and coordinates complex and specialized work.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (*illustrative only*)

- Analyzes and prepares legal memoranda and issues papers, legal opinions, and policy memoranda.
- Analyzes and drafts rules of court.
- Analyzes, drafts, and testifies about legislation.
- Drafts, negotiates, and reviews contracts.
- Writes legal benchbooks and judicial practice guides.
- Organizes and conducts legal and judicial conferences.
- Writes curriculum and teaches courses for judicial and court staff education.

- Represents the agency as house counsel in litigation.
- Provides legal counsel services for specified programs.
- Provides staff and legal services to Judicial Council committees.
- Carries out public relations activities and serves as liaison to external legal organizations, including the courts of other states.
- Performs legal research.
- Maintains proficiency through continuing education in specified areas of procedural and substantive law.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Work occasional evening and weekend hours.
- May be required to travel statewide as necessary.

QUALIFICATIONS

The level and scope of the knowledge and abilities below relate to the duties as defined in Class Characteristics.

Knowledge of:

- Substantive and procedural legal principles and applications.
- Scope and character of California statutory and case law and provisions of the United States and California Constitutions.
- California Rules of Court; the legislative process; drafting statutes and constitutional provisions governing the organization, duties, powers, procedures, management, and conduct of the work of the trial and appellate courts.
- Legal research methods.
- Principles of administrative and constitutional law.
- Rules of evidence and conduct of proceedings in California trial and appellate courts.
- Basic principles and practices of effective law office management and administration.
- Principles of adult education.
- Principles of project management.
- The operation of personal computers and the use of specified computer applications, such as word processing.
- Principles and techniques of preparing effective oral presentations.
- Principles and techniques of preparing a variety of effective written materials.

Ability to:

- Initiate, design, develop, and implement projects in broad program areas.
- Perform legal research, including computerized legal research; apply legal principles and precedents to particular sets of facts.
- Analyze policy issues; present statements of facts, law, policy, and argument clearly, concisely, and logically in both written and oral form.

- Draft legal benchbooks and judicial practice guides, legal correspondence, and reports effectively and concisely.
- Write curriculum and teach courses for judicial education; analyze, draft; and testify on proposed legislation.
- Interact successfully with advisory committees, judges, court and agency staff, the State Bar, the Legislature, and the public.
- Exercise sound judgment and integrity consistent with representing the judicial branch.
- Maintain the ability to develop specialized projects, scholarly papers, or policies that advance the administration of justice and the goals of the Judicial Council.
- Organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical deadlines.
- Operate personal computers and use specified computer applications, such as word processing.
- Communicate effectively in English, orally and in writing.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.

Licenses and Certificates:

Admission to the State Bar of California.

Education and Experience:

Associate Attorney I: Admission to the State Bar of California and two years of post-bar legal experience in a legal setting such as a private law practice, corporation, government agency, law school, court, or legal publishing company.

Associate Attorney II: Admission to the State Bar of California and three years of post-bar legal experience in a legal setting such as private law practice, corporation, government agency, law school, court, or legal publishing company. Or one year as an Associate Attorney I with the judicial branch.

Attorney: Admission to the State Bar of California and four years of relevant post-bar experience either in a legal setting such as private law practice, corporation, government agency, law school, court, or legal publishing company, or performing a broad range of legal duties relating to the courts, such as analysis and drafting of legal and policy memoranda; involvement in legal publishing, legislation, or contracts; providing legal or judicial education; or staffing committees.

Or one year as an Associate Attorney II with the judicial branch.

After passing the state bar, work experience as a Law Clerk to a federal judge prior to formal state bar admission will be considered qualifying experience.