

## **SENIOR ATTORNEY**

### **DEFINITION**

Under direction, provides lead direction and work review to assigned staff, serves as a consultant, and/or performs and coordinates specialized legal work; acts as a statewide judicial resource in area of expertise; 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

This is the lead and/or specialist level in the legal series. Incumbents may serve in a lead capacity and direct the work of assigned staff, and/or may serve as specialists who work independently and deal with the most complex and/or sensitive projects. Incumbents also serve as a branch-wide resource in their subject matter expertise, mentor other attorneys, and develop scholarly papers and/or policies that advance the administration of justice and the goals of the Judicial Council. This class is distinguished from Supervising Attorney in that the latter is responsible for supervising legal staff, with effective authority for their selection, retention, and training and development and with responsibility for day-to-day supervision, evaluation, motivation, and discipline of employees.

### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES** (*illustrative only*)

- Provides lead direction, training, and work review; organizes and assigns work, sets priorities, and follows up to ensure coordination and completion of assigned work.
- Provides input into selection, evaluation, discipline, and other personnel matters.
- 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 teaching courses for judicial education.
- Represents the agency as house counsel in litigation.
- Provides legal counsel services for specified programs.
- Provides primary 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.
- Develops and continues to refine subject matter expertise; develops, initiates, and implements programs relating to this area of expertise.
- Exercises high level of judgment in handling difficult and sensitive projects.
- 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**

#### **Knowledge of:**

- Basic supervisory principles and practices.
- In-depth 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.
- Rules of evidence and conduct of proceedings in California trial and appellate courts.
- Principles of administrative and constitutional law.
- Principles and practices of effective law office management and administration.
- Basic principles of adult education.
- Principles and techniques 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:**

- Plan, direct, and review the work of others on a project or day-to-day basis.
- Use initiative and independent judgment within established procedural guidelines.
- Organize, prioritize, and coordinate multiple work activities and meet critical deadlines.
- 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.
- Acquire and maintain expertise as a statewide expert and resource to the judicial branch in one or more subject areas.
- 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.
- Teach, network, and negotiate in certain assignments.
- Exercise sound judgment and integrity consistent with representing the judicial branch.
- Develop specialized projects, scholarly papers, or policies that advance the administration of justice and the goals of the Judicial Council.
- 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:**

Admission to the State Bar of California and six years of 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, 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. One year of lead experience is required.

OR

Two years as an Attorney or three years as an Associate Attorney II with the judicial branch.