

JUDICIAL ASSISTANT

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, provides complex paralegal, legal secretarial, and office administrative assistance for attorneys and appellate court justices; performs related work as assigned.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Incumbents regularly perform complex paralegal, legal secretarial, and office administrative assistance for attorneys and appellate court justices. This class is distinguished from the Supervising Judicial Assistant in that the latter is responsible for supervising assigned 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 legal secretarial support to central staff or other court attorneys and/or other professional staff.
- Performs complex administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial support that may involve substituting for judicial assistants to appellate court justices during absences or while vacancies are being filled.
- Edits, proofreads, and reviews opinions and court orders and other related documents, using the electronic case management and document management systems, for correctness and accuracy with respect to grammar, spelling, punctuation, content, and organization; conforms opinions to uniform style using the California Style Manual and other style manuals, ensuring compliance with California Rules of Court.
- Maintains scheduling and tracks cases calendared for oral argument and submission.
- Prepares final opinions by checking cited facts for accuracy against all documents via electronic case management and document management systems, from the lower tribunal such as the clerk's and reporter's transcripts, administrative record, exhibits, and correspondence; validates legal authorities cited using resources found in the electronic law library and computer data bases such as state and federal reporters, state and federal statutes, citators, textbooks, handbooks, restatements, and legislative intent materials.
- Communicates with the Reporter of Decisions regarding stylistic requirements and content of opinions; proofreads and carefully inspects galley proofs of all published opinions for complete accuracy; may transmit opinions and modifications to the Clerk's Office for submission to the Reporter of Decisions.

- Provides training and guidance to new staff.
- Organizes and routes work using a document management system and follows up to ensure coordination and completion of assigned work; exercises skill in setting priorities; works closely with the Clerk's Office to ensure that materials are received and sent out in timely fashion.
- May draft correspondence; independently initiate specified correspondence for signature by appropriate staff, as assigned.
- Maintains, updates and generates weekly and monthly reports.
- Maintains office equipment and supplies.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The California Courts of Appeal are equal opportunity employers. The California Courts of Appeal comply with obligations under the law to provide equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities.

Light Work: Incumbents generally work in a typical office environment with adequate light and temperature. May occasionally exert up to 30 pounds of force, and/or up to 10 pounds of force frequently, and/or a negligible amount of force constantly to move objects. Positions in this class typically require: sitting for extended periods of time, walking, reaching, standing, grasping, pushing, pulling, lifting, keyboarding, kneeling, crouching, stooping, seeing, hearing, talking, and repetitive motions.

May be required to work overtime; may be required to travel, as necessary.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- General functions and organization of the judicial system and the roles and functions of other legal and law enforcement agencies.
- Legal and administrative office practices and procedures.
- Complex legal concepts, terminology, principles, and procedures.
- Methods of complex legal research (traditional and electronic).
- Calendar management and scheduling.
- Computers and the use of computer applications.
- Correct business English, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation, with emphasis on legal terminology.

Ability to:

- Learn California trial and appellate court practices and procedures.
- Verify the accuracy of complex legal documents and research (traditional and electronic).
- Understand, interpret and apply complex legal concepts, terminology, principles, and procedures.

- Operate computers and other standard office equipment, using standard business software and automated case management systems; interpret and apply technical manuals and tutorials.
- Organize, prioritize, and coordinate multiple work activities and meet critical deadlines while maintaining accuracy.
- Use initiative and independent judgment within established procedural guidelines.
- Maintain confidentiality; use tact, discretion and courtesy in dealing with sensitive materials and situations.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work, including justices, court staff, and representatives of other governmental and private agencies.
- Train others in policies and procedures related to work.
- Communicate effectively in English, verbally and in writing; learn the California Style Manual.

Licenses and Certificates:

None.

Education and Experience:

Equivalent to six (6) years of legal secretarial experience, including four (4) years of technical legal research.

OR

Bachelor's degree and two (2) years of legal secretarial experience, including technical legal research.

Additional directly related experience and/or college-level coursework may be substituted on a year-for-year basis for either of the paths outlined above.

OR

One (1) year as a Deputy Clerk OR two (2) years as a Lead Judicial Secretary or Assistant Deputy Clerk III OR three (3) years as a Judicial Secretary II with the judicial branch.

Equivalent years of experience performing the duties of a class comparable in the level of responsibility to the classes listed above in a California Superior Court or California state-level government entity also qualify.