

**JUDICIAL ASSISTANT TO AN  
APPELLATE COURT JUSTICE**

**DEFINITION**

Under general supervision, independently performs varied, complex and confidential paralegal, legal secretarial and office administrative duties for a specified appellate court justice; performs related work as assigned.

**CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This class in the Judicial Assistant series is responsible for organizing and managing administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial tasks for a specified appellate court justice. Incumbents also organize, coordinate, and ensure successful completion of specifically determined projects and assist with any other administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial duties. This class is distinguished from the Executive Judicial Assistant to an Administrative Presiding Justice in that the latter provides administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial support to an Administrative Presiding Justice in an appellate court.

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

- Provides varied, complex, confidential, administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial support to an appellate court justice and, in some courts, the justice's research attorneys.
- Maintains chambers calendar; arranges travel and prepares travel related documents for justices, as needed.
- 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.
- Tracks cases calendared for oral argument and submission; prepares materials for oral argument, as needed.
- 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 physical and/or 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.

- Transmits opinions and modifications either directly to the Reporter of Decisions or to the Clerk's Office for submission; 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.
- Maintains and updates both physical and electronic chambers library, as required.
- Maintains status reports for chambers; works closely with attorneys to ensure accuracy and timely filing of opinions and court orders; may be responsible for tracking motions.
- May support special projects as assigned, preparing meeting materials, scheduling meetings, preparing reports, and coordinating with internal and external stakeholders.
- Provides training and guidance to new staff; may assist in training new staff attorneys in court practices and procedures.
- 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.
- Drafts correspondence and routine orders for review, including opinion modifications, orders for granting or denying rehearings or publication requests; independently initiates specified correspondence for signature by appropriate staff.

### **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 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 Judicial Assistant OR two (2) years as a Deputy Clerk OR three (3) years as a Lead Judicial Secretary or Assistant Deputy Clerk III 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.*