



## Career Service Authority

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# Appellate Legal Research Assistant

### GENERAL STATEMENT OF CLASS DUTIES

This class performs full performance level paraprofessional legal work for attorneys in the District Attorney's Office providing them legal research services, advising on trial strategies and preparing briefs and other documents in diverse areas of the law practice.

### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The *Appellate Legal Research Assistant* class performs full performance level professional paralegal work for attorneys in the District Attorney's Office providing extensive technical and paraprofessional legal support utilizing considerable expertise in legal research, analysis and law office procedures in diverse areas of the law practice. The *Appellate Legal Research Assistant* class is distinguished from the *Legal* and *Investigative Research Assistant* classes by the diversity in paralegal practice: the *Legal Research Assistant* class assists in such areas as pre-trial, trial and appeal stages of litigation preparation and in complex transactional matters; and the *Investigative Legal Research Assistant* class researches habitual criminal cases. The *Appellate Legal Research Assistant* class is distinguished from the *Entry Paralegal* and *Paralegal* classes by the level of practical knowledge/experience; the *Entry Paralegal* class performs basic paralegal work and the *Paralegal* class researches and investigates progressively more difficult and diverse cases than those assigned an entry-level paralegal.

Employees in the *Appellate, Investigative and Legal Research Assistant* classes assist attorneys in more complex litigation and/or transactional matters and are expected to demonstrate considerable expertise while performing a broad range of paralegal duties and responsibilities in situations involving diverse areas of the law and where the consequence of error is relatively high. Employees in the *Entry Paralegal* and *Paralegal* class assist with basic and routine litigation and transactional matters; application and discretion limited by practical knowledge/experience.

### **Guidelines, Difficulty and Decision Making Level:**

Guidelines are generally but not always clearly applicable, requiring the employee to exercise judgment in selecting the most pertinent guideline, interpret precedents, adapt standard practices to differing situations and recommend alternative actions in situations without precedent.

Duties assigned are generally complex and may be of substantial intricacy. Work assignment is performed within an established framework under general instructions but requires simultaneous coordination of assigned functions or projects in various stages of completion.

Employee is responsible for determining time, place and sequence of actions to be taken. Unusual problems may be discussed with the supervisor.

***Level of Supervision Received and Quality Review:***

Under general supervision, the employee receives assignments and is expected to carry them through to completion with substantial independence. Work is reviewed for adherence to instructions, accuracy, completeness and conformance to standard practice or precedent

***Interpersonal Communications and Purpose:***

Contacts with the public or employees where explanatory or interpretive information is exchanged defended, gathered and discretion and judgment are required within the parameters of the job function.

***Level of Supervision Exercised:***

By position, performs lead work over paraprofessional and clerical staff.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES**

Identifies relevant issues, selects and analyzes applicable case or statutory law and relates relevant law to issues to prepare and interpret legal briefs, memoranda and motions for use by attorneys in court.

Reviews and analyzes new and existing legal briefs, memoranda, opinions and other relevant materials for points of law, determines current relevance, researches references and cross-references and prepares brief bank index.

Performs emergency research, locating relevant points of law and other legal authority for attorneys currently in trial.

Performs special research projects, collects and analyzes data, prepares reports of findings and recommendations and advises attorneys on trial strategies, supported by legal authority.

Coordinates the activities of legal interns and externs, providing training and assistance with research procedures and brief preparation.

Organizes and tracks case documents and makes them available and easily accessible to attorneys.

May create and maintain a legal reference bank.

Performs other related duties as assigned or requested.

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Any one position may not include all of the duties listed.  
However, the allocation of positions will be determined by  
the amount of time spent in performing the essential duties  
listed above.  
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## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

### ***Competencies, Knowledges & Skills:***

**Reading** – Understands and interprets written material, including technical material, rules, regulations, instructions, reports, charts, graphs, or tables; applies what is learned from written material to specific situations.

**Integrity/Honesty** – Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy; maintains confidentiality.

**Writing** – Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material, that is appropriate for the intended audience.

**Self-Management** – Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrates responsible behavior.

**Interpersonal Skills** – Show understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern; develops and maintains relationships; may deal with people who are difficult, hostile, distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and situations; is sensitive to individual differences.

**Attention to Detail** – Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.

**Legal, Government and Jurisprudence** – Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, legal practices and documents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, government organization and functions, and the democratic political process.

**Reasoning** – Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.

**Memory** – Recalls information that has been presented previously.

**Flexibility** – Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with ambiguity.

**Problem Solving** – Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.

**Information Management** – Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.

**Oral Communication** – Expresses information to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information; makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.

**Stress Tolerance** – Deals calmly and effectively with high stress situations (for example, tight deadlines, hostile individuals, emergency situations, dangerous situations).

Knowledge of federal and state trial procedures, discovery procedures and rules of evidence sufficient to be able to provide technical, legal, and civil investigation support for attorneys during trial preparation and at trial.

Knowledge of legal research techniques and civil investigation procedures sufficient to be able to determine relevant information, locate reference material, compile and analyze appropriate information and formulate logical recommendations.

Skill in the use of computer software, including word processing, spreadsheet, document management, electronic mail and database programs.

Skill in conducting legal research, including the use of Lexis, Westlaw, CD-Rom services, Internet services and library materials.

***Physical Demands:***

Standing: remaining on one's feet in an upright position.

Walking: moving about on foot.

Sitting: remaining in the normal seated position.

Talking: expressing or exchanging ideas by means of spoken words.

Hearing: perceiving the nature of sounds by the ear.

Near Vision: ability to see details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).

***Working Environment:***

Subject to varying and unpredictable situations

Subject to many interruptions

Subject to long irregular hours

***Education Requirement:***

Baccalaureate degree in Business Administration, Political Science, Management or a related field.

***Experience Requirement:***

Three (3) years full-time paralegal experience which provides litigation support to attorneys in substantive and procedural law, pre-trial management, and legal research and analysis; providing support to attorneys in transactional matters in areas such as construction, contracts, real estate, municipal finance, environmental law, municipal law and revenue; or conducting comprehensive investigations of complex criminal and civil cases.

***Education/Experience Equivalency:***

Completion of one year of law school at an accredited institution and three years full-time paralegal experience may be substituted for the minimum education requirement.

***Licensure and/or Certification:***

Graduation as a Paralegal with at least 25 semester hours of paralegal course work from an accredited institution.

**CLASS DETAIL**

***FLSA CODE:*** Non-exempt

***ESTABLISHED DATE:*** 09/16/1995

***REVISED DATE:*** 06/16/2005

***REVISED BY:*** Earline Hill

***CLASS HISTORY:*** This classification was revised into the new format during the Paralegal Class Maintenance Review.