



Career Service Authority

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Paralegal I

GENERAL STATEMENT OF CLASS DUTIES

Performs entry-level paraprofessional legal work assisting attorneys with legal support work. This includes research, analysis, drafting various legal documents, and providing basic paralegal assistance.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is the first class of three level paralegal series. However, this is not a progressive series. The Paralegal I performs entry-level paraprofessional legal work which is distinguished from the Paralegal II, which performs standard/intermediate level paraprofessional legal work assisting attorneys with legal support work such as research, analysis, drafting various legal documents, and providing standard/intermediate level paraprofessional support in transactional, litigation cases and any other such matters as needed. The Paralegal I is distinguished from the Paralegal III which performs full-performance advanced level paraprofessional legal work assisting attorneys with complex legal support work that involves the full-range of advanced paralegal services by gathering and analyzing legal data, informing attorneys/management on the findings and recommending appropriate courses of action. The Paralegal I is distinguished from the Legal Secretary that performs secretarial duties utilizing legal terminology, procedures, and documents. This class is also distinguished from the Investigative Legal Research Assistant, which handles the habitual criminal cases only.

Guidelines, Difficulty and Decision Making Level:

Procedures, methods and techniques to be used are well established with options to be considered well defined. Tools, work aids and materials to be used are specified.

Work steps are demonstrated or made clear by straightforward oral and/or written instructions. Detailed oral and/or written instructions are normally given during the training period. Duties assigned are basic and primarily routine, repetitive and restricted in intricacy with little or no discretion in how they are carried out.

Level of Supervision Received and Quality Review:

Under close supervision, the employee receives training to develop skills and abilities in a specific line of work or general occupational area. Work product is subject to close, continuous inspection.

Interpersonal Communications and Purpose:

Contacts with the public or employees where factual information relative to the organization or its functions is received and relayed, or a service rendered, according to established procedures or instructions.

Level of Supervision Exercised:

None

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

Reviews, analyzes, and identifies various documentation by conducting legal and factual research into various cases and/or matters. Prepares and provides materials, documentation, and reports on the research results.

Assists with the preparation of basic pleadings such as motions, summons, subpoenas, exhibits, resolutions and requests and responses to discovery and prepares other legal documents as requested or required. Provides litigation support to attorneys in various cases and/or matters such as depositions, trials and hearings.

Assembles and prepares documentation and/or exhibits based on materials developed during investigatory and discovery stages. Assists other Paralegals, at higher levels, with the preparation of witness binders for deposition and trial. Prepares exhibits for hearings including assembling and preparing trial notebooks and/or exhibits.

Assists with depositions and trials by preparing necessary documentation to commence, continue, or terminate proceedings as instructed.

Provides support functions for documentation control, coordinating exhibits and witnesses during trials and hearings, and provides immediate research and documentation retrieval when called upon. Arranges for documentation reproduction and maintains records of the related job functions.

Assists attorneys with interviewing clients, gathering, analyzing, and researching data such as statutes, decisions, legal articles, codes and regulations. Prepares drafts of written legal documents as necessary.

Assists with minimal investigation of facts to determine causes of action and assists in case preparation.

Assists in setting up case files, prepares requests and obtains necessary documentation.

Organizes and indexes case/matter documentation making it available and easily accessible to attorneys. Files legal documentation in the proper court or filing system.

Assists in administering routine contract preparation/execution, responds to client inquiries/communications and performs document management.

Drafts contracts and other routine transactional documents and prepares exhibits and other attachments.

Facilitates open records requests and meetings.

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.

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 documentation, 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.

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.

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

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.

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

Memory – Recalls information that has been presented previously.

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.

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:

Possession of Paralegal Certification/Degree from an accredited institution.

Experience Requirement:

None

Education/Experience Equivalency:

Completion of one year of law school at an accredited institution may be substituted for the minimum education requirements.

Licensure and/or Certification:

None.

CLASS DETAIL

FLSA CODE: Non-Exempt

ESTABLISHED DATE: 07/16/2005

REVISED DATE: 03/08/2009

REVISED BY: Hameed Pousti

CLASS HISTORY: This class was created during the Paralegal Class Maintenance Review to provide entry to the paralegal series.
8/2006 - Clarified the performance location of the classification by deleting the general term "legal department" and consistently specifying City Attorney's Office, District Attorney's Office or Career Service Hearing Office.
3/2009 - New class title created to replace the Entry Paralegal.