

City of Bellingham
Classification Specification

CLASS TITLE	Legal Administrative Assistant
DEPARTMENT	Legal
UNION:	E-PLAN
SG:	E-9
CS:	N
FLSA:	Y
EE04CODE:	PP

NATURE OF WORK:

Manages administrative functions of the Legal Department. Performs complex and confidential administrative management tasks for the City Attorney and other senior Legal staff, requiring independent judgment to coordinate all activities of a major project and legal department processes. Performs a variety of complex paralegal, technical and clerical tasks in support of the civil division of the City's Legal Department, requiring independent judgement in applying knowledge of legal processes, standards and requirements. Coordinates with City departments to respond to Public Records Requests, ensuring responses are made within the time specified by law and in accordance with legal requirements. Work requires a high degree of confidentiality and discretion.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This position is distinguished from the Administrative Assistant, Office Assistant and Executive Assistant classifications by its emphasis on work requiring specialized knowledge and expertise of legal terminology, legal forms, methods and procedures. It requires a paraprofessional level of work within a specific program area under the direction of professional staff.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Directly responsible to the City Attorney. Also receives direction from other senior legal staff and the Senior Assistant City Attorney/Public Records Officer. May provide direction to support staff. May assign and monitor the work of part-time and/or temporary employees and interns. Works independently to establish office procedures and work routines under the guidance of applicable Legal Department and City policies and procedures, as well as federal, state, City and departmental laws, rules and regulations.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Plans and performs complex administrative legal office coordination and provides high level administrative support to the City Attorney and Senior Assistant City Attorneys.
2. Coordinates the city's response to public disclosure requests under the Public Records Act (Chapter 42.56 RCW) to ensure compliance with all legal requirements and applicable city policies under general direction of the Senior Assistant City

Attorney/Public Records Officer. Receives and reviews requests, coordinates with staff in all city departments to locate responsive records, reviews records prior to disclosure for exempt information as needed, redacts exempt information in accordance with applicable exemptions, prepares necessary exemption logs, and communicates with requestors to finalize the city's response.

3. Coordinates the preparation of the annual department budget and claims and litigation budget, monitors and reconciles budget expenditures and processes invoices for payment. Provides data on expenditures and program objectives and results. Coordinates the annual renewal of City insurance programs and policies.
4. Receives and responds to a variety of inquiries, concerns and complaints. Screens and refers calls as appropriate. Assists citizens as needed through explanation of departmental or legal processes making appropriate referrals for services.
5. Acts as records manager for Legal Department; maintains and updates office filing systems, responsible for sending/retrieving archival materials and electronic records management. Tracks, processes, and supports review of all contracts, bond, or other legal documents that come into the Legal Department for signature.
6. Performs specialized administrative, clerical, and paralegal services in support of all phases of litigation and case management for assigned attorneys.
7. Drafts a wide variety of documents including legal notices, answers, motions, orders, discovery, exhibits, trial documents, correspondence, ordinances, resolutions, and other specialized documents for attorney review and signature.
8. Performs legal research as assigned.
9. Acts as City's liaison with Code Publishing Company (CPC) to coordinate maintenance of the Bellingham Municipal Code, and resolves questions that arise from CPC in the process of condensing the BMC. Uploads all ordinances and resolutions to CPC for inclusion into the BMC, and for inclusion into the Ordinance and Resolution tables maintained by CPC.
10. Maintains and processes departmental personnel and payroll records; reviews, codes and enters time sheets, processes personnel actions, coordinates recruitment processes with Human Resources and monitors performance evaluation dates.
11. Handles seminar/conference registration for staff, and makes travel arrangements as needed; coordinates departmental scheduling including appointments, meetings, and filing deadlines for attorneys.
12. Maintains inventories and determines need for supplies and equipment. May research information needed for purchasing decisions.
13. May provide instruction and training to support staff, temporary help or interns.
14. Provides back up to the Legal Assistant - Criminal on a scheduled basis or as needed.

15. Deals with highly sensitive and confidential data with discretion and professionalism.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Provides back up to Legal Process Technician.
2. Performs related duties within the scope of the classification.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of municipal administration and familiarity with the functions and activities of the departments and divisions of municipal government.
- Knowledge of federal, state and local program-related codes and regulations, policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of law and processes related to requests for public records. (Public Records Act)
- Knowledge of legal terminology, principles, forms, methods, procedures, technology and specialized functions, standard legal formats and court orders.
- Knowledge of research, interviewing, and investigative methods.
- Knowledge of court rules and requirements for courts at all levels; i.e., local, state and federal.

Skills:

- Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate verbally and in writing. This includes reading comprehension, composition, knowledge of standard and business English usage, punctuation, spelling, grammar, and format as well as the ability to communicate in clear and concise language appropriate to the purpose and parties addressed.
- Excellent interpersonal skills to deal with the public and staff, using courtesy and tact in sensitive or high-pressure situations.
- Problem solving, decision making, time management, planning and organizing skills.
- Skill in using software applications including word processing, spreadsheet and database management, and electronic document management programs.

Ability to:

- Stress tolerance and the ability to handle several tasks simultaneously while maintaining accuracy and attention to detail in an environment of frequent interruptions.
- Ability to work independently in carrying out position responsibilities.
- Willingness and ability to maintain a high level of confidentiality and professionalism.
- Ability to analyze and respond to changes for legal compliance and procedural development.
- Willingness and ability to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Ability to maintain consistent and punctual attendance.

- Physical ability to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
 - Frequently operate a computer and read a computer screen or typewritten page;
 - Frequently communicate verbally;
 - Move between work sites;
 - Occasional transport of boxes or equipment weighing up to 40 lbs.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in an office setting that includes a normal range of noise and other distractions, and low everyday risk working around standard office equipment. May experience frequent interruptions. May work for extended periods of time at a computer workstation.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Two years of college coursework or vocational training in paralegal studies, office administration, or related field; AND
- Two years experience in legal office management or a legal support role; OR Four (4) years experience in legal office management or a legal support role.
- Keyboarding speed of 45 wpm net required.
- Word processing skills required.
- Municipal or other governmental experience strongly preferred.
- Electronic Document Management skills preferred.
- Basic Excel skills preferred.
- A combination of experience and training that provides the applicant with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform this job will be considered.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

- Notary Public License or ability to secure Notary certification.

PREPARED BY: Ian Sievers
7/84

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4/87
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