

OFFICE OF THE SAN DIEGO CITY ATTORNEY

Deputy City Attorneys I-V perform professional legal duties of similar type and character. Work of Deputy City Attorneys at each of these levels is distinguished by increasing proficiency and skill in independently handling legal issues, matters, and cases of increasing complexity and risk to the City with experienced legal judgment, skill and acumen.

DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY V

Criminal & Community Justice Division

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS & SCOPE OF WORK:

Provides a high level of expertise in the assigned areas of law or specialty. Regularly leads projects of critical importance to the City which carry substantial consequences of success or failure. Independently and competently handles a wide variety of complex and high-profile legal matters. Provides advice, training and/or guidance in their assigned fields of practice to deputies and others. May supervise deputies, paralegals, investigators, and other City Attorney personnel.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

Typically, fifteen (15) years of experience as an attorney with at least eight (8) years of experience practicing municipal law. Membership in the State Bar of California.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

1. Sophisticated awareness of potential Charter/City issues and CORE¹¹ area issues that arise in assigned areas. Recognized legal authority with advanced expertise in principles, practices, and procedures related to assigned areas. Sufficiently familiar with other areas to coordinate overlapping assignments or issues. Resource for other DCA's and ACA's.
2. Advanced understanding of City and the duties, powers, and limitations of a city government and prosecutorial authority; pertinent federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations; and the City Attorney's Office structure, expectations, policies and procedures.
3. Advanced interpersonal communication and collaboration skills, including proven ability to actively listen, negotiate, persuade, problem-solve, and educate. Skills to gain trust and build credibility with a broad group of colleagues, clients, and the community.
4. Advanced research and analytical skills; ability to readily identify critical legislative changes in area of specialty. Advanced knowledge of Office guidance resources.
5. Ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise discretion and tact when handling sensitive or potentially sensitive issues. Demonstrated commitment to the highest ethical standards including California Rules of Professional Conduct.

¹ CORE areas are those areas of municipal law with which DCA's should have a basic level of familiarity advancing to expert knowledge, pertinent to their assignment. They are: The Ralph M. Brown Act; California Public Records Act; Records Retention laws; San Diego Charter (particularly Charter section 40) and City government structure; Ethics - Agency and Attorney; CA Gov't Code.

6. Advanced coaching and leadership skills to incorporate feedback and provide clear expectations, guidance and performance feedback to less experienced DCAs, legal support staff, interns and volunteers. Demonstrated ability to mentor and coach all levels of staff, interns and volunteers; provide for succession planning in area of specialty.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Regularly counsels and advises senior and executive management, often on issues that can have broad implications. Serves as a trusted strategic partner with City departments providing practical advice and alternative solutions to business issues.
2. Develops objectives and ensures timely service according to established priorities. Delegates work effectively to maximize efficiencies.
3. Provides clear expectations and mentors less experienced DCAs, legal support staff, interns, and volunteers, to establish strong commitment to teamwork and to meet expected levels of productivity and accuracy.
4. Puts into practice the City Attorney's commitment to diversity and inclusion – is collaborative, supportive, respectful of differences, and committed to fairness and diversity in all interactions, both within and outside the team. Promotes equity in advancements and encourages participation in mentoring opportunities. Ensures equal opportunity in recruitments through diverse representation on hiring committees and outreach efforts.
5. Has outstanding written communication skills Adheres to standards outlined in the City Attorney's Style Manual. Creates and delivers effective materials and/or presentations appropriate to a particular audience. Presents all communications with Office, client, court, court staff, and opposing counsel in a professional and courteous manner.
6. Seeks professional development opportunities.

DIVISION FUNCTIONS:

1. Proficiently identifies complex, nuanced and novel issues, challenges, and risks, with the ability to develop strategic solutions for the divisions.
2. Proficiently identifies, researches, briefs legal issues, drafts pleadings, motions and memoranda on complex and novel legal and evidentiary issues, and prepares oral presentations as necessary.
3. Proficiently conducts case review, independently makes sound charging decisions on all crime types and crafts ways to review and assess new crime types. Directs and proficiently manages a heavy, complex and novel caseload of criminal prosecution and/or civil litigation files from inception to disposition, taking into consideration and balancing administrative and leadership responsibilities, if applicable.
4. Proficiently performs all discovery tasks, including fact and expert discovery. Strategically develops and implements comprehensive discovery plans in novel and complex cases.
5. Proficiently identifies and investigates witnesses and information, gathering evidence and statements in complex and novel cases.
6. Proficiently handles all court appearances, including dispositive motion hearings, settlement conferences, and mediations in complex and novel cases.

7. Proficiently performs all aspects of trial preparation. Conducts complex and novel issue jury and bench trials, including researching, briefing, and arguing complex and novel legal issues; proficiently examines witnesses; and demonstrates excellent oral advocacy skills from jury selection to closing argument while supervising deputies and/or managing a heavy case load.
8. Proficiently communicates with and speaks on behalf of the office with victims, witnesses, the court, opposing and outside counsel, city departments, other government agencies and the community.
9. Proficiently communicates with supervisor and colleagues, as appropriate, regarding case development and presentation of alternative approaches for addressing issues, including analysis of risks associated with each option. Serves as a resource, mentor, and trainer for deputies and others on legal and procedural issues.
10. As a recognized leader and expert within the office, provides input and advice on complex legal and procedural issues on highly complex and novel legal matters in specialty area of law, utilizes best practice research methods, eloquently summarizes written and verbal advice. Interprets complex and novel facts and law in areas of ambiguity; provides practical application methods in a timely manner.
11. Effectively presents, or supports Chief or Assistant City Attorney, and proficiently briefs supervisor on items at Council, Committees, court and the community.
12. May be assigned to sit and proactively participate with lower level decision-making bodies, County, Court or Committees.
13. Manages and develops new complex projects or initiatives. (e.g., Gun Violence Restraining Order Program, SMART Program, Unsafe Facility Task Force, etc.).
14. Takes initiative to propose solutions to systemic issues and develop an action plan for the proposed solution (e.g. preparing proposed ordinances to amend the San Diego Municipal Code).
15. As a recognized expert and demonstrated leader, provides input and advice on highly complex legal matters that affect the Divisions, City and County.
16. Provides direction and supervision of interdisciplinary teams on the identification and framing of systemic legal issues, and the formulation and advancement of approaches to address them.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Attorneys in this position must be able to travel to locations outside the office; therefore, possession of a valid California Class C driver's license and personal vehicle or other means to travel are required.

ENVIRONMENT/WORKING CONDITIONS:

Environmental Conditions: Work is performed primarily in a standard office setting with occasional to routine exposure to the external environment when going to outlying offices or meetings and off-site locations. Incumbents may be required to work extended hours including evenings and weekends. Deputy City Attorneys are exempt under the FLSA.

Physical Conditions: Primary functions require sufficient physical ability and mobility to work in an office setting; to stand or sit for prolonged periods of time; to occasionally stoop, bend, kneel, crouch, reach, and twist; to pull up to 25 pounds; to operate office equipment requiring repetitive hand movement and fine coordination including use of a computer keyboard; and to verbally communicate to exchange information. May require occasional to frequent walking of up to .5 miles to off-site locations.

