

SUPERVISING COURT STAFF ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Under the direction of the Court Executive Officer or designee, the incumbent is responsible for providing legal research, information, and legal assistance to the Court in a unique unit. This includes analyzing, interpreting, and summarizing legal authorities for presentation to the judicial officers in pre-trial, trial, and post-trial matters, including Criminal, Habeas Corpus, Civil Law and Motion, Probate, Juvenile, Family Law, Appellate, Court Administration, and other research duties as assigned. Other assignments may include working with self-represented litigants and overseeing the day-to-day activities of staff in that specified unit. The incumbent is primarily responsible for a unit or department, supervising attorneys, and/or support staff, as necessary, to operate the unit charged with a particular area of legal services to and on behalf of the Court. Supervision includes input on policy direction, workload analyses, work assignments, and work reviews of all members of the unique unit.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Supervising Court Staff Attorney classification is distinct from the Senior Court Staff Attorney classification. The latter is the lead and administrative level in the professional Court Staff Attorney class series, where incumbents develop, coordinate, and schedule legal services for an assigned department or unit. They may also provide guidance, direction, legal work product review, oversight, and approval for other professional legal staff. In addition, they are expected to perform more complex professional legal work and research with minimal guidance and supervision.

By comparison, the Supervising Court Staff Attorney is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, and supervising a unique unit, which may include Court Staff Attorneys at all levels, as well as Legal Research Assistants (LRA), legal externs, and volunteers, and could include deputy clerks, paralegals, and other support staff positions within the assigned unit/division, as assigned. The incumbent is expected to exercise leadership in instituting policies, methods, and processes to deliver high-quality services efficiently and, most effectively, supervise the administrative and operational functions of attorney and law clerk pools, including court staff and contractors.

REPORTS TO

The Chief Executive Officer or designee.

CLASSIFICATIONS SUPERVISED

Senior Court Staff Attorney, Court Staff Attorney II, Court Staff Attorney I, Legal Research Assistant, Legal Extern and Volunteer Attorney, contractors, and other support staff, as assigned.

EXAMPLES OF IMPORTANT AND ESSENTIAL DUTIES *(The following is a partial description and is not restrictive regarding the duties required.)*

Assigns, reviews, and evaluates the work of staff. Participates and oversees the development of job announcements, recruitment, employee selection, staff development, performance evaluations, and progressive disciplinary process. Plans and implements cross-training; reviews employees' work to ensure quality and accuracy and provides ongoing feedback as to performance, including orientation, training research attorneys and interns, and offering technical assistance in casework procedures. Researches, analyzes, and interprets existing laws and ordinances, court decisions, pending legislation, and other legal authorities. Research legal authorities using traditional and computerized legal research

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methods, including statutory and case law of California, different states, federal and foreign jurisdictions, treaties and other international law, and legislative history. Researches and analyzes pleadings, memoranda of points and authorities, evidence, objections, and other documents and prepares a written memorandum for each matter, summarizing the factual background, identifying and analyzing factual and legal issues, and providing a proposed tentative ruling for disposition thereof; and/or orally briefs the judges on the research and analysis pertaining to each matter. Studies work patterns and unit efficiency. Develops and implements procedures to improve efficiency. Provides effective leadership and guidance in support of the Court's mission. Confers with judges and Court Executive Officer or designee on operational and legal issues. Conducts research on special projects assigned or requested by judicial officers or Executive staff. Participates in management meetings and projects. Serves on Committees within the court. Prepares reports and correspondence as needed. Performs other related work as required by business needs or as assigned.

May represent the unit, department, or Court in meetings with justice partners, community-based organizations, funders, Judicial Council of California, Bar Association of San Francisco, and other entities, as necessary.

Responsible for overseeing the allocation and assessment of tasks related to court calendars as applicable to assigned unit/division, e.g., Penal Code section 995 calendars and writs calendars, ensuring strict adherence to relevant statutes, court protocols, and local regulations. Ensures that all final legal research work products meet the Court's high-quality standards and deadlines by maintaining a hands-on approach, which may involve tracking, evaluating, reviewing, editing, and approving the legal research work before it is presented to judicial officers or Court management. Provides sound recommendations to court managers and supervisors and offers guidance to units, departments, divisions, and judicial officers in anticipation of new legislative mandates. Additionally, may be responsible for evaluating motions and writ petitions, conducting legal research, and providing training and mentorship to new staff in these areas to facilitate a delegation process. Regularly engages with judicial officers and court managers/supervisors to address legal and operational issues and contributes to the development of suggested policies, procedures, court rules, and forms concerning court proceedings to address recurring matters. May also oversee resentencing cases and ex parte requests, coordinate the activities of court clerks, and review court cases. Additionally, responsible for designing legal orientation training programs and fostering relationships with local law schools, paralegal programs, and other pre-law training programs.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Sit for extended periods; correct hearing and vision to normal range; constant verbal communication; use of office equipment, including extended use of a laptop computer; telephone, calculator, copiers, and facsimile machines.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed in an office, conference rooms, and courtrooms, with continuous contact with judicial officers, other professional or support staff, legal representatives of litigants, other staff, court users, and the public.

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DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

Must be an active member in good standing of the California Bar, including maintaining compliance with mandatory continuing legal education (MCLE) requirements.

Training and Experience:

Five (5) years of increasingly responsible professional-level legal experience that includes litigation or legal research in support of the judiciary or a legal division, including pertinent substantive experience sufficient to direct a small group of attorneys performing legal research and attendant administrative matters or any combination of training and experience that could provide the desired knowledge and abilities.

Prior work experience in a leadership capacity and/or overseeing a small group of legal staff.

Knowledge of:

- Knowledge of principles and practices of supervision applicable to developing an internal group of professionals.
- Knowledge of program management practices and techniques.
- Knowledge of principles, practices, methods, legal research, and analysis materials.
- Knowledge of California statutes related to California trial court processes, Rules of Court, and Rules of Evidence.
- Knowledge of civil, criminal, family, constitutional, and administrative law principles.
- Knowledge of legal terms, procedures, forms, and documents used in court cases.
- Knowledge of proper English usage, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, and spelling.
- Knowledge of customer service skills and techniques

Ability to:

- Ability to supervise, train, and review the work of others.
- Ability to organize and prioritize work assignments, including assignments with short deadlines and/or assignments due concurrently.
- Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Ability to monitor and support the work of professional staff and/or support staff.
- Identify and analyze legal issues and research legal authorities, including independent research when necessary.
- Ability to prepare and present legal analyses orally or in writing and make sound and objective recommendations for judicial action.
- Maintain a flexible and cooperative attitude when working with judicial officers, management, all court employees, outside agencies, and the public and stakeholders relevant to the unit/division.
- Handle sensitive matters with finesse and discretion and maintain confidentiality of information.
- Ability to work under pressure to deal with emergencies, tolerate frequent interruptions, coordinate work with others, listen to arguments/discussions, and understand underlying problems/questions/concerns and respond appropriately.
- Ability to use traditional and computerized legal research methods.
- Ability to use computers for legal research, word processing, and communication.
- Recognize and respect the limits of authority and responsibility.

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- Uphold judicial ethics.
- Ability to work in an environment with conflicting priorities and adapt to changes.
- Ability to accept criticism, deal calmly and effectively with high-stress situations, maintain composure, control emotions, control anger, and avoid behavior that may be considered aggressive, even under challenging conditions.

Special Requirements:

Incumbents may be required to pass a criminal history background check. Information discovered through such a background check may become grounds for dismissal from employment.

The contents of this class specification shall not be construed to constitute any expressed or implied warranty or guarantee, nor shall it constitute a contract of employment. The contents of this specification may be modified or revoked without notice. Terms and conditions of employment are "at will" employment at the pleasure of the Judges of the Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco.