

## **SENIOR COURT STAFF ATTORNEY**

### **DEFINITION**

Under general direction, to coordinate, schedule, and organize staff legal services for an assigned Department or unit; to provide coordination, scheduling, and guidance for other professional legal staff and/or Court Legal Research Assistants; to perform a variety of complex professional legal work, legal research, and legal consultation for Court judicial officers and staff; to perform special projects, as assigned; to review court documents and filings for compliance with legal mandates; and to do related work as required.

### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

This is the lead and administrative level in the professional Court Staff Attorney class series. Incumbents develop, coordinate, and schedule legal services for an assigned Department or unit. They also provide some guidance and direction for other professional legal staff. In addition, they are expected to perform the more complex professional legal work and research with minimal guidance and supervision. Special projects and assignments are regularly included in the responsibilities of this class. This class differs from Court Staff Attorney II in that Court Staff Attorney II is the journey level and does not include the special administrative and coordination responsibilities of the Senior Court Staff Attorney class.

### **REPORTS TO**

A Judicial Officer, or other Court management staff, as warranted by job assignment.

### **CLASSIFICATIONS SUPERVISED**

Provides some guidance and direction for Court Staff Attorney I, II and Court Legal Research Assistant. May be assigned to supervise non-attorney support staff.

### **EXAMPLES OF IMPORTANT AND ESSENTIAL DUTIES** *(The following is used as a partial description and is not restrictive as to duties required.)*

Organizes and coordinates legal services for an assigned Department or unit; provides some coordination and scheduling for other professional legal staff; may develop and conduct special training and legal orientation and court familiarization programs for Court clients; may work with the local community and legal professionals in the development of special programs; may develop special grant funding and have responsibility for grant reporting; performs a variety of the more complex professional legal assignments and research; may be assigned responsibility for an area of specialized legal services in a Department or work unit; reviews and summarizes legal

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evidence, procedural history, and legal contentions in matters related to a variety of legal cases and Court calendars; researches legal authorities, including statutory and case law, appellate court decisions, and legislative history, using both traditional and computerized legal research methods; prepares memoranda for matters researched, summarizing background, identifying and analyzing factual and legal issues, and recommending disposition of legal issues for use by judicial officers; may meet with judicial officers and provide oral briefings on the results of research, as requested; drafts rulings for Court cases, including minute orders, formal orders, tentative decisions, statements of decision, and judgments for review and use by judicial officers; drafts correspondence to counsel and other concerned parties regarding matters pending before the Court; responds to judicial officer inquiries on procedural and substantive issues during trials and pre-trial hearings, including motions, evidentiary objections, jury instructions, status of case authorities cited by counsel, and points of substantive law; researches, analyzes, and formulates recommended policies, procedures, and forms related to court proceedings and recurring issues at the request of judicial officers, judicial committees, and court management; may serve as hearing officer, when duly appointed, for certification review hearings under the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act; may conduct ex parte hearings and make recommendations regarding their disposition to the appropriate judicial officer; may serve as a legal advisor to assigned judicial committees; may provide legal and court orientation consultation and advice for persons filing "small claims" or Family Court clients; may perform special assignments related to legislative mandates for timely disposition of Court caseload; performs a wide scope of legal assignments, as needed.

### **TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Sit for extended periods; frequently stand and walk; normal manual dexterity and eye-hand coordination; lift and move objects weighing up to 25 lbs.; corrected hearing and vision to normal range; verbal communication; use of office equipment, including computer, telephone, calculator, copiers, and FAX.

### **TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS**

Work is performed in an office environment; occasionally works outside; continuous contact with other staff.

### **DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **Knowledge of:**

- Principles of Criminal, Constitutional, Civil, and Administrative Law.
- California codes and statutes applicable to criminal, and civil law.
- Judicial procedures and the rules of evidence.
- Legal research methods.
- Interviewing techniques.
- Computers and software used in professional legal work.
- Principles of legal service development, work coordination, and training.

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**Ability to:**

- Organize and coordinate legal services for an assigned Department or unit.
- Provide work coordination, scheduling, and guidance for other professional legal staff.
- Supervise non-attorney staff, as required.
- Develop staff legal services, special training, and/or court orientation programs for Court clients.
- Perform a wide scope of professional legal and legal research work.
- Analyze facts and apply legal precedents and principles to assigned legal review and research work.
- Provide sound legal advice regarding the Court system to small claims filers and others with matters before the Court, as assigned.
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Prepare and present a variety of special reports.
- Operate a computer and use appropriate software in the performance of professional legal work.
- Effectively represent the Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco with the public, petitioners, law enforcement agencies, and other government jurisdictions.
- Maintain confidential information when required by legal or ethical standards.
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships.

**Training and Experience:**

Any combination of training and experience which would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required knowledge and abilities would be:

Four years of professional legal experience equivalent to that of a Court Staff Attorney II with the Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco.

**Special Requirements:**

Current membership in the State Bar of California.

An incumbent 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.*