

Job Title: Chief Assistant City Attorney

SUMMARY

The Chief Assistant City Attorney has a broad and executive leadership role, managing and directly overseeing the legal staff and department, and handling the most critical legal issues in partnership with the City Manager and part-time elected City Attorney. The Chief Assistant City Attorney provides a complete range of complex legal counsel, advice, and representation to the City Council, the City's Boards and Commissions, the City Manager, Department Directors, and all City staff.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This is the highest level of the Attorney series. This is an at-will, single position class within the City Attorney's Office and functions as a department head level executive. The Chief Assistant City Attorney is a practicing attorney in one or more key specialty areas and manages the overall operations of the legal department. The position is distinguished from the City Attorney in that the latter is elected by the public and works in a part-time capacity and has overall responsibility for the department and all City legal matters.

The Chief Assistant City Attorney is distinguished from the Assistant City Attorney by the significant level of independence and interaction with the City Manager's Office and elected officials. The Chief Assistant City Attorney serves as executive partner to City Attorney & City Manager providing strategic legal leadership, directly managing the legal staff and operations, performing specialized & complex legal work in significant legal issues or critical specialty areas and exercising a high degree of independent judgement. The Chief Assistant City Attorney may serve as Acting City Attorney during an absence.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES include the following. Other duties may be assigned.

- Act for the City Attorney in the City Attorney's absence.
- Plan, direct and perform complex municipal legal work to support the goals and activities of management-level staff, department heads, the City Manager, and appointed and elected officials; conceptualize and research legal problems; prepare opinions; strategize and propose solutions; confer with and advise City officials and employees, departments, advisory bodies, and commissions on legal questions pertaining to their powers, duties, and activities.
- Proactively identify legal risks and develop strategies to reduce and manage those risks.
- Manage and administer City litigation; consult and assist assigned counsel in case management; review and approve all billings; confer on settlement decisions; may represent the City and its officers and employees in litigation on occasion, including preparation of pleadings, briefs, motions and other documents; may appear before federal and state courts and administrative agencies.

- Negotiate and draft and/or approve complex and routine ordinances, resolutions, contracts, deeds, leases, and other legal documents and instruments.
- Confer with and render assistance to department directors in establishing departmental policies by applying legal points and procedures; recommend changes in policies and procedures to meet legal requirements.
- Review and analyze all liability claims. Consult and assist risk manager in management and resolution of claims.
- Coordinate and supervise the work of outside counsel engaged by the City for special legal issues and litigation matters.
- Represent the City Attorney at various City Council, board and commissions meetings and in court as assigned, and render legal advice on agenda items.
- Assist in or prepare cases for administrative and judicial hearings and represent the City in such hearings.
- Draft and review documents with legal implications including ordinances, resolutions, reports, contracts, leases, bids, permits, easements, deeds, etc.
- Act as Senior Attorney in representing the City in Court proceedings including motions, mediations and settlement conferences.
- Manage the in-house legal department and staff.
- Respond to citizen complaints and requests for information.
- Assist in budget preparation and administration; review and approve all invoices for payment.
- Provide legal assistance to various commissions, and boards
- Supervise, train and evaluate assigned staff attorneys and support staff.
- Represent the City in administrative proceedings such as personnel disciplinary mediations and arbitrations.
- Perform related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE OF:

- Constitutional, tort, administrative, and employment law.
- Land use law and regulations.
- Judicial procedures and rules of evidence.
- Ordinances, statutes, and court decisions relating to municipal corporations.
- Organization and operating procedures, duties, powers, limitations and authority of City government and the City Attorney's office.
- Municipal government operations, including zoning, planning, real estate, real property, labor and employment, environmental, public contracting, public safety, code enforcement and civil and criminal procedures.
- Statutes and court decisions relating to municipal government operations; Public Records Act; Brown Act and conflict of interest laws; tort law and liability insurance litigation.
- Law and practices related to municipal government and public administration.
- Judicial procedures and rules of evidence.
- Legal research and writing.
- Personnel rules and regulations.
- Brown Act and Public Records Act.

- Principles of management and supervision.
- Modern office equipment, legal research software, and methods including use of computer applications in word processing, spreadsheet, database, and visual presentation.

ABILITY TO:

- Effectively perform and administer all phases of City legal work including those requiring specialized knowledge.
- Analyze, appraise, and apply legal principles and precedents to difficult legal problems.
- Conduct legal research, prepare sound legal opinions and a variety of legal documents.
- Demonstrate effective leadership.
- Draw valid conclusions and project consequences of decisions and recommendations.
- Interpret, apply and explain rules, laws, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Analyze situations and make quick decisions requiring sound judgment.
- Represent the City in a wide variety of judicial and administrative proceedings; prepare and present cases.
- Effectively plan, organize and direct the activities required of a municipal legal office.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Assess exposure to liability and risk.
- Select, supervise, train, and evaluate assigned staff.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with employees, public officials, community organizations and the general public.
- Communicate effectively, orally and in writing.
- Communicate logically and effectively with a diverse group of clients, witnesses, judges, other attorneys, employees of various agencies and departments, and the public.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software programs.

EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE:

Any combination of education and experience that demonstrates possession of the requisite knowledge, skill and abilities. A typical way to obtain these would be:

Education: Juris Doctor degree from an accredited law school.

Experience: Eight (8) years of progressively responsible experience in municipal law as a practicing attorney.

Membership: Active membership in the State Bar of California.

License: Valid Class C California driver's license.

Preferred, but not required: Legal concentration in one or all of the following: land use, civil liability, and human resources/labor relations. Background serving municipal clients either in private practice, or within a municipal organization, and familiarity working in a union environment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; and talk or hear. The employee is occasionally required to stand and walk. The employee must regularly lift and/or move up to 10 pounds and occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, and ability to adjust focus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly exposed to video display and regularly works in inside environmental conditions. The employee occasionally works in evenings or weekends and occasionally works with use of personal vehicle. The noise level in the work environment is usually quiet.

Department:	City Attorney
FLSA Status:	Exempt
Revised By:	Human Resources
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