



Human Resources

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DATE: September 6, 2022

TO: Civil Service Board

FROM: Chris Kohel
Human Resources Generalist

SUBJECT: Job Classification Specifications for Assistant City Attorney

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL OF THE NEW JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE EXISTING CLASSIFICATION OF ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY.

Background Information/Summary of Job

As you are aware, the City is undertaking a job description review on all job descriptions last revised over 10 years ago. During this project, the job descriptions are being reviewed by both the supervisor of the position, as well as the incumbent(s). The intent of this process is to ensure that the description reflects the current duties of the position, as well as the education, experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform those duties.

In addition to the revision of the classification specific duties and KSAs, the Human Resources team has created standardized language that is included in all job descriptions and varies slightly based on their level of responsibility. You will see those language additions throughout the revised descriptions, including two new sections regarding supervision received and supervision given.

The Assistant City Attorney is an appointed position that has never had a formal job description attached to it. The purpose of this position is to perform a variety of legal duties to support the City Attorney's Office, which may include preparing and drafting briefs, pleadings, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, leases, permits, letters, memos, and other documents; receiving and reviewing claims, administrative proceedings, and lawsuits against the City and its departments for litigation or settlement; initiating litigation or administrative proceedings on behalf of the City and its departments; providing written and oral legal opinions to departments, employees and officers of the City and its related authorities; prosecuting misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors and violations of City ordinances; preparing for and representing the City and its departments in all court hearings, arbitration, and trials.

The job classification was discussed with the Supervisory Union and incumbents, and all are agreeable to the proposed job description.

Recommendation

Based on the above information, and in accordance with Section 13-7 of the Civil Service Code, I recommend that the Civil Service Board approve the job description for Assistant City Attorney.

Assistant City Attorney

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

To perform a variety of legal duties to support the City Attorney's Office, which may include preparing and drafting briefs, pleadings, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, leases, permits, letters, memos, and other documents; receiving and reviewing claims, administrative proceedings, and lawsuits against the City and its departments for litigation or settlement; initiating litigation or administrative proceedings on behalf of the City and its departments; providing written and oral legal opinions to departments, employees and officers of the City and its related authorities; prosecuting misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors and violations of City ordinances; preparing for and representing the City and its departments in all court hearings, arbitration, and trials.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

The Assistant City Attorney performs both routine and complex duties as assigned. Positions at this level receive instruction, assistance, training, and guidance from the City Attorney as well as other staff attorneys as needed. The Assistant City Attorney is supervised and directed by the Deputy City Attorney and the City Attorney.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

The supervisor makes assignments by defining objectives, priorities, and deadlines and assists incumbents with unusual situations, which do not have clear precedents. Incumbents plan and carry out the successive steps and handle problems and deviations in the work assignment in accordance with instructions, policies, previous training, or accepted practices in the occupation.

SUPERVISION GIVEN

Does have supervisory responsibility, typically for employees with little discretion. Makes decisions and/or recommendations about hire, termination, pay, and performance.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Perform general legal research and prepare written and oral opinions on various legal issues for the City Council, City departments, City authorities, and various boards and commission.
2. Prosecute violations of City ordinances, misdemeanor, and certain gross misdemeanor level violations and represent the City and its authorities in all actions at law,
3. Assist in preparing, reviewing and drafting ordinances, resolutions, motions; review exceptions to model agreements/contracts to be made or entered into by the City and its authorities and approve the form of such instruments.
4. Represent the City Attorney's Office at various City Council, authority, and board and commission meetings and in court as directed and render legal advice on agenda items as may be required.
5. Represent the City and its authorities in litigation; appear before courts and administrative proceedings to represent the City's interest as required.
6. Provide technical assistance to the City Attorney with respect to the acquisition, sale or abandonment of real property including acceptance of deeds on behalf of the City; assist with legal work regarding elections, special assessment districts and bond issues.
7. Investigate claims and complaints against the City and its authorities and recommend appropriate action regarding their handling.
8. Receive and respond to public inquiries, citizen complaints, and requests for information.
9. Establish and maintain positive working relationship with departments by maintaining two-way communications, producing consistent results, advocating for the team when appropriate, and offering expertise to improve processes, systems, and the organization.
10. Provide written and oral legal opinions as requested by the City Attorney.
11. Manage employee performance, and provide training, coaching, and mentoring for employees.
12. Provide clear, sufficient, and timely direction and information to the employees about plans, expectations, tasks, and activities.
13. Demonstrate highly-effective leadership by promoting and supporting the mission and vision of the organization, recognizing and defining issues, and taking initiative towards improvements.
14. Recommend the hire, transfer, assignment, promotion, employee grievance resolution, discipline, suspension, or discharge of assigned personnel.

15. Provide for ongoing training of employees in emerging methods, trends, technologies, and proper and safe work methods and procedures.
16. Coordinate with various City departments, other government agencies, and community groups to develop methods of sharing resources, minimizing duplication, and simplifying procedures.
17. Establish and maintain positive working relationship with the employees by maintaining two-way communication, producing consistent results, advocating for the team when appropriate, and offering expertise to improve processes, systems, and the organization.
18. Other duties may be assigned.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed are representative of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required.

1. Education & Experience Requirements
 - A. Juris Doctorate Degree from an accredited law school or equivalent.
2. License Requirements
 - A. Must be licensed to practice law in the State Bar of Minnesota, in good standing.
3. Knowledge Requirements
 - A. General knowledge of legal principles and practices, including civil, criminal, constitutional, and administrative law and procedure.
 - B. Knowledge of judicial procedures and rules of evidence as applicable to the assigned areas of responsibility.
 - C. Knowledge of modern and moderately complex principles and practices of municipal law as applicable to the assigned areas of responsibility.
 - D. Knowledge of organization, duties, powers, limitations, and authority of City government, its authorities, and the City Attorney's office.
 - E. Knowledge of ordinances, statutes, and court decisions relating to municipal corporations as applicable to the assigned areas of responsibility.
 - F. Knowledge of established precedent and sources of legal reference and methods of legal research.
 - G. Knowledge of Modern office practices, methods, and technologies.
 - H. Knowledge of English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
 - I. Knowledge of techniques for effectively representing the City and its authorities in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
 - J. Knowledge of techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and City and authority staff.
 - K. Knowledge of problem-solving and conflict-resolution techniques.
 - L. Knowledge of applicable safety requirements.
 - M. Knowledge of, or the ability to learn, City policies and procedures.
 - N. Knowledge of federal, state, and local laws, statutes, regulations, codes, and standards related to the area of responsibility.
 - O. Knowledge of effective leadership and personnel practices.
 - P. Knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources practices, leadership technique, and coordination of people and resources.
 - Q. Knowledge of budgetary, and management principles, practices, and procedures.
 - R. Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
4. Skill Requirements
 - A. Skill in researching and analyzing issues, developing recommended actions, preparing reports, and maintaining records.
 - B. Skill in drafting and negotiating contracts and agreement.
 - C. Strong written communication skills.

- D. Sound legal judgment, proactive initiative, ability to analyze issues.
 - E. Exhibit attention to detail in written product to withstand high levels of scrutiny.
 - F. Possess and exhibit skill to keep the City Attorney and Deputy City Attorneys apprised of issues and potential developments in a timely manner.
 - G. Skill in the operation of office equipment including, but not limited to, general computer systems, job required software applications, the internet, and modern office equipment.
 - H. Skill in managing one's own time and the time of others.
 - I. Skill in completing assignments accurately and with attention to detail.
 - J. Skill in mediation and dispute resolution.
 - K. Skill in using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
 - L. Skill in motivating, developing, and leading people.
5. Ability Requirements
- A. Ability to organize, interpret, and apply legal principles and knowledge of complex legal problems; effectively apply legal knowledge and principles in court.
 - B. Ability to present statements of law, fact, and argument clearly and logically.
 - C. Ability to prepare and present cases in court.
 - D. Ability to conduct research on legal problems, analyze, and prepare sound legal opinions.
 - E. Ability to properly interpret and make decisions in accordance with laws, regulations, and policies.
 - F. Ability to use good judgment in decision-making.
 - G. Exhibit qualities of dependability and accountability.
 - H. Ability to create and maintain a positive working environment that welcomes diversity, ensures cooperation, and promotes respect by sharing expertise with team members, fostering safe work practices, and developing trusting work relationships.
 - I. Ability to communicate and interact effectively with members of the public.
 - J. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
 - K. Ability to recognize, analyze, and problem-solve a variety of situations.
 - L. Ability to consistently and independently prioritize one's own work and the work of others, including scheduling, assigning staff, and securing resources.
 - M. Ability to handle difficult and stressful situations with professional composure.
 - N. Ability to establish goals and objectives.
 - O. Ability to set expectations and provide training in safe and proper work methods, development, and coaching for employees.
 - P. Ability to interpret and apply laws, contracts, regulations, policies, and procedures.
 - Q. Ability to manage a budget and work within the constraints of that budget.
 - R. Ability to enforce safety rules and regulations.
 - S. Ability to maintain confidential information.
 - T. Ability to demonstrate dependability, responsibility, and consistency in job performance.
 - U. Ability to exercise sound judgment in making critical decisions.
 - V. Ability to analyze, organize, and prioritize work while meeting multiple deadlines.
 - W. Exhibits leadership qualities of dependability and accountability.
 - X. Ability to attend work as scheduled and/or required.

Physical Demands

The work is sedentary. Typically, the employee may sit comfortably to do the work. However, there may be some walking, standing, bending; carrying of light items such as papers, books, small parts; driving an automobile, etc. No special physical demands are required to perform the work.

Work Environment

The work environment involves everyday risks or discomforts requiring normal safety precautions typical of places such as offices, meeting and training rooms, libraries, and residences or commercial vehicles (e.g., use of safe work practices with office equipment, avoidance of trips and falls, observance of fire regulations and traffic signals, etc.). The work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated.

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