

LITIGATION ASSISTANT (SPANISH-SPEAKING)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is legal clerical work of a moderately complex nature within a municipal office or government agency which involves assisting attorneys or higher-level administrators in preparing and processing a variety of legal documents and in implementing a variety of routine legal procedures. This specialized work primarily includes the research and preparation of legal documents, as directed by an attorney or a higher-level administrator. The work requires the incumbent to possess speaking and reading ability in Spanish at the fluency level indicated in the Note below. The work is performed under the supervision of an attorney or a higher-level administrator. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Provides assistance to attorneys or higher-level administrators in the preparation of a variety of legal documents (e.g., verifies citations in briefs and memos, rechecks the accuracy of cited cases, gathers exhibits from files, completes portions of legal forms, etc.);

Prepares routine legal documents such as affidavits of service, summonses, complaints, notices of violations, judgments, etc., under the supervision of an attorney or a higher-level administrator;

Arranges for service of papers upon opposing counsel, debtors, etc.;

Maintains diaries and tickler files for debt-payment schedules, orders to show cause, complaints, summonses, demands for bills of particulars, default judgments, etc. and initiates routine legal procedures and/or contact with individuals, departments or attorneys, when appropriate;

Maintains a system and implements routine procedures for collecting outstanding money;

Monitors responses to complaints, violations, demands for bills of particulars, default judgments, debt-payment schedules, etc. and follows up by initiating general procedures and preparing standard legal forms and documents (e.g., information subpoenas, affirmation papers, execution papers, satisfaction of judgments);

Maintains liaison with a variety of individuals and agencies, members of the community, attorneys, witnesses, the courts and court reporters;

Develops and maintains a "forms" file and updates and revises forms as appropriate;

Uses computer applications or other automated systems such as spreadsheets, word processing, email, database software, etc. in the performance of work assignments;

Answers phone and routine correspondence and provides appropriate answers to inquiries concerning service of legal papers and other routine questions pertaining to litigation, debt collection and related work in both English and Spanish;

Prepares and/or gathers information for the preparation of a variety of reports;

Develops and maintains a variety of files and records.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Good knowledge of legal terminology, procedures and forms; working knowledge of basic legal documents and procedures; ability to prepare routine legal documents appropriate to a municipal law office or government agency*; ability to assist an attorney, paralegal or higher-level administrator by performing a variety of routine legal duties*; ability to understand and carry out oral and written instructions; ability to organize information and records; ability to prepare written material; ability to understand and interpret written material; ability to use computer applications or other automated systems in the performance of work assignments*; ability to read, speak and understand Spanish at the fluency level described below in the Note; ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with others.

(over)

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma and either:

- a. Two (2) years of paid work experience that included litigation duties** as a major function of the work (major function of the work is defined as 50% or more of the day-to-day work experience); or
- b. Four (4) years of office clerical experience in a law-related setting (e.g., corporate, municipal, private practice) at least one (1) year of which must have been in a law office and/or court setting.

NOTES:

1. An Associate's degree in Paralegal Studies, Criminal Justice, Legal Assistant Studies, or comparable curriculum, may be substituted for the two (2) years of paid work experience that included litigation duties as a major function of the work or two (2) years of office clerical experience in a law-related setting (e.g., corporate, municipal, private practice).
2. A Bachelor's degree or higher in Paralegal Studies, Criminal Justice, Legal Assistant Studies, or comparable curriculum, may be deemed fully qualifying.
3. Completed years of law school may be substituted for the paid work experience that included litigation duties as a major function of the work or the office clerical experience in a law-related setting (e.g., corporate, municipal, private practice) on a year-for-year basis (a Juris Doctor shall be deemed fully qualifying).
4. Incumbents are expected to possess Level I proficiency in Spanish (as defined by the Examinations Division of the State of New York Department of Civil Service) which requires that the incumbent be able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family and autobiographical information. Can provide instructions on routine, concrete matters. Can translate routine correspondence and documents with the aid of a dictionary and/or grammar book. Can get the gist of most conversations on non-technical subjects, and has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions. Accent, though faulty, is intelligible. Can read with general accuracy news items on non-technical topics and general correspondence.

*To be demonstrated during the probationary period.

**Litigation duties shall be defined as assisting attorneys involved in litigation by performing duties such as rechecking the accuracy of cited cases; organizing and preparing exhibits; completing portions of legal forms; preparing routine legal documents such as affidavits of service; maintaining diaries and "tickler" files for debt-payment schedules; organizing cases and evidence; contacting people involved in a case; providing information to clients; preparing and filing discovery requests; preparing case summaries; and inputting information into file databases.