

**UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

LEGAL RESEARCH SECRETARY

CLASS CODE: 99-71-21

POSITION PURPOSE

Provides administrative assistance to the Chief of Legal Research and Staff Attorneys, the Executive Secretary to the Board of Bar Examiners, and patrons of the law library by preparing and maintaining files on bar applicants, maintaining an inventory of library materials, processing vouchers to pay bills, performing reception work to facilitate work of the office, and preparing and proofreading legal documents and writings.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURE

This position is distinguished by the prioritization and efficiency of accomplished work, and reliability in managing a multi-faceted workload.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Note: The duties listed are typical examples of work performed by positions in this job classification. Not all duties are included, nor is the list exclusive.

1. Manages procedures for bar examinations to ensure applications are properly received and materials are obtained so that applicants may take the bar exam.
 - a. Receives applications for the bar examination, prepares receipts for application fees, prepares files for applicants, mails confidential questionnaires to applicants' references, and mails or emails follow-up correspondence to applicants.
 - b. Reserves rooms in which bar examinations will be administered, and makes arrangements for applicants with special needs.
 - c. Orders supplies for bar examinations including test booklets for MPT, MEE, and MBE from the National Conference of Bar Examiners; blue books for test answers; and other necessary supplies.
 - d. Assigns and distributes bar examination identification numbers to applicants and makes a seating chart for the examination.
 - e. Acts as a proctor for the bar examination and MPRE (ethics portion).
 - f. Distributes bar examination results to applicants and reports aggregate data to the Dean of the Law School at USD, Justices, and Board of Bar Examiners to be used by the ABA when doing their reports on pass rate in various state bar examinations.
 - g. Sets up conference calls, completes travel vouchers, types memorandums, etc., for the Board of Bar Examiners.
 - h. Prepares documents for hearings and attends hearings.
 - i. Maintains historical records of all applicants for bar examinations, examination scores, and bar examination question assignments.
 - j. Answers telephone calls, email, and written requests regarding the bar examination requirements and sends applications and rules and regulations as requested.

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2. Manages procedures for operation and maintenance of the Law Library to ensure books, pocket parts, and materials are properly ordered, received, inventoried, returned, filed, billed, and tracked in the Law Library.
 - a. Maintains the card catalog and directs library patrons to references.
 - b. Opens and closes the Library.
 - c. Maintains death-penalty files and makes and sends copies when proportionality requests are received.
3. Performs administrative support functions for Justices, Chief of Legal Research, Supreme Court Staff Attorneys, and Supreme Court Law Clerks to facilitate the workflow in the office.
 - a. Answers and directs telephone calls.
 - b. Opens and distributes mail.
 - c. Makes reservations and completes travel vouchers for Supreme Court staff.
 - d. Types memos, correspondence, and reports for staff.
 - e. Orders office supplies.
 - f. Files documents and correspondence for the office.
 - g. Makes copies and distributes as requested for staff.
4. Functions as the backup for the Legal Secretary to assist the Chief Justice, Associate Justices, Supreme Court Law Clerks, and other Supreme Court staff during the facilitation of the appeal before the Court and proofreading work to verify correctness of formatting and citations.
 - a. Checks formatting and citation references and makes suggestions to the authors for corrections.
 - b. Provides administrative support to facilitate the appeals process for the Chief Justice and Associate Justices by keeping all files accurate, recording the votes, and preparing and filing the appeals.
 - c. Checks the proposed calendar for errors and disqualification statements in preparation for the monthly case draw.
 - d. Providing administrative support to the Chief Justice and Associate Justices.
5. Performs other work as assigned.

SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS

This position does not supervise.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS REQUIRE

Performing work at a desk for extended periods of time; operating office machines such as a computer, telephone, copier, etc.; using hands for repetitive movement including grasping, turning, and typing; lifting as much as 30 pounds; walking up and down stairs; and attendance in accordance with rules and policies. The incumbent is also required to work effectively with coworkers and the public, maintain confidentiality, manage stress, meet deadlines, and understand and communicate (verbally and in writing) procedures and practices.

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PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Challenges include explaining bar examination rules, procedures, and application processes; updating Library materials quickly and accurately; and ensuring error-free work.

Problems encountered include understanding legal terminology; locating files and materials; accuracy of format, punctuation, and grammar; and organizing and prioritizing workload.

DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY

Decisions include answering inquiries about the bar examination; sending appropriate information; ensuring proper location of materials in the Library; filing appropriately; format and grammar in draft memorandums or opinions; and preparing vouchers for Library materials.

Decisions referred include answers to technical questions; sentence structure changes; content of non-routine editions and publications; and budget requests or purchases.

CONTACT WITH OTHERS and PURPOSE

Routine contact with the Board of Bar Examiners and applicants to answer questions, law clerks to provide administrative support, the finance division to submit prepared vouchers or receive paid vouchers, vendors regarding purchases, and the inventory/supply coordinator to order supplies.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The incumbent works in a typical office environment.

COMPETENCIES/QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- English, grammar, and punctuation;
- legal terminology;
- legal citation;
- use of the Law Library;
- alphabetical and numerical sequences as they apply to sorting or filing;
- computer applications such as Word, Excel, Internet Explorer, and Outlook.

Ability to:

- deal with others courteously and effectively;
- communicate both orally and in writing;
- work with figures;
- copy, compare, and summarize data from a variety of sources;
- follow instructions;
- learn the operation of various office machines.

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Education:

Graduation from high school or possession of a GED certificate.

Experience:

Three (3) years of experience as a legal secretary or paralegal; or an equivalent combination of related education and experience.