

UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM POSITION DESCRIPTION

RURAL ATTORNEY RECRUITMENT PROGRAM/STAFF ATTORNEY – SC/SCAO

CLASS CODE: 99-51-40

POSITION PURPOSE

Manages the Rural Attorney Recruitment program and provides legal advice for the Unified Judicial System (UJS), Supreme Court, Judges, employees, projects, and programs to enhance access to justice and public trust and improve court operations.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURE

This position manages the Rural Attorney Recruitment program and provides legal support to the Supreme Court and administration of the court system for the State Court Administrator's Office (SCAO), UJS committees and UJS programs.

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. Supervises and manages the Rural Attorney Recruitment program to ensure program goals and objectives are realized.
 - a. Communicates with potential applicants regarding the program and coordinates with other interested entities including the State Bar and Counties.
 - b. Manages contracts with applicants and compliance.
 - c. Conducts assessment of eligible counties for program participation.
 - d. Educates law students and interested stakeholders about the program.
 - e. Maintains data and updates program information and materials.

2. Performs various legal research and advisory projects to give legal opinions and advice that are accurate and timely and in the best interest of the UJS.
 - a. Identifies legal issues and potential litigation issues with varying levels of complexity.
 - b. Researches applicable laws and recommends resolutions.
 - c. Communicates impact of issues as they relate to the UJS.

3. Performs other work as assigned.

SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS

This position does not have supervisory authority; however, does provide legal oversight for business matters and various projects and programs throughout the court system.

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ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS REQUIRE

This position requires ordinary functions of a typical working day, sitting (sometimes for extended periods of time), standing, and walking; attendance in accordance with rules and policies; proficiency in the use of office equipment such as computers, telephones, copiers, etc.; frequent in-state travel to confer with referees and attend meetings and trainings; and out-of-state travel for trainings and meetings. This position also requires working effectively with coworkers, managing stress appropriately; meeting deadlines; demonstrating initiative and motivation; identifying and analyzing legal issues; and communicating (verbally and in writing) complex ideas, concepts, dispositions, rules, policies, and procedures.

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Challenges include marketing and promoting the rural attorney program to build access in rural areas and access to justice for rural communities and finding legal resolutions to diverse issues related to projects and programs.

Problems encountered include reviewing the law and factual situations, conducting investigations, and providing legal advice and recommendations for various situations; foreseeing and minimizing liability for the UJS; developing new systems, forms, and methods to make the courts more accessible to the public; identifying legal issues and potential litigation issues and researching and recommending resolutions.

DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY

Decisions include interpretation of the law, ensuring legal protection and standards are followed; drafting forms; organizing meetings; and ensuring public access to UJS information and forms.

Decisions referred include legal decisions that involve statewide impact and approval of legal decisions.

CONTACT WITH OTHERS AND PURPOSE

Daily contact with Supreme Court staff, SCAO Legal Counsel, SCAO staff, and rural attorney recruitment program participants or interested applicants to promote the rural attorney program and provide legal advice.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The incumbent works in a typical office environment and travels in- and out-of-state to attend meetings and trainings.

COMPETENCIES/QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- South Dakota law;
- methods of legal research and analysis;

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Currently Revised: June 2023

FLSA: Exempt

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Skill in:

- legal writing;
- organizational management;
- time management.

Ability to:

- travel frequently in-state and occasionally out-of-state;
- communicate effectively with various personalities both orally and in writing;
- establish and maintain effective working relationships with a wide variety of people;
- convey ideas and future directions clearly;
- conduct legal research, analyze results, and write pertinent legal recommendations;
- interpret and apply the law and UJS policies to various situations;
- understand computer system capabilities at a professional level.

Education:

Graduation from an ABA accredited law school and possession of a Juris Doctorate. Licensed to practice law in South Dakota or successful completion of the first South Dakota bar examination following employment with the SCAO.

Experience:

One year of work experience as a practicing attorney such as a trial court attorney, family law attorney, or a related field is preferred but not necessary.