CITY OF BELLINGHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: **Legal Administrative Assistant** **E-PLAN**
SG:E1-9
DEPARTMENT: **Legal** **CS:N**
FLSA:Y
EEO4/SOCCODE:PP/23-2011

JOB SUMMARY:

Manages administrative functions of the Legal Department. Performs complex and confidential administrative management tasks for the City Attorney and other senior Legal staff. Coordinates all activities of major projects and legal department processes. Performs a variety of complex paralegal, technical and clerical tasks in support of the civil division of the City's Legal Department, requiring independent judgement in applying knowledge of legal processes, legal standards, and contracting principles applicable to multiple City functions. Work requires a high degree of confidentiality and discretion. Serves as Legal Departmental Public Records Coordinator.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to the City Attorney. Receives direction from senior professional Legal staff. Work is performed under general supervision and the guidance of applicable Legal Department and City policies and procedures, as well as federal, state, City and departmental laws, rules and regulations. May provide direction to support staff. May assign and monitor the work of part-time and temporary employees and interns.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Plans and performs complex administrative legal office coordination and provides high level administrative support to the City Attorney and Senior Assistant City Attorneys.

2. Serves as Legal Departmental Public Records Coordinator. Under the direction of the Senior Assistant City Attorney assigned as the Public Records Act legal advisor, reviews and redacts exempt information in accordance with applicable exemptions. Gathers and reviews information necessary to fulfill public records requests for the Legal Department and other areas, as assigned. Stays apprised of legal requirements related to the Public Records Act.

3. Coordinates the preparation of the annual department budget and claims and litigation budget. Monitors and reconciles budget expenditures and processes invoices for payment. Provides data on expenditures and program objectives and results. Coordinates the annual renewal of City insurance programs and policies.

4. Receives and responds to a variety of inquiries, concerns and complaints. Screens and refers calls and visitors as appropriate. Assists the public as needed through explanation of departmental or legal processes, making appropriate referrals for services.

5. Acts as records manager for Legal Department; maintains and updates office filing systems, routines, forms and record-keeping systems, responsible for sending/retrieving archival materials and electronic records management. Tracks, processes, and supports review of all contracts, bond, or other legal documents that come into the Legal Department for signature.

6. Performs specialized administrative, clerical, and paralegal services in support of all phases of litigation and case management for assigned attorneys.

7. Drafts a wide variety of documents including legal notices, answers, motions, orders, discovery, exhibits, trial documents, correspondence, ordinances, resolutions, and other specialized documents for attorney review and signature.

8. Performs legal research such as checking citations to authority and a formal record and verifying proper procedures as assigned.

9. Acts as City's liaison with Code Publishing Company (CPC) to coordinate maintenance of the Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) and resolves questions that arise from CPC in the process of condifying the BMC. Uploads all ordinances and resolutions to CPC for inclusion into the BMC, and for inclusion into the Ordinance and Resolution tables maintained by CPC.

10. Maintains and processes departmental personnel and payroll records. Reviews, codes and enters time sheets; processes personnel actions; coordinates recruitment processes with Human Resources; and monitors performance evaluation dates.

11. Handles seminar and conference registration for staff and makes travel arrangements as needed. Coordinates departmental scheduling including appointments, meetings, and filing deadlines for attorneys. Acts as liaison with clients or staff in other departments, agencies or jurisdictions.

12. Maintains inventories and determines need for supplies and equipment. May research information needed for purchasing decisions.

13. May provide instruction and training to support staff, temporary help or interns.

14. Provides back up to the Paralegal position as necessary, including discovery and trial preparation, service of pleadings, and filings with courts and agencies. Performs work on special projects/assignments that may be outside the normal area of assignment, as directed.

15. Handles and maintains highly sensitive and confidential data with discretion and professionalism.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Performs other related work of a similar nature and level.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities):

Knowledge of:

- Field of assignment sufficient to thoroughly and accurately perform the full scope of responsibility as illustrated in this job description.
- Municipal administration and familiarity with the functions and activities of the departments and divisions of municipal government.
- Federal, state and local program-related codes and regulations, policies and procedures.
- Law and processes related to requests for public records (Public Records Act).
- Legal terminology, principles, forms, methods, procedures, technology and specialized functions, standard legal formats and court orders.
- Research, interviewing, and investigative methods.
- Court rules and requirements for courts at all levels, i.e., local, state and federal.

Skill in:

- Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate verbally and in writing. This includes reading comprehension, composition, legal drafting, proofreading, standard and business English usage, punctuation, spelling, grammar, and format as well as the ability to communicate in clear and concise language appropriate to the purpose and parties addressed.
- Excellent interpersonal skills to deal with the public and staff, using courtesy, tact and good judgement in sensitive or high-pressure situations.
- Problem solving, decision-making, time management, planning and organizing skills.
- Using software applications including word processing, spreadsheet and database management, electronic document management programs public records portal, e-mail search software, and audio redaction.

Ability to:

- Manage stress and handle several tasks simultaneously while maintaining accuracy and attention to detail in an environment of frequent interruptions.
- Work independently in carrying out position responsibilities.
- Willingness and ability to maintain a high level of confidentiality of sensitive information and professionalism.
- Analyze and respond to changes for legal compliance and procedural development.
- Analyze, coordinate, communicate, and plan regarding department budget.
- Maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical ability to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
    - Frequently operate a computer and other office machinery such as a keyboard, mouse, phone, and fax machine;
    - Frequently communicate accurate information and ideas with others;
    - Move between work sites;
    - Occasionally transport objects wighing up to thirty 30 pounds.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in an office setting that includes a customary range of noise and other distractions, and low everyday risk working around standard office equipment. May experience frequent interruptions. May work for extended periods of time at a computer workstation. This is a sedentary position with minimal physical exertion requirements.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Two years of college coursework or vocational training in paralegal studies, office administration, or related field; AND
- Two years experience in legal office management or a legal support role; OR
  Four (4) years experience in legal office management or a legal support role.
- Keyboarding speed of 45 wpm net required.
- Word processing skills required.
- Municipal or other governmental experience strongly preferred.
- Electronic Document Management skills preferred.
- Basic Excel skills preferred.
- An equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to provide the applicant with the knowledge, skill, and ability to successfully perform the essential job functions will be considered.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

- Employment contingent upon passing a criminal background check.
- Notary Public License or ability to secure Notary certification.

PREPARED BY: Ian Sievers
7/84

REVIEWED BY:_____
Alan Marriner
City Attorney

REVISED BY: KSH
4/87
S. Mahaffey
J. Hoisington
L. Klemanski
1/01
Hoisington/Messer/Klemanski
7/02
K. Messer
A. Sullivan
12/13
A. Sullivan
6/21
A. Kraham

S. Chaplin
A. Silva
11/25