

# NEW MEXICO JUDICIAL BRANCH

## Attorney - Chief Appellate (At-Will)

*This job description is ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY and is not a comprehensive listing of all functions performed.*

### SUMMARY

**This job classification is utilized only by the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.** Under administrative direction of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, manage the operations of the Office of Supreme Court Counsel or the Prehearing Division of the Court of Appeals. Act as chief counsel to the Court on matters of Court operations and serve as a member of the Court's management team. Perform legal research, evaluation, analysis and writing and make recommendations concerning the work of the Court.

### QUALIFICATIONS

**Education:** Must be a graduate of a law school meeting the standards of accreditation of the American Bar Association; possess and maintain a license to practice law in the State of New Mexico.

**Education Substitution:** None.

**Experience:** Seven (7) years of experience in the practice of applicable law, including appellate law experience, of which three (3) years must have been as a supervisor.

**Experience Substitution:** None.

**Supervisory Substitution:** Leadworker duties may be considered on a prorated basis for supervisory experience at a rate of one (1) year equals six (6) months. Leadworker assigned duties must have included the development of employee performance plans and appraisals, discipline and approval of time for assigned staff.

**Other:** Completion of a post offer background check may be required.

**Knowledge:** Comprehensive knowledge of management techniques and practices; personnel management practices, principles and techniques; financial management techniques, information technology; United States and New Mexico constitutions; federal law; New Mexico case law, statutes, rules, policies and procedures; Judicial Code of Conduct, Rules of Professional Conduct; court structure and operations; case flow management; New Mexico Judicial Branch Personnel Rules; employment law (i.e., Americans with Disabilities Act, Family Medical Leave Act, Equal Employment Opportunity Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Workers' Compensation); problem solving and conflict resolution principles and techniques; computer software applications and general office practices.

**Skill & Ability:** **Exceptional skill in** communicating effectively both orally and in writing with diverse individuals and groups, including those with high level authority; analyzing the facts of a case and applicable law; maintaining confidentiality and using discretion when dealing with sensitive information; maintaining professional demeanor and composure; using computer and computer software including word processing, case management and e-mail programs; working independently and collaboratively; managing time and resources

effectively to meet established priorities on multiple projects; training, motivating and mentoring others; giving constructive criticism and guidance; planning and assigning work; problem solving and conflict resolution; persuading others using tact and diplomacy; identifying problems and solutions, implementing change, and monitoring situations to determine if solutions are effective; recommending corrective action and ensuring action is taken and meeting objective productivity and work-quality requirements. **Ability to** establish and maintain cooperative working relationships; adapt to frequently changing priorities and high stress; solve problems constructively; accept constructive criticism and guidance; learn quickly and retain information; prepare and deliver presentations; and maintain accurate files and records; apply coaching and supervisory techniques, personnel management practices, problem solving and conflict resolution principles and techniques.

## **EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED**

**Supervision** - Train, supervise, mentor, evaluate and motivate a legal staff of two (2) or more attorneys; develop employee performance plans and evaluations, discipline and approval of time; lead, mentor, oversee, and train legal staff in judicial procedures, day-to-day legal functions and case and document processing; communicate changes in court processes, rules and systems; track daily attendance; set expectations and performance standards; plan, organize, and develop work and training programs; mentor, coach and provide feedback to staff; and lead interview panels for vacant positions and make recruitment recommendations.

**Supreme Court:** Manage the operation of the Office of Supreme Court Counsel, including the direct supervision of personnel and budgetary matters, to ensure the efficient, effective performance of all administrative and legal functions; oversee the operation of the Supreme Court's committees, boards, and commissions and analyze Court operations to ensure that office policies and procedures are designed and implemented to fully integrate the Office of Supreme Court Counsel into the work of the Court; analyze Court operations, rulemaking activity, and caseload trends to alert the Court to the need for changes in Supreme Court policies and procedures that will promote the efficient and effective exercise of the Court's administrative, adjudicative, and rulemaking authority; draft recommendations and proposed dispositions for assigned cases filed with the Supreme Court to ensure that the Court is fully advised of the facts and law necessary to reach a decision; provide staff support for the Supreme Court's rulemaking committees, boards, and commissions and legal advice to the Supreme Court to ensure that the Court's constitutional rulemaking authority is exercised in an efficient and effective manner; remain current with developments in the law and discuss cases with other staff counsel, law clerks, and justices to ensure substantive and procedural consistency within the Court based on the most current state of the law; screen pro se petitions to ensure that the Supreme Court is fully advised of jurisdictional and procedural prerequisites to the substantive review of the merits of each petition.

**Court of Appeals:** Manage the operation of the Prehearing Division, including prioritizing and assignment of work to the legal and administrative staff; prepare comprehensive status and statistical reports reflecting work of the Division; monitor, evaluate and modify operations and procedures; participate in defining fiscal, human, information technology and physical resources needed to accomplish the goals and objective of the Court; train, supervise, mentor, evaluate, motivate and discipline legal staff; set expectations and performance standards; plan, organize, and develop training programs for court staff; mentor, coach and provide feedback to staff; prepare and administer employee performance evaluations; act as legal and procedural resource to court personnel, outside attorneys and pro se litigants; serve as legal back-up to Chief Clerk; assist the court to resolve pending appeals by: reviewing motions, docketing statements and briefs, identifying issues, reviewing records and transcripts; performing legal research; draft calendar recommendations and notices; identifying, analyzing and assessing the impact of applicable law; evaluating the merits of legal issues and arguments; drafting orders and opinions judges' final approval and monitor, evaluate and modify operations and procedures to ensure efficient and

effective performance of the Court's functions.

**May** serve on national, statewide, and local committees and conduct oral presentations and trainings at national, statewide, or local conferences and continuing legal education programs.

### **WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The following functions are representative of the work environment and physical demands an employee may expect to encounter in performing tasks assigned to this job.

Work requires the extensive use of computers and is performed in an office or court setting. The employee is regularly required to sit for long periods of time, talk, hear, read typed and/or handwritten material; perform repetitious hand, arm and finger motions as well as use manual/finger dexterity. May also be required to stand, walk, kneel/stoop, move, lift, pull and carry up to twenty-five pounds; travel (valid driver's license required), work overtime and/or flexible hours, weekends, and holidays; and may be exposed to fluctuating building temperatures, hostile or violent situations and contagious health conditions. The employee is expected to be punctual and to adhere to a work schedule.

Dev: 3/9/98 - Chief Staff Attorney (At-Will)  
Rev: 6/6/08 - Attorney Chief Appellate  
Rev: 10/4/13