

NEW MEXICO JUDICIAL BRANCH

LEGAL OFFICE SPECIALIST

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

SUMMARY

Under general supervision, serves as a liaison to court staff, other agencies and the public; performs routine legal support work in a legal office or court setting; maintains case files, statistics, and research materials; composes correspondence and other legal documents as directed, and performs other administrative support functions.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education: Associates degree in any field.

Education Substitution: Two (2) years experience as a legal assistant, legal office specialist, or a court clerk.

Experience: Three (3) years experience as a legal assistant, legal office specialist, or a court clerk.

Experience Substitution: Additional relevant education may substitute for up to one (1) year of experience. Thirty (30) semester hours equals one year of experience.

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

Knowledge: Knowledge of the differences between authorized practices and the unauthorized practices of law; knowledge of legal terminology and procedures, court rules, policies, and operations; case management systems and applicable software; New Mexico Statutes Annotated (NMSA); Supreme Court Rules and Regulations; New Mexico Judicial Branch Personnel Rules; New Mexico One Source; and other legal reference materials; assigned court(s) and procedures (i.e., Arbitration, Settlement Facilitation, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Conflict Resolution and local rules governing ADR, civil and criminal, Truancy, DWI, Domestic Violence, License Revocation Civil Appeals, Pro Se, On-Record Appeals); court procedures versus legal advice; office management and practices; court equipment, computer systems, and applied programs; computer research using the internet; sources for fact gathering, data collection and retrieving information; proper English usage, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and basic math.

Skill & Ability: **Skill** in avoiding the unauthorized practice of law and the giving of legal advice; dealing with conflict and hostile individuals; identifying potentially dangerous situations; applying effective interview techniques; applying proper English grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling; effective communication, both oral and written; use of legal reference materials; preparing legal documents and correspondence; compiling information and preparing reports; using computers, including hardware and software; understanding and utilizing legal terms and phrases; maintaining confidentiality, professional demeanor, and composure. **Ability** to work independently and under pressure; communicate effectively both orally and in writing; perform legal research and apply knowledge of legal procedures stipulated by New Mexico Rules; apply and communicate complex rules for case administration; exercise independent judgment in appraising situations; work with security personnel; deal with conflict and hostile individuals; deal with higher courts; remain impartial; utilize conflict resolution techniques; establish priorities; meet deadlines; multitask to achieve objectives; public speaking; effectively manage time within restrictive time frames; establish and maintain cooperative working relationships; follow written and oral directions and organize and maintain accurate records and files.

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EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED

Provide customer service and information to the general public, attorneys and other state agencies; provide routine assistance to the public, other court staff and outside agencies with forms, referrals and information according to court rules and guidelines to customers; keep others in the court apprised of procedural changes in procedures; coordinate the timely processing of documents; answer telephones; manage office files and records; file, stamp and docket all documents/pleadings; maintain calendar of deadlines and appointments; independently draft routine orders; calendar hearings; manage cases for assigned program; maintain and manage case flow; analyze cases for rule compliance, legal documents and process cases; identify cases for judgment; prepare drafts, notices, judgments and court orders pursuant to directive by the judge or commissioner; answer phones and provide information as needed; draft and prepare correspondence and documents; prepare agendas, schedule appointments and prepare materials for meetings; manage administrative minutes; document all communication(s) in case file; accurately prepare, track and maintain case files; provide information and referral services; communicate and apply complex rules for case administration, filing, court procedures and legal process under the New Mexico Law; utilize and update legal reference materials. **May** interview customers and identify relevant legal issues, analyze circumstances and review court rules; make recommendations regarding complex situations and how to address non-routine issues that may fall outside court rules and guidelines; provide guidance, consultation and assistance to new law clerks and Legal Office Specialists in the technical and procedural aspects of their job; assist the judge in the courtroom; prepare legal pleadings; maintain daily cash drawer; take in cash; prepare transport list; data collection; compile and prepare statistical reports; follow-up on overdue arbitrations; coordinate with other agencies and court staff to manage cases and case documents; provide assistance for back-up to other courts as requested; event planning; maintain Law Library; prepare draft memoranda in areas of law; serve as a Court Monitor; and serve as a liaison with other court staff, state agencies and the public.

WORK CONDITIONS/Essential Functions

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

The employee will work closely with judges, attorneys, and the public. The work is performed in an often fast paced and stressful work environment and the employee may have to make quick decisions under stress. The 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, read typed and/or handwritten material; perform repetitious hand, arm and finger motions as well as use manual/finger dexterity and may also be required to move, lift, pull and carry up to 25 pounds; travel (valid driver's license required), work overtime and/or flexible hours, weekends, and holidays; and may be exposed to fluctuating building temperatures. The employee may be exposed to hostile or violent situations that may arise when dealing with individuals involved in court cases; be exposed to disturbing and/or hazardous court exhibits.