

SENIOR DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Under general direction, leads, assigns, directs, and reviews the work of professional legal duties in support of the District Attorney's Office and the prosecution of criminal activities; represents the District Attorney's Office and litigates assigned cases in courts of law; plans and coordinates investigations for the prosecution of legal cases; provides guidance to individuals and team lead direction to Deputy District Attorneys; assists management with the creation, implementation and evolution of policy; and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is the fifth working, and lead-level classification in the Deputy District Attorney series responsible for providing technical and functional direction to an assigned team of Deputy District Attorneys and for performing the most complex and difficult professional legal work within the District Attorney's Office; typical cases would include those assigned to the Deputy District Attorney IV level. Incumbents may also function as a liaison to law enforcement, task forces, and grand jury. This class is distinguished from the Assistant District Attorney in that the latter is a management-level classification, and may act for the District Attorney on a relief basis.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Illustrative Only)

- Provides lead direction, guidance, and training to team of lower-level Deputy District Attorneys and law enforcement personnel; reviews cases and evaluates their work product; and sets priorities and follows up to ensure coordination and timely completion of assigned work.
- Directs the work and leads teams of attorneys on projects requiring interdisciplinary skills and policy development.
- Provides technical leadership for staff and projects, which includes oversight of an assigned team of Deputy District Attorneys as well as various task force and liaison functions of the department.

- Provides input for performance evaluation of employees; participates into the selection and hiring of new employees.
- Assists management with the creation, implementation and evolution of policy.
- Performs legal activities involving the investigation and prosecution of complex, high profile, and highly sensitive criminal or civil cases with minimal supervision; prepares and presents cases in court.
- Performs complex trial work, including jury selection, examination and cross-examination, and argument of the prosecution case.
- Evaluates incoming law enforcement reports involving juvenile and adult offenders; reviews reports and files cases and handles all aspects of prosecution from arraignment to sentencing.
- Reviews, analyzes, and researches allegations; makes determinations on the appropriate charge following receipt of agency reports; files criminal charges; keeps victims and witnesses informed of the status of legal proceedings.
- Interviews witnesses and victims; reviews and analyzes evidence, police reports, and other material related to pending cases.
- Provides direction to law enforcement and investigative personnel related to investigation of criminal offenses; provides advice as to applicable laws, court decisions, and legal authorities.
- Negotiates with defense counsel at pre-trial hearings regarding case disposition or modification.
- Prepares and appears in court for trials, hearings, and pleadings.
- Makes recommendations regarding sentencing, and presents the position at sentencing and revocation hearings.
- Assists and advises district attorney investigators and law enforcement agencies regarding investigations in progress.
- Researches law and precedents to obtain information needed to prosecute pending cases.
- Performs appellate research and drafts appellate briefs, pleadings, bail recommendations, motions, and other legal documents; appears in the designated court of appeal.
- Manages court calendars to ensure that cases are resolved quickly; prepares for weekly settlement conferences; conducts in-chambers discussions with court staff and defense attorneys to facilitate case settlement.
- Maintains accurate records and files, and compiles reports of work performed.
- Monitors legal developments, including proposed legislation and court decisions; evaluates their impact on the prosecution of civil and criminal cases and recommends appropriate action.

- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

Principles of providing functional direction and training.
Principles and practices of leadership.
Civil and criminal law and procedures, particularly as related to areas of legal specialty.
Advanced pleading procedures.
Advanced appellate court procedures.
Advanced practices and effective techniques in presentation of complex court cases.
Judicial procedures and rules of evidence.
Responsibilities and obligations of public officials and administrative agencies.
Applicable state and federal laws, criminal law, constitutional law, and provisions affecting the prosecution of alleged criminals.
Advanced principles, practices, and methods of legal research, legal writing, and investigation techniques.
Procedures, practices, and effective techniques in presentation of court cases.
Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

Skill in:

Planning, organizing, and coordinating the work of professional, technical, and administrative support staff.
Providing staff leadership and work direction.
Training staff in work procedures.

Defining issues, performing legal research, analyzing complex problems, evaluating alternatives, and making appropriate recommendations.

Exercising sound, independent judgment within general policy guidelines and legal parameters.

Handling difficult situations and responding quickly to changing situations.

Conducting effective negotiations.

Interviewing and preparing witnesses for testimony.

Preparing clear, concise, and legally sufficient resolutions, ordinances, contracts, leases, permits, reports, correspondence, and other written material.

Presenting statements of fact, law, and argument clearly and logically.

Understanding, interpreting, and applying all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.

Effectively representing the department and the County in hearings, courts of law, meetings with governmental agencies, community groups, various business, professional, and regulatory organizations, and in meetings with individuals.

Independently organizing work, setting priorities, meeting critical deadlines, and following up on assignments.

Effectively using computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.

Communicating clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.

Using tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.

Establishing, maintaining, and fostering positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Other Requirements:

Must possess a valid California driver's license.

Must be a current member of the California State Bar Association.

Desirable Education and Experience:

A typical way to obtain the knowledge and skills outlined above is:

Equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university, plus a Juris Doctorate from an accredited school of law, and seven (7) years of legal experience, preferably in the area of criminal prosecution with demonstrated ability to prosecute complex and high penalty cases with a minimum of supervision.

Physical Demands:

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various County and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

Environmental Conditions:

Employees work in an office and court environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees also work in a court room environment and may interact with members of the public under emotionally stressful conditions and situations. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.