

PARALEGAL

DEFINITION

Under general direction and supervision of the Family Law Facilitator or other licensed attorney, the Paralegal assists self-represented litigants in the preparation of legal documents, identifying necessary legal steps to proceed in the litigant's case, reviewing the litigant's case file history and answers a general legal and procedural questions. Paralegals also assist with researching and analyzing legal statutes and case law; in preparing legal documents; with case management duties; and assist the Family Law Facilitator and/or staff attorneys with a variety of paralegal duties required in family, civil and probate law cases. This position is subject to the provisions of the Trial Court Employment Protection and Governance Act.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Paralegal is a classification characterized by its paraprofessional status. Incumbents are responsible for performing assignments requiring a professional understanding of law and legal procedures in a variety of legal fields and must have the ability to communicate this knowledge to internal/external stakeholders and self-represented litigants. Incumbents perform a variety of moderately complex tasks, relieving the Family Law Facilitator and/or staff attorney of responsibilities, which can be appropriately delegated to specifically skilled, non-licensed personnel.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

The Court reserves the right to assign or reassign duties as required to achieve business and operational objectives. When assigned, all of the essential functions and duties listed below must be accomplished effectively, are standard, and may not be inclusive of all functions and duties that may be assigned. Essential functions and duties may include, but are not limited to those listed below.

- Assists self-represented litigants from a wide range of diverse backgrounds.
- Interviews self-represented litigants to assess their legal issues; reviews the court case file as necessary to determine the case status; identifies legal/procedural requirements and the correct forms/documents for use by litigants; distributes necessary forms and provides assistance in completing forms; and informs litigants of the next step options.
- Meets with self-represented litigants individually or in groups (in-person or remotely) to provide information and assistance with navigating through the family law, civil and/or probate court process.
- Prepares and presents workshops (in-person or remotely) regarding the family law, civil and/or probate court procedures and requirements.
- Provides information about and referral to self-help resources, Judicial Council of California forms, local forms and available community resources and services by phone, e-mail, in-person or through videoconferencing.
- Schedules appointments, answers the phone, responds to e-mail, maintains calendars and performs other duties as necessary to support the Self-Help Program functions and services.
- Assists the Family Law Facilitator and/or staff attorneys with a variety of paraprofessional legal duties.
- Reviews changes in legislation and case law.
- Examines, reviews and analyzes local rules and forms, statutes, codes, rules, procedures and policies.

- Conducts basic legal research and analyzes and interprets existing laws and ordinances, court decisions, pending legislation and other legal authorities utilizing legal resources from computerized electronic and print media, including internet resources.
- Prepares reports, memoranda and performs special studies.
- Drafts and prepares legal documents for review and approval by the Family Law Facilitator and/or a licensed attorney.
- Reviews family law, civil and/or probate files for compliance with statutes and the preparation for calendar notes and/or review for case management conferences.
- Compiles and maintains statistical information.
- Evaluates, analyzes, prepares and maintains procedures and protocols for use in the Self-Help Program and in coordination with other divisions/units.
- Aids other employees and divisions/units as needed.
- Attends staff and other work-related meetings, workshops, seminars and continuing education opportunities in order to stay informed of legal updates.
- Serves as a representative of the Court, displaying courtesy, tact, consideration and discretion in all interactions with other members of the Court community and with the public.
- Travels between Court facilities and to other locations as necessary to carry-out duties.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Minimum Qualifications

Education/License/Certificates:

1. A certificate of completion of a paralegal program approved by the American Bar Association.

OR

2. A certificate of completion of a paralegal program at, or a degree from, a postsecondary institution that requires the successful completion of a minimum of 24 semester, or equivalent, units in law-related courses and that has been accredited by a national or regional accrediting organization or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education.

OR

3. A baccalaureate degree or an advanced degree in any subject and a minimum of one (1) year of law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney in accordance with Business and Professions Code, section 6450(c)(3).

OR

4. A high school diploma or general equivalency diploma and a minimum of three (3) years of law-related experience and training completed by December 31, 2003 under the supervision of an attorney in accordance with Business and Professions Code, section 6450(c)(4).

AND

Experience: Two (2) years of increasingly responsible legal, court and/or judicial support experience that includes researching legal issues, drafting legal documents and/or providing family, civil and/or probate services under the supervision of an attorney.

Desirable Qualifications

Experience with a public agency or court in a self-help center.

Knowledge and Abilities

Knowledge of:

- Superior court functions, characteristics, services and activities.
- Statutes relating to court legal processes and procedures, including but not limited to: the California Rules of Court; Code of Civil Procedure; Family Law Code; Probate Code; and other statutes relating to court processes and procedures.
- Litigant assistance programs.
- Principles, practices, methods and materials of legal research and analysis.
- Legal terms, procedures, forms and documents used in family law, civil and probate cases.
- Techniques of interviewing.
- Record keeping, report preparation and filing methods.
- Modern office methods and technology including the use of a personal computer and related software such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, case management systems and scheduling programs.
- Basic mathematics, and statistical development and reporting.
- Correct English use, punctuation, spelling and grammar.

Ability to:

- Read and understand legal information, procedures, documents and forms.
- Perform basic legal research from varied sources and analyze a variety of information related to the law.
- Effectively explain legal issues and procedures to self-represented litigants who may have little or no knowledge of the law.
- Prepare concise written instructions and materials for self-represented litigants.
- Interview individuals from a wide range of diverse backgrounds.
- Prepare a variety of legal documents.
- Use initiative and sound independent judgment within established guidelines.
- Organize and maintain accurate records and files.
- Communicate clearly, concisely and accurately, both orally and in writing.
- Use work-related computer applications such as e-mail, word processing, spreadsheets and/or the internet.
- Remain patient, calm and professional while working with individuals who are in highly challenging situations.
- Work under the pressure of deadlines and conflicting demands.
- Complete all duties as assigned timely and accurately.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Work independently as well as closely with others.

Other Requirements

- Maintain mandatory continuing education requirements in accordance with Business and Professional Code, section 6450(d).
- Possession of a valid driver's license may be required depending on the position or the ability to provide alternate methods of transportation that meets job requirements.

- Candidates are required to pass a fingerprint clearance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Justice (DOJ). Convictions, depending on the type, number and date, may be disqualifying.
- All Court employees must take the Oath of Allegiance.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an incumbent to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Physical Requirements: Strength, dexterity, coordination and vision to use a keyboard and monitor; hearing to communicate with the public and Court staff; ability to sit for extended periods of time; walk or otherwise move within the Court facilities; reach with hands and arms; vision to read and write material; sufficient strength to lift, carry, push or pull materials weighing up to 25 pounds; lifting position may be from floor to waist, and/or from the waist to an overhead position; to stoop, kneel, squat and crouch to pick-up or move objects, office equipment and records; speak clearly on the telephone and before groups.

Working Environment: Work is performed in an office environment with little exposure to outside temperatures or dirt and dust. The incumbent’s working conditions are typically quiet but may be loud at times at some locations. The noise level and traffic level in the work environment are similar to a busy office.

Normal business hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Work outside of these hours may be necessary in certain circumstances.

NOTE: The statements herein are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by individuals assigned to this job classification and are not construed as an exhaustive list of responsibilities, duties, and skills required of personnel so classified. Furthermore, they do not establish a contract for employment and are subject to change at the discretion of the employer.

Job Title	Paralegal
Classification Status	PL
Representation Unit	N/A
FLSA Status	Non-Exempt
Established	07/2021
Revised	
Previous Title	

General sign-off: I understand that I am expected to adhere to all Court policies and procedures. I have read and understand the explanation and description of this job classification. By signing below, I am declaring that I am able to meet the employment standards and perform the essential functions and duties of this classification with or without accommodation.

Signature _____

Date _____