

CITY ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Under the provisions of the Municipal Charter and within the framework of general policy established by the City Council, serves as the chief legal advisor to the city government and is the administrative head of the office of the City Attorney; plans, organizes and directs the operations and activities of the City Attorney's Office; and provides legal advice and representation to the City of Fresno City Council, boards, commissions, officers and staff.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED/EXERCISED

This classification receives direction from the City Council. Exercises supervision over staff in the City Attorney's Office.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The City Attorney is the chief legal advisor of the City responsible for providing comprehensive legal services in the enforcement and administration of the provisions of the City Charter and of the laws and ordinances governing the City; coordinates and directs all legal activities on behalf of the City Departments; and maintains effective management of the legal affairs of the City. The City Attorney is appointed by, receives instructions from, presents recommendations to, and is directly responsible to the City Council for all legal matters, including the City's Code Enforcement Unit within the City Attorney's Office, pertaining to the administration and operation of the City government.

This is an unclassified position in which the incumbent serves at the will of the City Council.

EXAMPLES OF IMPORTANT AND ESSENTIAL DUTIES

Duties include but are not limited to the following:

Performs the duties specified by Section 803 of the City Charter.

Directs and supervises the personnel, administration of the programs, policies, and procedures of the City Attorney's Office.

Directs the preparation and administration of codes, ordinances, resolutions, contracts, deeds, leases, and other legal documents.

Supervises professional staff in the preparation of civil cases for trial, and in the investigation of claims and complaints for or against the City.

Provides legal opinions to the City Council, boards, commissions, offices, and departments.

Secures specialized legal services as deemed necessary for cases in which the City may be involved.

Initiates tax and ordinance compliance proceedings in court; oversees preparation of all the required instruments and the proper execution of all procedures for acquiring, managing, and disposing of property by the City.

Reports to and advises the City Council on legal issues and liabilities affecting local government; presents recommended solutions and alternatives.

Prepares bills for enactment at the State Capitol in matters of interest to the City; attends legislative sessions to represent and promote the interest of the City before committees and legislative representatives.

Directs the preparation of the budget requests for the City Attorney's Office and administers approved budget.

Attends various community, commission and council meetings as required, and provides professional legal support relative to their respective programs.

Directs and supervises the Code Enforcement Unit regarding the day-to-day code enforcement operations of the City, including property inspections, enforcement of housing and building codes and applicable laws.

Represent and appear for the City in all actions or proceedings in which the City is concerned or is a party to the action or proceeding.

Performs related duties as required.

JOB RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

City Ordinances and City Charter, civil law, state and federal constitutional and statutory provisions and state and federal judicial decisions.

Code Enforcement ordinances and regulations.

Administrative, legislative, and judicial procedures, including rules of pleading, evidence, and practice.

Legal research methods, established precedents and sources of legal reference applicable to municipal activities.

Principles and practices of personnel management, program development and supervision.

Financial and budget administration principles and practices.

Current legal trends and issues affecting municipal government.

Skill/Ability to:

Plan, organize and direct the operations and activities of the City Attorney's Office including Code Enforcement programs and staff.

Prepare and present complex cases before county, state, and federal trial and appellate courts, and administrative and legislative bodies.

Interpret and apply legal principles and procedures and prepare complex legal documents.

Communicate effectively orally and in writing; draft and present persuasive legal arguments.

Analyze and research complex legal issues and prepare sound legal advice and opinions.

Prepare clear, concise, and comprehensive reports, records, and other written documents.

Establish and maintain effective working relationships with representatives of community organizations, state and local agencies and associations, elected officials, City staff, and the public.

Develop, implement, and revise legal policies, procedures and responses pertaining to city government and department issues.

Operate modern office equipment including computer hardware, software, and automated systems.

Operate a motor vehicle safely, when appropriate.

Exercise discretion and sound judgment in handling sensitive and confidential issues.

Effectively and independently manage multiple work assignments; work effectively in a dynamic and changing environment; be adaptable and flexible in setting priorities and meeting established deadlines.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Duly licensed as an attorney-at-law under the laws of the State of California with at least five (5) years of experience in the practice of law. Local government law experience is preferable.

Special Requirements:

Active Membership, in good standing, in the State Bar of California.

Possession and continued maintenance of a valid California Driver's License is required.

APPROVED: (signed copy on file) DATE: 07/15/2022
Director of Personnel Services

MR/LH/jl/05/30/86
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REVISED: MS:VP: 7/14/2022