

CHIEF ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY

Class Definition

Under general administrative direction, plans, manages, oversees and directs the operations and services of the City Attorney's Office; provides legal advice and representation to the City of Fresno, City Council, boards, commissions, officers and staff.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The Chief Assistant City Attorney performs responsible professional administrative and supervisory work in providing legal advice to elected, appointed, executive and senior management personnel on legal matters, including various highly complex legal issues. Incumbents may handle civil and criminal law matters including the preparation and presentation of cases, drafting of resolutions and documents, and preparation of legal opinions. Incumbents may supervise other attorneys and are expected to use professional judgment, independence, and skill in the performance of duties. Incumbents function as assistant department director and acts for the City Attorney during absences. The Chief Assistant City Attorney differs from Assistant City Attorney in that incumbents of the latter do not typically assume responsibility as assistant department director. It differs from City Attorney in that the incumbent of the latter functions as the department director and assumes full responsibility of the department. This is an unclassified position in which incumbents serve at the will of the City Attorney.

Typical Duties

(May include but are not limited to the following)

Performs complex legal research and prepares and presents formal legal opinions to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Department Heads, Redevelopment Agency, and other boards, commissions, and offices of the City.

Represents the City in civil lawsuits, preparing and presenting cases in appellate courts; provides specialized services to the City and coordinates activities with other City officials, departments, outside agencies and organizations; appeals adverse judgments to higher courts when authorized by City Council.

Prepares cases for trial and may serve as a trial lawyer for the City of Fresno before county, state, and federal courts at all levels; takes depositions, prepares briefs and pleadings, and supervises necessary investigations.

Supervises and instructs attorneys, para professionals and secretarial employees in the performance of their work providing advice and counsel.

Prepares and drafts complex ordinances, resolutions, contracts, deeds, leases, and other legal documents.

Investigates the more serious claims and complaints by or against the City of Fresno and recommends and takes action as is necessary; determines the propriety of major actions under the City Charter, State Constitution, and state and federal law.

Assists the City Attorney in planning, developing, and implementing goals, objectives, policies and procedures, and serves as acting City Attorney in City Attorney's absence.

Monitors new developments regarding court decisions, administrative decisions, legislation and problems pertaining to local government laws.

Participates in the preparation and administration of the City Attorney's Office budget; submits budget recommendations and monitors expenditures.

Performs other related duties as required.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

(The following are a representative sample of the KSA's necessary to perform essential duties of the position)

Thorough knowledge of City Ordinances and City Charter and, civil law, and state and federal constitutional and statutory provisions relating to municipalities.

Thorough knowledge of legal limitations on the authority of various City departments and enforcement and procedural problems.

Thorough knowledge and understanding of legal administrative principles and procedures regarding court decisions, civil, criminal, legislative and judicial procedures, including rules of pleading, evidence, and practice.

Thorough knowledge of the methods of legal research, established precedents and sources of legal reference applicable to municipal activities.

Knowledge of the principles and practices of personnel management, program development and supervision.

Skill to operate an office computer in basic legal applications such as electronic legal research, word processing, and timekeeping applications.

Demonstrated ability to represent the City in a wide variety of judicial and administrative proceedings and present statements of law, fact and argument clearly and logically.

Demonstrated ability to prepare and try civil law cases before county, state, and federal courts.

Ability to interpret and apply legal principles and procedures and prepare diverse legal documents.

Ability to conduct research on complex legal problems and prepare sound legal opinions in accordance with laws, regulations, and policies.

Ability to supervise and review the work of professional, technical, and clerical personnel.

Ability to exercise sound, independent judgment within general policy guidelines and operating parameters.

Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, and prepare clear and concise written reports and correspondence.

Ability to establish and maintain positive working relationships with representatives of community organizations, state and local agencies and associations, elected officials, City staff, and the public.

Minimum Requirements

Possession of a Juris Doctorate Degree from an ABA or California state accredited school of law and four years of broad and extensive professional experience in a governmental law office.

- or -

Graduation from an accredited school of law and four years of varied experience in the practice of law, including civil and criminal trial and appellate court experience, which included experience in local government law, preferably in a public law office. Other specialized legal training or experience may be substituted for the required experience at the discretion of the City Attorney.

Necessary Special Requirements

Membership in the Bar of the State of California.

Possession of a valid California Driver's License may be required at time of appointment.

APPROVED: (Signature on File)
Director

DATE: 12/05/2003