

SENIOR ATTORNEY - 1223

General Definition of Work:

Performs complex professional work providing legal assistance for the Department of Social Services. Work is performed under general supervision of the Social Services Director. Consults and confers with County Attorney concerning legal issues. Supervision is exercised over legal department staff.

Essential Functions/Typical Tasks:

Responding to legal inquiries; rendering legal assistance and opinions; litigating cases; drafting ordinances; maintaining records and files; preparing reports.

(These are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work performed. The omission of specific duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.)

- Represents the Department of Social Services in child welfare matters and court proceedings, including, termination of parental rights, review, permanency planning, and post termination/surrender hearings and adjudication hearings for child abuse/neglect/dependency proceedings.
- Handles all appellate work before the North Carolina Court of appeals involving child welfare matters; drafts petitions, briefs, court orders, memorandum and other legal pleadings.
- Assists with obtaining citizenship of illegal immigrants in the custody of the department; prepares and reviews discovery.
- Ensures DSS's compliance with court rules and orders.
- Represents the Department locally and throughout the state on motions to quash; prepares and negotiates with opposing attorneys; participates in settlement conferences; interviews witnesses; prepares witnesses for trial; prepares trial exhibits and notebooks.
- Reviews, analyzes and interprets work product prepared by staff and social workers.
- Trains DSS staff on legal related matters; provides legal advice to Department of Social Service management and staff.
- Negotiates contracts for services to be provided by contract attorneys.
- Implements policies and procedures for Legal Department.
- Responsible for employment, directing, training, evaluating legal staff and making employment decisions.
- Assists with coordinating and hosting training conferences with local attorneys, social workers, DSS managers, guardian ad litem, etc. on child welfare related matters.
- Attends case conferences and staffing with Department of Social Services staff and other legal and court personnel and other meetings as required.
- Oversees department annual operating budget.
- Performs related tasks as required.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Comprehensive knowledge of modern principles and practices of local and State laws and court decisions; comprehensive knowledge of legal research and the investigation, preparation and presentation of cases for trial; and a thorough knowledge of legal office procedures, practices. Ability to communicate complex ideas effectively, both orally and in writing; establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, Department of Social Services officials, court officials, attorneys, clients and the general public; handle trial litigation; and prepare and render legal opinions.

Education and Experience:

Requires graduation from an accredited law school and extensive litigation experience. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered. Experience in social services litigation preferred.

Physical Requirements:

This is sedentary work requiring the exertion of up to 10 pounds of force occasionally and a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to move objects; work requires reaching, and fingering; vocal communication is required for expressing or exchanging ideas by means of the spoken word, and conveying detailed or important instructions to others accurately, loudly, or quickly; hearing is required to perceive information at normal spoken word levels, and to receive detailed information through oral communications and/or to make fine distinctions in sound; visual acuity is required for preparing and analyzing written or computer data, determining the accuracy and thoroughness of work, and observing general surroundings and activities; the worker is not subject to adverse environmental conditions.

Special Requirements:

Licensed to practice law in the State of North Carolina and possession of all other qualifications as prescribed by State Statute. Possession of an appropriate driver's license valid in the state of North Carolina.

This position is subject to an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday work schedule. Position also subject to working after hours to meet the needs of families/clients and complete agency mission requirements.

HR revised 11-17-2011