

**JUDICIAL ASSISTANT TO AN  
APPELLATE COURT JUSTICE**

**DEFINITION**

Under general supervision, performs varied, complex and confidential paralegal, legal secretarial and office administrative duties for a specified appellate court justice and, in some courts, the justice's research attorneys; performs related work as assigned.

**CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This specialized position in the Judicial Assistant series is responsible for organizing and managing administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial tasks for a specified appellate court justice and, in some courts, the justice's research attorneys. Incumbents also organize, coordinate, and ensure successful completion of specifically determined projects and assist with any other administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial duties. This class is distinguished from the Executive Judicial Assistant to an Administrative Presiding Justice in that the latter provides administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial support to an Administrative Presiding Justice in an appellate court.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES** (*illustrative only*)

- Provides administrative, paralegal, and legal secretarial support to an appellate court justice and, in some courts, the justice's research attorneys.
- Edits, proofreads, and reviews opinions and court orders for correctness with respect to grammar, spelling, punctuation, content, and organization; conforms opinions to uniform style using the California Style Manual, the Harvard Blue Book, and other style manuals.
- Calendars cases for oral argument.
- Prepares final opinions by checking facts referenced against all documents from the lower tribunal such as the clerk's and reporter's transcripts, administrative record, exhibits, and correspondence; verifies and Shepardizes legal authorities cited using resources found in the law library and computer data bases such as state and federal reporters, state and federal statutes, citators, textbooks, handbooks, restatements, and legislative intent materials.
- Transmits opinions and modifications to Reporter of Decisions; communicates with Reporter of Decisions regarding stylistic requirements and content of opinions; proofreads and carefully inspects galley proofs of all published opinions for complete accuracy.
- Maintains and updates chambers library.
- Organizes and routes work, sets priorities, and follows up to ensure coordination and completion of assigned work; exercises skill in setting priorities that accurately reflect the

importance of assigned responsibilities; trains backup support staff; works closely with Clerk's Office and file room staff to ensure that materials are received and sent out in timely fashion.

- Drafts correspondence; independently initiates specified correspondence for signature by appropriate staff.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

- Must be available to work overtime.
- Must be able to work independently in an isolated environment.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **Knowledge of:**

- Administrative office practices and procedures, the standard format for typed materials, including proper memoranda, briefs, drafts, opinions, recordkeeping systems and file maintenance, and standard office procedures and practices.
- Complex legal concepts, terminology, principles, and procedures.
- Methods of complex legal research (traditional and electronic).
- California trial and appellate court practices and procedures.
- Personal computers and the use of specified computer applications, such as word processing, spreadsheets, legal applications, desktop publishing, and on-line search and reference tools.
- Correct business English, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation, with emphasis on legal terminology, the uniform system of citation and the California Style Manual, etc.
- Organizational policies and procedures.
- Basic supervisory principles and practices.

#### **Ability to:**

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Apply complex legal concepts, terminology, principles, and procedures.
- Conduct legal research (traditional and electronic).
- Use initiative and independent judgment within established procedural guidelines.
- Organize, prioritize, and coordinate multiple work activities from multiple sources and meet critical deadlines while maintaining accuracy; exercise skill in setting priorities that accurately reflect the importance of assigned responsibilities.
- Train others in policies and procedures related to work.
- Transport boxes weighing up to 40 pounds.
- Operate personal computers and use specified computer applications, such as word processing, spreadsheets, legal applications, and desktop publishing, including demonstrated skills in interpreting and applying technical manuals and tutorials.
- Communicate effectively in English, verbally and in writing.

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work, including justices, court staff, and representatives of other governmental and private agencies.
- Plan, direct, and review the work of others on a project or day-to-day basis.

**Licenses and Certificates:**

None.

**Education and Experience:**

Equivalent to graduation from high school and six years of legal secretarial experience, including four years of technical legal research and processing. Or Two years as a Lead Judicial Secretary or three years as a Judicial Secretary II with the judicial branch.

Directly related college-level course work may be substituted for required experience on a year-for-year basis.