October 2018
FLSA: EXEMPT
CLASS CODE: 90450

SELF-HELP ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Under general direction, provides legal assistance and legal information to self-represented litigants with regard to family law, guardianship and other related matters in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations and court policies; supervises and provides direction to staff within the Self-Help Center; educates and assists self-represented litigants regarding court procedures; develops and provides educational materials to self-represented litigants concerning the law and procedures; provides referrals to other court-based services; and performs related work as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from the Family Law Facilitator. Exercises direct and general supervision over assigned legal support staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the full journey-level professional attorney classification in the Self-Help and Family Law Facilitator Services. Attorneys in this class provide legal and procedural assistance to self-represented litigants in a variety of legal matters, provide legal guidance and direction to the Court's non-lawyer Self-Help staff and provide work review of documents and forms they generate. The Self-Help Attorney is distinguished from the Family Law Facilitator in that the latter is responsible for the overall planning, development, administration of self-help services.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Supervises Paralegals, office staff, and interns in the Self-Help Center; enforces compliance with policies and procedures, provides coaching for performance improvement and recommends disciplinary action to address deficiencies in accordance with department resources and policies.
- Reviews legal documents and forms for completeness and procedural compliance with specific requirements set forth in applicable legal codes; provides guidance and assistance to non-lawyer court staff to determine appropriate procedures and applicable forms and documents needed; reviews, for technical accuracy, the work performed by Paralegals and assigned staff.
- Develops and provides information and educational materials to the public regarding court rules and procedures; reviews court documents with self-represented parties and explains legal options; assists with the preparation of legal documents; screens cases and refers to outside agencies if necessary; disburses legal documents to self-represented parties.
- Assists in the daily operation of the office, including the maintaining of statistics and ensuring staff coverage.
- Assists in developing community outreach programs for unrepresented and financially disadvantaged litigants; performs community outreach activities to inform the public of the services offered.
- Responds to email requests for assistance and written correspondence from incarcerated litigants.

- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of employee supervision, including work planning, assignment, review and evaluation, and the training of staff in work procedures.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures including California Rules of Court, other California codes and court rules.
- Family law, including mediation techniques and approaches, and/or provisions of domestic violence, probate, landlord/tenant or consumer law, legal processes, and Rules of Court.
- Litigant assistance programs, including legal aid and legal assistance services.
- Family law and other legal software programs.
- Principles, practices, methods, and materials of legal research and analysis.
- Legal terms, procedures, forms, and documents.
- Principles and practices of sound business and legal communication, data collection and report preparation.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.

Ability to:

- Assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Supervise, select, train, motivate, and evaluate the work of staff.
- Establish and maintain staff and work schedules to meet assignment coverage needs.
- Work with people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds.
- Use tact and diplomacy when dealing with sensitive, complex, and/or confidential issues, situations, and/or difficult individuals.
- Analyze problems and legal issues and identify solutions.
- Apply legal principles to case facts and make sound decisions.
- Research and analyze a variety of legal documents.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Operate office equipment and computer applications related to the work.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of experience and education/training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Equivalent to possession of a Juris Doctorate degree from an accredited school of law, and three (3) years of increasingly responsible experience in the practice of law.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment if required to drive.
- Possession of a California State Bar license.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.