



## **ATTORNEY, STAFF**

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF WORK:**

This is legal and/or administrative work at the executive level involving responsibility for handling legal matters including cases concerning fraud, federal or state regulations, and state leases and contracts; implementing state procedures; and supervising legal personnel. A majority of the functions performed by an incumbent within a state agency involve determination and advocacy of public policy governing federal and state programs. The work may include analyzing and interpreting state, federal and agency regulations; preparing documents and instruments for administrative and executive decisions and actions; representing the state and/or agency in court; performing legal research and preparing legal briefs. Supervision is received from an administrative superior within an agency and is closely coordinated with the Attorney General's office, from which permission is received to represent the state in court.

### **EXAMPLES OF WORK:**

**Examples of work performed in this classification include, but are not limited to, the following:**

Recommends to the appointing authority, if employed within an agency, organization consistent with federal and state laws and regulations governing the agency.

Represents the state and/or the agency regarding explanation of policy to the general public and justification of program policy development and innovation to state and federal approving agency.

Represents the state and/or the agency in general legal matters and assists in the defense of the state and/or the agency with the approval of the Attorney General.

Conducts legal research and prepares opinions and briefs.

Consults with the Attorney General for opinions on legal issues regarding the interpretation and administration of state laws.

Confers with federal agencies concerning federal regulations, procedures of issues affecting the state and/or the agency.

Supervises and evaluates legal, auditing, investigative, and secretarial staff.

Examines and/or prepares legal documents, agreements, contracts, leases or any other instruments affecting the state and/or the agency.

Counsels the appointing authority, if employed within an agency, on matters of policy and procedures.

Performs related or similar duties as required or assigned.

**COMPETENCIES:**

The following competencies describe the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes that lead to a successful employee in this position. An applicant will be expected to exhibit these competencies or the ability to reach competency achievement within a specified time. These competencies are linked to the essential functions of the job. Employees in this position may be evaluated on these competencies as part of the performance appraisal system. Example behaviors are listed below each competency and are used for illustrative purposes only. Specific behaviors may be identified and included later by the hiring agency. It is understood that some of these behaviors might not be acquired until a reasonable time after hire. Failure of an employee to successfully demonstrate some or all of these competencies, as deemed important by his or her reporting official, may result in the employee being placed on a performance improvement plan. If after a reasonable period of time, usually three (3) months, the employee fails to demonstrate successful performance, the employee may be terminated. These competencies include, but are not limited to, the following:

**PUBLIC SECTOR COMPETENCIES:**

**Integrity:** Demonstrates a sense of responsibility and commitment to the public trust through statements and actions.

Models and demonstrates high standards of integrity, trust, openness, and respect for others. Demonstrates integrity by honoring commitments and promises. Demonstrates integrity by maintaining necessary confidentiality.

**Work Ethic:** Is productive, diligent, conscientious, timely, and loyal.

Conscientiously abides by the rules, regulations, and procedures governing work. Meets deadlines. Work product is of a high quality. Follows through on assigned tasks until they are completed correctly. Takes ownership of tasks and duties.

**Service Orientation:** Demonstrates a commitment to quality public service through statements and actions.

Seeks to understand and meet and/or exceed the needs and expectations of customers. Treats customers with respect, responding to requests in a professional manner, even in difficult circumstances. Provides accurate and timely service. Develops positive relationships with customers. Obtains first-hand customer information and uses it to improve projects and/or services.

**Accountability:** Accepts responsibility for actions and results.

Is productive and carries fair share of the workload. Focuses on quality and expends the necessary time and effort to achieve goals. Demonstrates loyalty to the job and the agency and is a good steward for state assets. Steadfastly persists in overcoming obstacles and pushes self for results. Maintains necessary attention to detail to achieve high level performance. Deals effectively with pressure and recovers quickly from setbacks. Takes ownership of tasks, performance standards and mistakes. Knows the organization's mission and functions and how it fits into state government.

**Self Management Skills:** Effectively manages emotions and impulses and maintains a positive attitude.

Encourage and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust and group identity. Fosters commitment and team spirit. Works effectively and cooperatively with others to achieve goals. Treats all people with respect, courtesy, and consideration. Communicates effectively. Remains open to new ideas and approaches. Avoids conflicts of interest. Promotes cooperation and teamwork. Continuously evaluates, adapts,

and copes effectively with change. Allows self and others to make mistakes and learns from those mistakes. Adheres to high ethical standards.

**Interpersonal Skills:** Shows understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy, and concern to develop and maintain relationships.

Demonstrates cross-cultural sensitivity and understanding. Identifies and seeks to solve problems and prevent or resolve conflict issues. Encourages others through positive reinforcement. Expresses facts and ideas both verbally and in writing in a clear, convincing and organized manner, helping others translate vision into action. Models appropriate behavior. Recognizes and develops potential in others; mentors. Builds constructive and effective relationships.

**Communication Skills:** Receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and expresses information to individuals or groups effectively.

Receives nonverbal cues, such as body language in ways that are appropriate to listeners and situations. Takes into account the audience and nature of the information. Listens to others and responds appropriately. May make oral presentations. Communicates ideas, suggestions and concerns as well as outcomes and progress throughout the course of an activity. Provides thorough and accurate information. Can accurately restate the opinions of others even when he/she disagrees.

**Self-Development:** Adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles.

Seeks efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills. Uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development. Develops and enhances skills to adapt to changing organizational needs. Remains open to change and new information and ideas. Is committed to and actively works to continuously improve himself/herself.

## **MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES:**

**Emotional Maturity:** Conducts oneself in a professional, consistent manner when representing the organization.

Has the ability to work through adversity and hold self and others accountable for work actions. Takes risks appropriate to one's level of responsibility. Acts as a settling influence in a crisis. Exhibits the ability to work through challenges and create opportunities.

**Macro-Oriented:** Exercises good judgment and makes sound, well-informed decisions.

Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, and regulations related to specialized areas of expertise. Understands the effects of decisions on the organization and on other organizations.

Acts as a change agent by initiating and supporting change within the agency when necessary.

**Working Through Others:** Supports, motivates, and is an advocate for staff

Creates effective teams; shows a willingness to get work done through others. Clearly and comfortably delegates work, trusting and empowering others to perform. Reinforces and rewards team efforts and positive behaviors. Is fair, yet firm with others. Monitors workloads and provides feedback.

**Results Oriented:** Plans effectively to achieve or exceed goals, sets and meets deadlines.

Identifies, analyzes, and solves problems. Develops standards of performance and know what and how to measure.

**Resource Management:** Acquires, effectively and efficiently administers, and allocates human, financial, material, and information resources. Demonstrates ability to plan, prioritize, and organize.

#### **TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES:**

**Technical Proficiency:** The ability and willingness to exhibit competency in the technical areas needed to do a specific job.

Reads, comprehends, and correctly applies all rules, regulations, and policies applicable to work assignments. Performs work with a minimum amount of supervision in areas that are familiar. Conducts effective research on statutes and case law relevant to agency matters. Follows proper procedures when preparing pleadings for filing with local courts. Effectively relates relevant statutes and case law to issues, policy and procedures and any other agency matters. Properly follows Mississippi rules, case law, and procedures when drafting and filing necessary court documents in cases with limited supervision. Prepares effectively for court dates (i.e., conducts process checks, prints support data, and by having relevant evidence). Adequately researches unique situations before giving legal advice and/or taking legal action. Demonstrates sound word processing skills. Demonstrates a sound working understanding of statutory construction and basic constitutional law regarding competing state and federal law.

**Workflow Management:** The ability and willingness to perform work within defined specifications and timelines and to manage conflicting priorities.

Operates under specific time constraints and within specified deadlines. Effectively prioritizes tasks in order to meet deadlines. Works on appropriate priorities to get the job done. Prepares cases for court action well in advance of actual court dates. Prioritizes legal referrals in such a way that legal actions can be filed in a timely manner. Effectively schedules hearings, visits, and work assignments in assigned counties or courtrooms. Demonstrates the ability to effectively manage at least 15 active litigation cases either in stages of trial or appellate. Files cases with the court in an efficient manner. Utilizes a filing system for cases referred for legal action that lends itself to the type of action required (e.g., to be filed, pending in court, judgments to be prepared, etc.) being easily identifiable.

**Problem Solving/Decision Making:** The ability and willingness cooperate with other employees in identifying and solving problems in order to effectively and efficiently complete assigned tasks.

Exhibits ability to identify and address issues. Ensures that all problems encountered are addressed at the appropriate level and communicates all relevant information on a timely basis with accuracy and completeness. Exercises sound reasoning. Displays the ability and willingness to work with other offices or other divisions in order to collectively complete assigned tasks or problems as that arise. Responds to phone calls from other attorneys in a timely manner. Responds to phone calls from clients in a timely manner. Communicates effectively with coworkers to resolve and/or explain legal issues that arise due to changes in the law and/or agency policy. Handles routine problem solving matters in a trustworthy manner. Demonstrates the ability to accurately identify the pros and cons of a given legal decision, along with possible ramifications and contingency plans. Effectively communicates to clients that their problems and concerns are being addressed. Maintains a positive and unbiased attitude when dealing with difficult clients. Collaborates effectively with agency staff when resolving issues/problems. Demonstrates the ability to actively listen to parties in disagreement to discern what they really want, not just what they say they want. Demonstrates the ability to

accurately determine when a settlement (versus prolonged litigation) is the best outcome/solution for dissenting parties.

**Stakeholder Relations:** The ability and willingness to interact and communicate effectively with stakeholders.

Proactively provides stakeholders with proper information in an effort to reduce occurrences of future problems. Supports the agency mission and goals in all interactions with internal and external stakeholders. Acts as an advocate for agency policy. Effectively communicates to coworkers and supervisors what specific actions are needed to complete tasks. Demonstrates the ability to establish solid, trustworthy working relationships with judicial officers and court personnel. Knows how to effectively mediate between outside counsel/taxpayer and agency heads to come to solutions that benefit the agency. Properly and regularly documents actions that have been taken on cases so that coworkers can finish any unresolved matters. Follows proper procedures when communicating the status of legal actions to agency personnel, other state agency personnel, and/or opposing counsel. Responds promptly to his/her supervisor's requests, inquiries and instructions. Strives to make him/herself available to local staff to provide timely legal support.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

**Additional essential functions may be identified and included by the hiring agency. The essential functions include, but are not limited to, the following:**

1. Analyzes and interprets state, federal, and agency regulations.
2. Performs legal research and prepares legal briefs.
3. Serves as a supervisor to staff and performs evaluations.
4. Serves as an advocate for the state and represents them in legal proceedings.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

These minimum qualifications have been agreed upon by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in this job class and are based upon a job analysis and the essential functions. However, if a candidate believes he/she is qualified for the job although he/she does not have the minimum qualifications set forth below, he/she may request special consideration through substitution of related education and experience, demonstrating the ability to perform the essential functions of the position. Any request to substitute related education or experience for minimum qualifications must be addressed to the State Personnel Board in writing, identifying the related education and experience which demonstrates the candidate's ability to perform all essential functions of the position.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:** These physical requirements are not exhaustive, and additional job related physical requirements may be added to these by individual agencies on an as needed basis. Corrective devices may be used to meet physical requirements. These are typical requirements; however, reasonable accommodations may be possible.

**Light Work:** May frequently walk or stand and/or frequently exert force equivalent to lifting up to approximately 10 pounds and/or occasionally exert force equivalent to lifting up to approximately 20 pounds.

**Vision:** Requires the ability to perceive the nature of objects by the eye.

**Near Acuity:** Clarity of vision at 20 inches or less.

**Midrange:** Clarity of vision at distances of more than 20 inches and less than 20 feet.

**Far Acuity:** Clarity of vision at 20 feet or more.

**Accommodation:** Ability to adjust focus

**Speaking/Hearing:** Ability to give and receive information through speaking and listening skills.

**Motor Coordination:** While performing the duties of this job, the incumbent is regularly required to sit; use hands to finger, handle or feel objects, tools or controls; and reach with hands and arms. The incumbent is frequently required to stand; and walk. The incumbent is occasionally required to climb or balance; and stoop, kneel, crouch, or bend.

**EXPERIENCE/EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

**Certification, Licensure, and/or Registration:**

Membership in the Mississippi State Bar Association.

**Required Documentation:**

Applicant must attach evidence of membership in the Mississippi State Bar Association.

**INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS:**

Any candidate who is called to an agency for an interview must notify the interviewing agency in writing of any reasonable accommodation needed prior to the date of the interview.

**Additional essential functions and behavioral anchors may be identified and included by the hiring agency.**