

POSITION DUTY STATEMENT

DOT PM-0924 (REV 01/2025)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE Graduate Legal Assistant	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION 42-LEGAL-BAY AREA LEGAL OFFICE	
WORKING TITLE GLA	POSITION NUMBER 701-002-5797-XXX	REVISION DATE 03/26/2026

As a valued member of the Caltrans team, you make it possible to improve lives and communities through transportation.

GENERAL STATEMENT:

Under the close supervision and direction of the Deputy Chief Counsel (DCC), Assistant Chief Counsel (ACC), Attorney Supervisor and/or Attorneys, the Graduate Legal Assistant provides legal and policy support, studies, interprets and applies laws, court decisions, and other authorities in the preparation of moderately difficult and/or complex cases, opinions and briefs; prepares and presents cases for trial; and/or does a variety of transactional work.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

As a Graduate Legal Assistant, the incumbent is expected to become proficient in the following competencies as described below in order to successfully perform the essential functions of the job, while adhering to and promoting the Department's Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Imperatives and Goals. Effective development of the identified Core Competencies fosters the advancement of the following Leadership Competencies: Change Commitment, Risk Appetite, Self-Development/Growth, Conflict Management, Relationship Building, Organizational Awareness, Communication, Strategic Perspective, and Results Driven.

- **Learning on the Fly:** Learns quickly, is open to change, experiments, and is flexible. (Employee Excellence - Integrity)
- **Dealing with Ambiguity (Risk):** Can comfortably handle risk and uncertainty, as well as make decisions to act without having the total picture. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **Initiative:** Ability to identify what needs to be done and doing it before being asked or required by the situation. Seeks out others involved in a situation to learn their perspectives. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **Problem-solving and Decision-making :** Identifies problems and uses logical analysis to find information, understand causes, and evaluate and select or recommend best possible courses of action. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **Teamwork/Partnership:** Develops, maintains, and strengthens partnerships with others inside or outside of the organization through effective communication and collaboration. (Employee Excellence - Collaboration)
- **Customer Focus:** Considers, prioritizes, and takes action on the needs of both internal and external customers. (Employee Excellence - Integrity)
- **Interpersonal Effectiveness :** Effectively and appropriately interacts and communicates with others to build positive, constructive, professional relationships. Tailors communication style based on the audience. Provides and is receptive to feedback. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **Analytical Skills:** Approaches problems using a logical, systematic, and sequential approach. Weighs priorities and recognizes underlying issues. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **Thoroughness:** Ensures that work and information is complete and accurate. Ensures that assignment goals, objectives, and completion dates are met. Documents and reports on work progress. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)

TYPICAL DUTIES:

Percentage	Job Description
Essential (E)/Marginal (M) ¹	

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40%	E	<p>ANALYSIS - Analyze a case file (e.g., investigative reports, discovery materials, correspondence, administrative record, trial or deposition transcripts) and identify issues raised to determine appropriate further action. Analyze legal authorities to determine their applicability to a particular case and/or statute, policy, or issue. Analyze, review, or draft terms and conditions of contracts and proposed amendments to contracts, and suggest changes as appropriate.</p> <p>RESEARCH - Research statutes, regulations, court decisions, administrative board decisions, and other legal authorities pertinent to a particular case or issue, using both text and computer-based resources to provide legal advice and advocacy for the department. Verify that the law cited in any written work is valid authority (i.e., "Shepardize"), using both text and computer-based resources.</p> <p>DISCOVERY - Coordinate production of discoverable documents or declarations to litigation discovery requests to provide legal representation and advocacy for the department. Analyze documents responsive to litigation discovery requests to determine any applicable privileges and objections to provide legal representation and advocacy for the department utilizing appropriate oral and written communication skills.</p> <p>DOCUMENT PREPARATION - Assists in drafting litigation, transactional, and advisory documents, including motions, briefs, memoranda, settlement agreements, reports, letters, and other legal documents to provide legal advice to the advocacy for the department using appropriate written communication skills and ethical considerations. Edit written work (e.g., for content, tone, organization, grammar, and format) to produce a final version.</p> <p>REPRESENTATION - Represent the Department to protect the legal interests of the Department and reduce legal risk utilizing oral and written advocacy skills, interpersonal skills, negotiation skills, personal knowledge, relevant training, laws, regulations, and Departmental policies and practices. Consult with client on a pending matter or case in order to develop a strategy, prepare witnesses, or review evidence. Participate in selecting and/or preparing witnesses for depositions, trials, or administrative proceedings.</p>
40%	E	<p>COMMUNICATION - Draft memoranda to colleagues and/or superiors seeking or providing advice, recommendations, comments, etc. Draft correspondence to outside entities (e.g., clients, opposing counsel or other interested parties). Prepare written outlines to ensure complete, accurate, and effective oral presentations (e.g., for client meetings, court appearances, and depositions). Orally communicate with colleagues and supervisors regarding procedural and substantive case issues, strategy/tactics, court decisions, new legislation, office policies, and client relations. Orally communicate with clients, potential clients, and/or witnesses regarding a case or matter.</p> <p>ETHICS - Maintain compliance with applicable ethical and professional standards while providing legal representation and advocacy for the department.</p>
10%	E	<p>EDUCATION - Keep current on developments in particular areas of law in order to acquire and/or maintain knowledge.</p>
10%	M	<p>Use appropriate time management methods to ensure work is completed properly and on time (e.g., calendaring, monitoring the status of all assignments, and anticipating future tasks). Responsible for ensuring office, case files and calendars are kept in an organized manner to promote professional and efficient work habits.</p>

¹ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS are the core duties of the position that cannot be reassigned.

MARGINAL FUNCTIONS are the minor tasks of the position that can be assigned to others.

SUPERVISION OR GUIDANCE EXERCISED OVER OTHERS

None. Functional direction over Legal Secretaries and other clerical support staff.

KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, AND ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS

KNOWLEDGE OF: Legal principles and practices with particular reference to the law of eminent domain, public tort liability, contracts, and laws governing public officers and agencies; State Contract Act and the statutes and constitutional provisions governing the organization and conduct of the work of the Department of Transportation; law relating to public highways; Federal Highways Act and other Federal aid statutes relating to highways; California law relating to acquisition, financing, administration,

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and construction of toll bridges; law governing the relations of the Department of Transportation with public utilities and public agencies; trial and appellate court procedure and of the rules of evidence; methods used in appraising real property and of the problems involved in negotiating for rights of way, and safety, health affirmative actions, and labor relations and the processes available to meet these program objectives.

ABILITY TO: Prepare proceedings before courts and administrative bodies; analyze and appraise legal problems and apply legal principles and apply legal principles and precedents to particular sets of facts; plan and direct legal work and direct the work of assistants; write clear and concise reports, legal correspondence and opinions; present oral statements of fact, law, and argument clearly and logically; maintain the confidence and respect of members of the legal profession and other persons; and effectively contribute to the Department's safety, health, affirmative actions, and labor relations objectives.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR

The Graduate Legal Assistant prepares legal documents, letters and memoranda. Errors could result in dismissal of a court case, court sanctions, and/or loss of credibility with the courts, other public agencies and the public.

PUBLIC AND INTERNAL CONTACTS

The incumbent must consult with all levels of staff in the Legal Division and other administrative programs; have a wide variety of contacts with court staff, judges, departmental staff, private industry, and other governmental agency representatives; and outside witnesses, which requires diplomacy, tact, and professionalism.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Must be able to work appropriately and effectively under stress, manage complex and varied workload and meet deadlines. Ability to work on a keyboard; manual dexterity; sitting for long periods; develop and maintain cooperative working relationships; ability to focus for long periods of time. Requires occasional bending, stooping and kneeling.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

While at their base of operation, employees will work in a climate-controlled office under artificial light. However, due to periodic problems with the heating and air conditioning, the building temperature may fluctuate. Will have to perform work duties in different court rooms throughout the state and therefore, this position does require travel.

I have read, understand and can perform the duties listed above. (If you believe you may require reasonable accommodation, please discuss this with your hiring supervisor. If you are unsure whether you require reasonable accommodation, inform the hiring supervisor who will discuss your concerns with the Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator.)

I agree that by providing my electronic signature for this form, I agree to conduct business transactions by electronic means and that my electronic signature is the legal binding equivalent to my handwritten signature. I hereby agree that my electronic signature represents my execution or authentication of this form, and my intent to be bound by it.

EMPLOYEE (Print)

EMPLOYEE (Signature)

DATE

I have discussed the duties with, and provided a copy of this duty statement to the employee named above.

SUPERVISOR (Print)

G. MICHAEL HARRINGTON

SUPERVISOR (Signature)

DATE