STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
HUMAN RESOURCES BRANCH
DUTY STATEMENT
SO-92 (REV. 07/2026)

☐	**Current**
☒	**Proposed**

Classification / Working Title Attorney / Animal Health Attorney	**Employee Name**
Position Number 014-013-5778-XXX	**Supervisor Name / Classification** Haig Baghdassarian / Chief Counsel and Deputy Secretary
Division / Branch / Unit Executive Office / Legal Office	**Effective Date**
Collective Bargaining Unit Identifier (CBID) R02	**Work Week Group (WWG)** SE
Tenure Permanent	**Timebase** Fulltime
Reporting Location ***(Employee's Headquarters Address)*** 1220 N Street, Sacramento CA 95814	**Division / Program Hyperlink** https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/exec/legaloffice/

As an employee of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), we are stewards of public resources, we operate in a transparent, authentic, and ethical manner and are accountable for our actions. We expect true, open partnership with our colleagues within CDFA and with our partners outside of CDFA. We demonstrate courtesy, dignity, compassion, and consideration in every interaction. Together, we strive to create a workplace and implement programs that promote diversity, equity, belonging, and accessibility. We base our vision for the future and our everyday decisions on fair, objective measures and cutting-edge science.

Division / Branch / DAA Information:
The California Department of Food and Agriculture's Legal Office advises and represents the Department on a wide range of issues; supports the development and implementation of the Department's programs by providing legal services to the Secretary, Executive Office, and seven Divisions; and directs the State Attorney General in representing the Department in litigation matters.

Position Identification:
Under the direction of the Chief Counsel, the Attorney provides legal advice and representation primarily to the Animal Health and Food Safety Services Division (AHFSS) of the Department. The Attorney is expected to maintain regular and reliable attendance, work independently, and exercise a high degree of sound judgment and discretion.

The incumbent is expected to be proficient in legal research and be knowledgeable about legal principles and their application; the scope and character of California statutory law; proceedings before administrative bodies; legal terms and forms in common use; and principles of administrative and constitutional law.

The Attorney must possess the ability to: analyze legal principles and precedents and apply them to unique legal and administrative problems; identify issues of legal and practical significance; efficiently perform research; write persuasively in order to present statements of fact, law, and argument in a clear and logical manner; draft statutory language; prepare correspondence explaining legal matters in simple terms; analyze situations accurately and recommend an effective course of action in a clear and concise manner; understand instructions in verbal and written form; read, understand, and draft various forms of correspondence, notices and other writings; communicate clearly and provide clear and concise information to those persons contacted during the course of the work; and prioritize assignments and workload to meet due dates.

Special Requirements:

☒ Conflict of Interest Filer (Form 700)

☐ Medical Clearance

☐ License / Certificate Required

☐ Bilingual: Pass a State written and/or verbal proficiency exam in _____

☒ Telework (TW) Eligible: The amount of telework is at the discretion of the CDFA. It is based on the current TW policy and is subject to change.

☐ California Driver's License

☐ Travel Required over 10% - Employer Pull Notice (EPN) Required

☒ Field Work: 0-5%

☒ Other (Specify): Active membership of the California State Bar

Essential Functions:

40%	**Legal Advice and Counsel to Designated Divisions and Programs** • Provide legal analysis and guidance for the AHFSS Division and the Executive Office by preparing advisory memoranda and responding to legal correspondence. • Advise the Chief Counsel on policy and procedural matters, including preparing written memoranda on legal issues. • Offer legal counsel regarding existing legal requirements, including potential implications and unintended consequences of proposed actions by the Executive Office and division or program staff. • Conduct legal research and provide advice on a broad range of issues affecting departmental operations, including contract disputes, grant reviews, bill analyses, conflicts of interest, and constitutional matters. • Interpret legal documents and provide instructions related to procurement solicitations, bids, contracts, and risk mitigation associated with CDFA operations. • Review contracts for compliance with applicable laws, policies, and sound judgment, and assess contract disputes as needed. • Evaluate policy determinations for legal concerns and ensure consistency with existing regulations, statutes, and constitutional requirements.
20%	**Regulatory/Legislative Counsel** • Provide legal advice and counsel regarding the requirements of regulations, statutes, and other proposals. • Assist with drafting and reviewing regulations, statutory enactments, legal memoranda, and advisories to ensure Department management receives accurate and up-to-date information. • Advise Department staff on the promulgation and amendment of regulations, including compliance with Office of Administrative Law procedures and requirements.
10%	**Litigation Liaison to DOJ** • Serve as the Department's liaison with the Attorney General's Office and other governmental departments and agencies on litigation matters. • Prepare legal memoranda and issue briefings and coordinate with Department of Justice

	(DOJ) litigation counsel while liaising with opposing counsel, judges, hearing officers, the public, and Department staff.
10%	**Legal Representation as Assigned by the Chief Counsel** • Represent the Office of Chief Counsel in various less difficult legal proceedings, and coordinate and develop litigation strategies and communications with outside counsel. • Serve as a Department liaison with the Office of Chief Counsel and other governmental departments and agencies. • Coordinate with CDFA's Legislative Office staff regarding pending or proposed legislation. • Analyze and track proposed legislation that may affect the Department and advise and prepare the Chief Counsel on potential legal issues arising from such proposals.
10%	**Administrative Hearings** • Advise and serve as counsel for Department programs and prepare for and advocate on behalf of the Department in informal administrative hearings. • Conduct hearings for less complex matters involving divisions or programs represented by other Department counsel. • Draft and review Hearing and Appeal Decisions and Orders to ensure legal accuracy and consistency.
5%	**Public Records Act Requests** • Review responsive documents for confidentiality, completeness, and applicability to determine whether they satisfy the request or qualify for an exemption. • Communicate with requesters, program personnel, and other public agencies and officials; conduct necessary research; and advise the Program on disclosure obligations. • Provide guidance to the Legal Assistant on processing Public Records Act and Information Practices Act requests.
Non-Essential/Marginal Functions:	
5%	• Perform other job-related duties as assigned by the Supervisor.

Required Qualifications:

Active membership in the California State Bar.

Work Environment and Equipment Used:

The duties of this job are performed indoors approximately 95% of the time. The employee has an office and is equipped with standard office equipment (computer, desk, chair, etc.). Consistent with requirements under the Unit 2 Memorandum of Understanding, State personnel rules, and Departmental policies, the Attorney will be provided with a dedicated office if they work in-person more than 50% of the week and will either have use of a hoteling space or dedicated office (if available) if they work remotely the majority of the time.

The duties of this job require the employee to operate various office equipment such as a computer with software programs, use Lexis, Microsoft Outlook, stapler, hole- punch, photocopier, and fax machine.

Regular or recurring telework may occur as part of the incumbent's ongoing regular schedule in accordance with the Department's Telework Policy.

Physical/Mental Abilities:

Travel to various locations throughout the state may be required on an occasional basis.

Employee Certification

This duty statement reflects the typical duties of the essential functions described for the position. It is not considered an all-inclusive list of work requirements. I have read and discussed the duties of this position with my supervisor and understand I may perform other duties as assigned, including but not limited to, work in other functional areas to cover absences, peak work periods, or balance workload.

I certify I possess qualifications, including but not limited to, integrity, initiative, dependability, good judgement, and the ability to work cooperatively with others. Additionally, I am able to perform the assigned duties with or without reasonable accommodation. Should I have any concerns about performing the assigned duties, I will discuss them with the hiring manager who will provide the required information for the Office of Civil Rights.

I have read the duty statement and discussed the duties with my supervisor.

Employee Name (Print)	**Signature**	**Date**

Supervisor Statement:
I have discussed the duties outlined in the duty statement and provided a copy to the employee.

Supervisor Name (Print)	**Signature**	**Date**

CC: Employee
Official Personnel File
Supervisor's Drop File

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Classification / Working Title Attorney III / Animal Health Attorney	**Employee Name**
Position Number 014-013-5795-005	**Supervisor Name / Classification** Haig Baghdassarian / Chief Counsel and Deputy Secretary
Division / Branch / Unit Executive Office / Legal Office	**Effective Date**
Collective Bargaining Unit Identifier (CBID) R02	**Work Week Group (WWG)** SE
Tenure Permanent	**Timebase** Fulltime
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Division / Branch / DAA Information:
The California Department of Food and Agriculture's Legal Office advises and represents the Department on a wide range of issues; supports the development and implementation of the Department's programs by providing legal services to the Secretary, Executive Office, and seven Divisions; and directs the State Attorney General in representing the Department in litigation matters.

Position Identification:
Under the general direction of the Chief Counsel, the Attorney III provides legal advice and representation primarily to the Animal Health and Food Safety Services Division of the Department. The Attorney III is expected to maintain regular and reliable attendance, work independently, and exercise a high degree of sound judgment and discretion.

The incumbent is expected to be proficient in legal research and be knowledgeable about legal principles and their application; the scope and character of California statutory law; proceedings before administrative bodies; legal terms and forms in common use; and principles of administrative and constitutional law.

The Attorney must possess the ability to: analyze legal principles and precedents and apply them to unique legal and administrative problems; identify issues of legal and practical significance; efficiently perform research; write persuasively in order to present statements of fact, law, and argument in a clear and logical manner; draft statutory language; prepare correspondence explaining legal matters in simple terms; analyze situations accurately and recommend an effective course of action in a clear and concise manner; understand instructions in verbal and written form; read, understand, and draft various forms of correspondence, notices and other writings; communicate clearly and provide clear and concise information to those persons contacted during the course of the work; and prioritize assignments and workload to meet due dates.

Special Requirements:

☒ Conflict of Interest Filer (Form 700)

☐ Medical Clearance

☐ License / Certificate Required

☐ Bilingual: Pass a State written and/or verbal proficiency exam in _____

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☐ California Driver's License

☐ Travel Required over 10% - Employer Pull Notice (EPN) Required

☒ Field Work: 0-5%

☒ Other (Specify): Active membership of the California State Bar

Essential Functions:

40%	**Legal Advice and Counsel to Designated Divisions and Programs** • Provide legal analysis and advice for the AHFSS Division and the Executive Office in complex and politically sensitive areas of law by developing litigation strategies, preparing advisory memoranda, and responding to difficult legal correspondence with broad discretion and minimal supervision. • Advise the Chief Counsel on major policy and procedural issues; review policy determinations for legal issues to ensure consistency with existing regulations, statutes, and constitutional requirements; and prepare written memoranda on legal matters of special importance; and draft responses to inquiries from legislators, parties, or the public that raise sensitive and complex legal issues. • Provide legal counsel on existing legal requirements and assess potential implications and unintended consequences of proposed actions by the Executive Office and division or program staff with broad discretion and minimal supervision. • Independently conduct research on confidential, highly sensitive, and often controversial matters to provide legal advice with broad discretion and minimal supervision on a wide range of issues affecting departmental operations, including but not limited to contract disputes, grant reviews, bill analyses, conflicts of interest, and constitutional law. • Interpret legal documents and provide guidance in complex areas such as procurement solicitations, bids, contracts, and risk mitigation related to CDFA operations. • Review contracts for compliance with applicable laws, policies, and sound judgment, and evaluate contract disputes as needed.
20%	**Regulatory/Legislative Counsel** • Provide legal advice and counsel regarding the requirements of regulations, statutes, and other proposals with broad discretion and minimal supervision. • Draft and review regulations, statutory enactments, legal memoranda, and advisories to ensure Department management receives accurate and current information. • Advise Department staff on the promulgation and amendment of regulations, including compliance with Office of Administrative Law procedures and requirements.
10%	**Litigation Liaison to DOJ** • Serve as the Department's liaison with the Attorney General's Office and other

	governmental departments and agencies on sensitive and complex litigation matters. • With broad discretion and minimal supervision, prepare legal memoranda and issue briefings, and coordinate with Department of Justice (DOJ) litigation counsel while liaising with opposing counsel, judges, hearing officers, the public, and Department.
10%	**Legal Representation as Assigned by the Chief Counsel** • Represent the Office of Chief Counsel in various legal proceedings, and coordinate and develop litigation strategies and communications with outside counsel with broad discretion and minimal supervision. • Serve as the Department's liaison with the Office of Chief Counsel and other governmental departments and agencies with broad discretion and minimal supervision.. • Coordinate with staff from CDFA's Legislative Office regarding pending or proposed legislation. • Analyze and track proposed legislation that may affect the Department and advise and prepare the Chief Counsel on potential legal issues arising from such proposals.
10%	**Administrative Hearings** • Advise and serve as counsel for Department programs and prepare for and advocate on behalf of the Department in informal administrative hearings. • Independently conduct complex and difficult hearings for matters involving divisions or programs represented by other Department counsel. • Draft and review Hearing and Appeal Decisions and Orders to ensure legal accuracy and consistency. • Provide guidance to the Legal Office Hearing Coordinator on the management and oversight of informal and formal administrative hearings and appeals.
5%	**Public Records Act Requests** • Review responsive documents for confidentiality, completeness, and applicability to determine whether they fulfill the request or qualify for an exemption. • Communicate with requesters, program personnel, and other public agencies and officials; conduct necessary research; and advise the Program on disclosure obligations. • Advise the Legal Assistant on processing Public Records Act and Information Practices Act requests.
Non-Essential/Marginal Functions:	
5%	• Perform other job-related duties as assigned by the Supervisor.
Required Qualifications: Active membership in the California State Bar.	
Work Environment and Equipment Used: The duties of this job are performed indoors approximately 95% of the time. The employee has an office and is equipped with standard office equipment (computer, desk, chair, etc.). Consistent with requirements under	

the Unit 2 Memorandum of Understanding, State personnel rules, and Departmental policies, the Attorney will be provided with a dedicated office if they work in-person more than 50% of the week and will either have use of a hoteling space or dedicated office (if available) if they work remotely the majority of the time.

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I have read the duty statement and discussed the duties with my supervisor.

Employee Name (Print)	**Signature**	**Date**
Supervisor Statement: I have discussed the duties outlined in the duty statement and provided a copy to the employee.		
Supervisor Name (Print)	**Signature**	**Date**

CC: Employee
Official Personnel File
Supervisor's Drop File