



PARALEGAL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Department: Executive	Division: Legal
Work Location: Urbana City Building	Percent Time: 100%
Job Type: Civil Service	FLSA Status: Exempt
Reports To: City Attorney	Union: Non-union

JOB SUMMARY

Under general direction and supervision of the City Attorney, the Paralegal performs advanced-level analytical and technical paralegal work in the analysis, data management, and research related to the operations and services related to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) administration and compliance, which includes administering the process for responding to requests for information pursuant to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act; undertakes legal research on a variety of routine and complex legal issues; prepares legal memoranda for or at the request of the City Attorney; prepares legal filings in civil court cases; prepares and handles filings with other units of government; and performs other related duties as assigned. This position performs a wide range of professional-level work including complex analysis and diverse records-related project management in a lead capacity. Successful performance of the work requires advanced knowledge in a general professional or technical field and the consistent exercise of discretion and independent judgment.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Serves as the City's appointed FOIA Officer.
- Supervises and coordinates the City's processes for responding to FOIA requests including assisting and guiding designated City staff in their handling and processing of FOIA requests.
- Tracks incoming FOIA requests; processes, reviews, redacts, and assembles responses, and analyzes content of records according to applicable legal and policy requirements in order to make a disclosure determination under FOIA.
- Reviews audio/video recordings for redactions, presentation, discovery, FOIA requests, copying and storage.
- Prepares responses to FOIA requesters and the Attorney General's Public Access Counselor's requests for information and further action by the City.
- Maintains the City's FOIA log, undertakes studies, and prepares memoranda that address particular issues related to the City's handling and responding to FOIA requests as requested.

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- Maintains and organizes evidence such as paper documents, PDF files, image files, audio files, video files, medical records, expert reports, contract documents, financial records, and other file types.
- Analyzes and communicates, orally and in writing, complex legal principles.
- Advises the City Attorney and City staff on municipal legal matters including researching, interpreting, and applying federal and state statutes, rules, regulations, and state and federal case law and City ordinances to specific fact situations.
- Assists with the management and operation of the division by making recommendations for and implementing improvements with respect to document management, case management, litigation management, and/or other legal office management.
- Obtains opinions and assistance from the Illinois Office of the Attorney General Public Access Counselor (PAC) as necessary.
- Assists in the resolution of complex legal issues and disputes.
- Prepares and reviews ordinances, resolutions, and other legal documents.
- Researches, studies, interprets, and analyzes legal opinions, memoranda, and briefs from other attorneys.
- Researches and recommends modifications to existing ordinances and practices and/or proposes new City legislation when requested.
- Utilizes office technology for daily duties and in court during litigation.
- Maintains confidentiality in performing assignments relative to any information received directly or indirectly; ensures that confidential information is kept secure.
- Complies with City policies and procedures.
- Performs other duties as needed or assigned.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

Education & Experience

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

- Bachelor's degree in Legal Studies, Paralegal Studies, or a related field from an accredited college or university.
- At least two (2) years of progressively responsible experience as a paralegal; four (4) years of progressively responsible experience being involved in legal matters involving local units of government may substitute for the bachelor's degree requirement.
- Knowledge and ability acquired through education, training, and experience working with attorneys involved in diverse legal matters.

Knowledge of

- Principles and practices of providing professional legal counsel to include representing the City in litigation, negotiations, financial transactions, and contract development.
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act and other relevant laws, statutes, codes, and regulations, or the ability to learn.
- Methods and techniques of legal research including use of computerized Westlaw research.
- Principles of legal and business letter writing and report preparation.
- English usage, spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Skills

- Demonstrated proficiency of Microsoft Office software suite.
- Demonstrated proficiency of document redaction tools, such as Adobe Acrobat Pro or similar software.
- Requires continuous, close attention for accurate results and frequent exposure to highly sensitive and/or controversial issues.
- Requires the application of legal methods in the solution of administrative, operational, or regulatory issues.

Ability to

- Research legal problems and prepare sound legal opinions.
- Properly interpret and make decisions in accordance with statutes, regulations, rules, case law, and policies.
- Communicate concisely and clearly both orally and in writing and present applicable statements of law clearly and logically.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work including the City Attorney, and other City employees, City Council and board and commission members, and the general public.
- Assume responsibility for and complete assigned work within established deadlines.
- Work independently and complete assigned work with minimal supervision and instruction.
- Prioritize work assignments.

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- Exercise sound analytical judgment in assigned work and identify and implement sound decisions in accordance with policies, procedures, and applicable law.
- Tactfully and effectively handle requests, suggestions, criticisms, and complaints to establish and maintain goodwill with other City employees, City Council, board and commission members, news media, business organizations, and the general public.
- Analyze information and use logic to address work-related issues and problems.
- Pay attention to detail and be thorough in completing work tasks.
- Be organized, reliable, responsible, and dependable in fulfilling obligations.
- Accept feedback and calmly and effectively handle highly stressful situations.
- Establish and maintain personally challenging achievement goals and exert effort toward mastering tasks.
- Maintain composure, keep emotions in check, and control anger, even in very difficult situations.
- Adjust priorities quickly as circumstances dictate.

Licenses, Certifications, and Memberships Required

- Paralegal certification is preferred.

Supplemental Information

Supervision received

- Works under general direction and supervision from the City Attorney: receives guidance in terms of broad goals and overall objectives and is responsible for establishing the methods to attain them. May assist with formulating policy for the assigned area of responsibility but does not necessarily have final authority for approving policy.

Level and complexity of supervision exercised

- This position is not responsible for supervising any staff positions.

Physical Demands and Working Conditions

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- **Physical Demands:** Primary functions require sufficient physical ability and mobility to work in an office setting; to stand or sit for prolonged periods of time; to occasionally stoop, bend, kneel, crouch, reach, and twist; to lift, carry, push, and/or pull light to moderate amounts of weight; to operate office equipment requiring repetitive hand movement and fine coordination including use of a computer keyboard; to travel to other locations using various modes of private and commercial transportation; and to verbally communicate to exchange information.
- **Working Conditions:** Work is performed primarily in a standard office environment with occasional interruptions.

Vision: See in the normal visual range with or without correction; vision sufficient to read computer screens and printed documents; visually inspect work in progress.

Hearing: Hear in the normal audio range with or without correction.

The physical demands and work environment characteristics described herein are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

The job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.

Class Specification History

New class: March 30, 2022

General revision:

Revised minimum qualifications:

Revised definition, minimum qualifications, and add distinguishing characteristics:

Revised minimum qualifications:

Revised definition and distinguishing characteristics:

New class code:

For HR/Finance Use

Job Class Code	Pay Grade 341
EEO Category 6—Administrative Support	LVL