

***RESEARCH ATTORNEY***

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**DEFINITION**

This professional level position performs legal research activities on behalf of the court and its judicial officers, primarily judges assigned to hear civil cases

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

Incumbents in this position work independently by performing complex and specialized legal research and drafting memoranda on a weekly basis for civil judges. They occasionally provide research for executive staff as well. Incumbents must be capable of responding to queries on procedural and substantive issues within short time frames. Incumbents periodically act as judges pro tem as requested by judicial officers.

**TYPICAL TASKS**

- Review and summarize evidence, procedural history, and legal contentions on matters before the court
- Identify, research and analyze legal issues pertaining to matters under consideration by the court and formulate recommendations for disposition of those issues
- Provide oral consultation with judges on expedited or emergency matters
- Prepare tentative rulings, bench memoranda, and other documents in connection with trials, motions, evidentiary hearings, ex parte applications, and other legal proceedings
- Serve as legal adviser to the court judicial officers, staff, or judicial committees on specific matters affecting the court
- Provide assistance in other legal areas, including criminal and probate matters

**EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS**

**Knowledge of:**

- Efficient legal research methods, practices and techniques, especially electronic research
- California civil procedure, evidence and a broad understanding of substantive areas of civil litigation
- Judicial ethics
- Case management, processing and calendaring practices within the local judicial system
- Appropriate case citation and reference methods

**Ability to:**

- Independently identify and analyze legal issues
- Effectively manage work load on a weekly basis under significant time constraints so that tasks are completed in a timely and efficient manner
- Conduct complex legal research independently
- Prepare and present legal analyses and recommendations for judicial actions, orally and in writing
- Confer with and advise judicial officers and court staff on procedural and substantive legal issues
- Handle sensitive matters with finesse and discretion
- Coordinate distribution of the workload with the people are other research attorneys
- Listen to oral argument and thereafter discuss and analyze underlying problem/question with judicial officers
- Quickly understand issues in unfamiliar areas of the law to sufficiently advise judicial officers
- Recognize and analyze ethical issues so as to you or your uphold judicial and attorney ethics
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships

**PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Strength, dexterity, coordination and vision to use a computer keyboard and video display terminal on a daily basis. Hear and communicate effectively in an office, in a courtroom environment and with the public and Court staff. Communicate standard text in order to assist the public. Dexterity, coordination and positions self to handle and retrieve files and single pieces of paper. Moves objects weighing up to 20 pounds, such as files, stacks of papers, reference and other materials. Personal mobility to work in various office and courtroom locations. Remain in a stationary position for prolonged periods of time.

**EXPERIENCE/EDUCATION**

Law School degree and active membership in good standing with the State Bar of California AND at least five (5) years of experience as a practicing lawyer in civil litigation is preferred (any combination of training and experience that would satisfy the demanding employment standards listed above can be substituted for the experience on a year for year basis).