

PARA-LEGAL AIDE

TOMPKINS COUNTY

Department Human Rights, DSS

Classification Competitive

Labor Grade J(10)

Approved Bd Res#193, 7/16/96

Revised 1/00; 2/01; 05/06; 3/07

By AF, Commissioner of Personnel

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This is a position which combines complex legal secretarial work with paraprofessional legal work in the County's Human Rights Commission Office or the Department of Social Services Legal Unit. The legal secretarial work involves responsibility for assisting the County's Director of Human Rights or Legal Unit Administrator in a wide variety of legal, administrative and clerical functions involving the operation of a typewriter, word processor or microcomputer to prepare written materials and/or transcribe audio dictation. A general understanding of law and of legal procedures and administrative policies is required in exercising the independent judgment necessary for performing these clerical duties. The paralegal work involves performing a variety of procedures required of the Human Rights' Commission or DSS Legal Unit. The Human Rights Commission position is responsible for drafting, filing and investigating complaints of discrimination include obtaining evidence and statements, as well as preparing and filing all necessary paperwork for filing and maintaining complaints with the State Division of Human Rights. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Director of Human Rights or Legal Unit Administrator with considerable leeway allowed for the exercise of independent judgment. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Assists in the preparation of complaints, memos of law, transcriptions, memos of conversion, minutes, resolutions and other legal documents;
Obtains legal reference material when requested;
Transcribes and types audio dictation of letters, memoranda, reports and other materials related to the Human Rights' Office or DSS Legal Unit;
Transcribes, types and records minutes and proceedings of meetings, hearings and conferences;
Conducts routine correspondence on matters where policies and procedures have been defined;
Types, processes, indexes, sorts records and maintains confidential and regular correspondence files necessary for the operations of the department;
Conducts interviews with witnesses and when appropriate, prepares and takes sworn statements or depositions;
Answers telephone, schedules appointments, receives callers and refers them to the proper persons, and answers requests for various information;

At the Human Rights Department:

Prepares complaints and other legal documents required for the Division of Human Rights proceedings and files same with the Division;
Keeps Office of Human Rights calendar and arranges for the scheduling of cases;
Conducts research regarding questions of law or regulation under the supervision of the Director of Human Rights;
Meets with the Director of Human Rights to obtain information regarding matters before the Division to determine what evidence, witnesses or materials would be required to continue processing of the case; and
Assists the Director of Human Rights in matters that require legal interpretation or preparation.

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PARA-LEGAL AIDE (CONTINUED)

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of general legal principles, practices and procedures;
Thorough knowledge of office procedures, terminology and equipment;
Thorough knowledge of business arithmetic and English;
Skill in investigative, interviewing and report preparation techniques;
Ability to type accurately from hard copy at a rate of at least 50 words per minute using a PC, typewriter and/or a word processor;
Ability to operate machine transcription equipment to transcribe audio dictation at a rate of speed satisfactory to the Director;
Ability to understand and carry out complex oral and written directions; Ability to write legibly;
Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with the public and with other governmental and private agencies;
Ability to efficiently gather facts through investigation and interview; Mental alertness; neatness; accuracy; integrity; good judgment; and
Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

The Human Rights Department position requires:

A good knowledge of and the ability to research and draft complex legal documents including those involving violations of NYS Human Rights Law, federal civil rights law and local civil rights ordinances in the preparation of cases for investigation;
A working knowledge of the functions and procedures of the State Division of Human Rights;
A working knowledge of laws pertaining to legal proceedings, especially the Civil Rights Act, State Human Rights Law, the ADA, ADEA and other legislation pertaining to civil rights law;

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

The candidate must possess the ability to type accurately at a rate of at least 50 words per minute using a PC, typewriter or Word Processor **AND**

- (a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered four year college or university **AND** possess at least one year of legal clerical experience; **OR**
- (b) Graduation from a New York State registered two-year college with an Associates Degree in Paralegal Studies or a certificate in Paralegal Studies **AND** possess at least three years of full-time paid (or the part-time and/or volunteer) legal clerical experience; **OR**
- (c) Possess any combination of training and experience that would be determined equal to, or greater than, that specified in (a) and (b) above, as determined by the Commissioner of Personnel.