

PARALEGAL TO COUNTY ATTORNEY

TOMPKINS COUNTY

Department County Attorney

Classification Competitive

Labor Grade N(64)

Approved 12/20/93 AF

Revised 11/05

By AF, Commissioner of Personnel

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is an administrative position that involves complex legal secretarial work combined with para-professional legal work in the County Attorney's Office. The legal secretarial work involves assisting the legal staff of the County Attorney's office by performing a wide variety of legal, administrative, and clerical functions, which involve the substantial operation of a word processor or personal computer. The incumbent is responsible for budget planning and implementation, space allocation and equipment allocation for the attorneys and clerical staff. The paralegal work involves performing a wide variety of procedures required of the County Attorney's Office as the Presentment Agency in juvenile delinquency proceedings pursuant to the Family Court Act. These duties include drafting criminal charges, obtaining evidence and statements, as well as preparing and filing all necessary paperwork for juvenile hearings. A working knowledge of law and legal procedures and administrative policies is required. The incumbent will establish and administer policy, as well as serve as a voting member of the Landfill Neighborhood Protection Committee and liaison between the County, the Committee, property owners and realtors for the duration of the Property Value Protection Program and Well Water Protection Program. The Paralegal to the County Attorney has considerable autonomy and is expected to exercise independent judgment when performing the duties of the position. Administrative direction is exercised over the work of the department's attorney as it relates to Family Court matters involving court coverage and timeliness of case activity. An employee in this class works under the general supervision of the County Attorney. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Accurately drafts various legal documents (pleadings, orders, petitions, motion papers, appellate briefs, contracts, resolution, deeds and other legal documents) pertaining to civil/municipal law, Family and Court Laws, Criminal Procedure Laws and foreclosures;

Prepares deeds and real estate documents for the sale of county foreclosure property or purchase of properties by the County;

Obtains legal reference material and performs legal research;

May take, transcribe, type and record minutes and proceedings of meetings, hearing and conferences;

Conducts correspondence on matters where policies and procedures may or may not have been clearly defined;

Types, processes, indexes, sorts records and supervises confidential and regular files necessary to the operation of the County Attorney's Office;

Calls meetings for the LNPC as necessary and is the contact person for property owners concerned about well water contamination or property value around open or closed County-owned landfills;

Reviews arrest reports and prepares appropriate criminal charges against juveniles in Family Court petitions, which preparation requires meeting with police officers to obtain information concerning arrests of juveniles and determining what additional evidence is required before proceeding;

Conducts initial interviews with witnesses and victims; prepares and takes sworn statements or depositions as needed;

Subpoenas witnesses, officers and others to obtain testimony at trials;

Keeps Family Court calendar and pending case status, and arranges for timely scheduling of cases;

Appears in court with the Assistant County Attorney;

Trains police officers annually in juvenile law and arrest procedures;

Schedules appointments, receives callers and refers them to the proper persons, and answers requests for various information;

Prepares annual department budget and ordering of supplies;

Serves as an advisory member of the Child Sexual Abuse Team, working in conjunction with police agencies, the Department of Social Services and District Attorney's Office to coordinate efficient and speedy prosecution of child sex abuse cases.

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE
PARALEGAL TO COUNTY ATTORNEY (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;
Working knowledge of the functions and procedures of the courts, especially Family Court;
Working knowledge of the laws pertaining to civil and criminal legal proceedings, especially Family Court pertaining to juveniles and to civil law pertaining to municipalities;
Ability to interact effectively and calmly in difficult situations, especially those pertaining to landfills and those pertaining to traumatized victims in Family Court cases;
Skilled in investigative, interviewing and report preparation techniques as applied to juvenile criminal proceedings;
Ability to type accurately at a satisfactory rate of speed using a word processor or personal computer;
Ability to write legibly; ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with the public and other governmental and private agencies, including law enforcement agencies;
Ability to efficiently gather facts through investigation and interview;
ability to compassionately and sensitively interact with child victims in taking statements and preparing them for possible Family Court involvement;
Mental alertness; neatness; accuracy; integrity; and good judgment; and
The employee's physical conditions shall be commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: EITHER:

- (a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered four year college or university with a Bachelors Degree in paralegal studies, business administration, political science, criminal justice or a closely related field with a strong concentration in American Legal System **AND** five years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) legal clerical experience, which must have involved working with the Criminal Procedure Law, applying the rules of evidence and legal research; **OR**
- (b) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two year college with an Associates Degree in paralegal studies, secretarial science, business administration, political studies, criminal justice or a closely related field with a strong concentration in the American Legal System **AND** seven years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) legal clerical experience, which must have involved working with the Criminal Procedure Law, applying the rules of evidence and legal research; **OR**
- (c) Any equivalent combination of training and experience as described in (a) and (b) above.

NOTE:

- (1) It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate to the County's satisfaction that his/her experience involved working with and applying the rules of evidence and performing legal research.

