



DATE: February 5, 2014

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: Human Resources Department

SUBJECT: **APPROVE THE CREATION OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF SENIOR LEGAL SECRETARY AND APPROVE THE PROPOSED SALARY LEVEL**

SYNOPSIS

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the creation of the classification of Senior Legal Secretary, amend the Salary Schedule to include the new salary, and add the classification to the Unrepresented/Supervisory employee group.

BACKGROUND

The City of Oceanside has evaluated the current structure of the City Attorney's legal secretarial staff and it is recommended that a classification of Senior Legal Secretary be created. Currently there are two Legal Secretary positions within the City Attorney's Office. Prior to the budget cuts in 2009, the Office had an additional secretarial position that reported directly to the City Attorney. That position provided supervision and training to the other legal secretaries. With the loss of the Secretary to the City Attorney position in 2009, the more senior Legal Secretary has become the defacto lead of the unit. As a result, the City Attorney requested the study and creation of a supervisory legal secretary classification.

The City Attorney expanded the responsibilities for the attorneys in his office in order to provide the broad-based legal expertise required by the City on a consistent basis. The additional ability of the City Attorney's staff to provide in-house litigation significantly impacted the complexity of the duties assigned to the City Attorney's secretarial support staff. As the caseload complexity has increased, it has become apparent that the secretarial staff requires a lead classification. During the past two years, there has been turnover in one position which requires extensive orientation and training related to the unique legal functions provided by the City Attorneys office. This function has been assumed by the more tenured legal secretary.

Human Resources staff has reviewed current class specifications, conducted interviews with the incumbent, and the City Attorney. Compensation and in-house litigation information was collected from area cities, and San Diego County to determine comparable benchmark classes. Based on the information collected, Human Resources staff has developed a new job specification and compensation recommendations.

ANALYSIS

The intent of the classification and compensation study was to provide consistent and equitable position assignment and compensation for the employees based on the level and complexity of duties and responsibilities performed. The recommendation is to create the classification of Senior Legal Secretary in addition to the existing Legal Secretary classification. If this action is approved by City Council, the existing Legal Secretary Position, AD37CA01, will be reclassified. This action will not add a new position to the City Attorney budget.

The proposed classification specification sheet is included as Attachment 1. There will only be one Senior Legal Secretary position in the foreseeable future.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The new classification's salary will be ten percent above the current Legal Secretary classification. The Salary Schedule proposal is included as Attachment 2. The projected cost (salary plus fringe) to implement the proposed change for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2013-14 is approximately \$2,619. This is proposed to be funded from the current City Attorney budget. The City Attorney will budget for this increase during the budget process for Fiscal Year 2014-15.

COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

Does not apply.

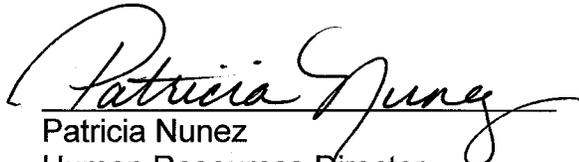
CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS

The City Attorney requested the salary and compensation study in light of the current duties being performed by legal secretarial staff. An additional attorney has been added to the City Attorney's staff consistent with the approved budget, increasing the work allocation of the secretarial staff. In addition, job assignments have been increased for all attorneys and secretaries in light of changes to the office.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the creation of the classification of Senior Legal Secretary, amend the Salary Schedule to include the new salary, and add the classification to the Unrepresented/Supervisory employee group.

PREPARED BY:


Patricia Nunez
Human Resources Director

SUBMITTED BY:


Steven R. Jepsen
City Manager

Reviewed By:

Michelle Skaggs-Lawrence, Deputy City Manager
James Riley, Financial Services Director




Attachments:

1. Classification Specification-Senior Legal Secretary
2. Proposed Salary Schedule addition

CITY OF OCEANSIDE

NEW: JANUARY 2014
JOB CODE:
UNIT: UNREP/SUPV

SENIOR LEGAL SECRETARY

Class specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in the class. Specifications are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

DEFINITION

Under direction, to serve as secretary to the City Attorney, to coordinate, supervise, and evaluate the work of subordinate legal secretarial and clerical staffs; to compose, prepare and process the most difficult and complex legal documents in proper format and to perform other work as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Positions in this class serve as the first level supervisor responsible for planning, scheduling, training and evaluating the work of subordinate staff. Incumbents perform the most complex and difficult legal secretarial work, which requires a thorough knowledge of legal processes, terminology and procedures. Positions in this class differ from the lower class of Legal Secretary by the complex nature of the work assignment, the independence of work and by the responsibility to supervise a work unit.

Incumbents have frequent contact with attorneys, city departments and outside agencies which requires a broad knowledge of the rules, policies and procedures of the legal department. Incumbents are required to exercise independent judgment and discretion, safeguard the confidentiality of information and demonstrate tact and diplomacy.

EXAMPLE OF DUTIES - *Examples of duties performed by employees in this class may not include all required duties, nor are all listed tasks necessarily performed by everyone in this class.*

Plans, assigns, schedules, coordinates and evaluates the work of legal secretarial and clerical staff; trains new staff in legal clerical work, terminology and office procedures and policies; prepares a wide variety of difficult and complex legal documents including briefs, orders, motions, warrants, citations, jury instructions, complaints, points and authorities, subpoenas, interrogatories, petitions, pleadings, resolutions, ordinances, opinions, tables of authority, reports, Board letters and correspondence from brief instructions, handwritten, typed or recorded drafts; determines format, distribution and priority; processes legal documents, records and reports within the department, through the courts or with other agencies; obtains a variety of records and reports required for cases; prepares files for attorneys, pulls files for cases scheduled for court and ensures required documents are included; records court events and disposition on the case; schedules appointments and meetings for attorneys; makes travel arrangements; answers routine requests for information; screens telephone calls and mail, provides information requested, takes messages, refers inquiry or request to appropriate staff or other agency, and resolves matters which do not require legal advice; researches State Codes, other legal reference books, brief banks, and opinion files to assist attorneys; maintains

automated and manual files and record-keeping systems; composes correspondence and prepares reports; compiles statistical and narrated reports; orders and maintains supplies; designs or revises forms to conform to legislative changes; may process personnel and payroll transactions; may calculate attorney fees and back-up data for grants and other programs; may update brief banks and opinion files; operates word processing equipment and computer terminals to input, access and analyze data; attends meetings; performs other duties of similar nature or level as required; reviews public records requests; coordinates with responding record holders, Information Technology and the City Clerk to ensure timely and complete responsive documents are assembled and prepared for final attorney review and release; performs other related duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Office procedures and practices, including preparation of correspondence and reports and filing;
- Vocabulary, spelling, grammar and punctuation;
- Standard formats for business correspondence and reports;
- Legal terminology forms, documents and procedures;
- Forms and formatting for legal documents;
- Organization services, programs and functions of the courts and legal departments;
- Supervision and training;
- Application of data processing to legal office operations.
- Court rules and filing requirements for all case types.

Ability to:

- Plan, assign, schedule, coordinate and evaluate the work of subordinate staff.
- Perform complex and difficult legal clerical work requiring independent judgment, accuracy and speed;
- Prepare legal documents in accepted formats from brief instructions, handwritten, typed or recorded drafts;
- Understand, interpret, explain and apply rules, laws, and regulations, policies and procedures;
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships;
- Understand and follow oral and written directions;
- Make arithmetic computations;
- Maintain records and prepare reports;
- Adjust to workload changes and meet deadlines under pressure of legal deadlines;
- Screen and prioritize correspondence and phone calls;
- Exercise independent judgment and discretion, safeguard the confidentiality of information, and demonstrate tact and diplomacy;
- Work independently;
- Perform routine legal research;
- Process a wide variety of legal documents;
- Compose letters and written responses to inquiries and routine portions of reports;
- Operate word processing equipment and computer terminals to input and access data;
- Operate standard office equipment.

Experience and Training

Experience: Four years of increasingly responsible legal secretarial experience. At least one year of supervisory or lead worker experience. One year of work experience with the Oceanside City Attorney's Office is highly desirable.

Training: Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth grade or equivalent supplemented by specialized legal secretarial training. An Associate of Arts degree in legal secretarial field is highly desirable.

Licenses/Certificates: Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Environmental Conditions: Office environment; exposure to computer screens.

Physical Conditions: Essential functions may require maintaining physical condition necessary for sitting for prolonged periods of time.

Probationary Period: Six months

Legal Secretary

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| \$3,911 | \$4,107 | \$4,312 | \$4,528 | \$4,754 | \$4,992 |
| \$22.57 | \$23.69 | \$24.88 | \$26.12 | \$27.43 | \$28.80 |

Senior Legal Secretary

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| \$4,302 | \$4,518 | \$4,744 | \$4,981 | \$5,230 | \$5,491 |
| \$24.82 | \$26.06 | \$27.37 | \$28.73 | \$30.17 | \$31.68 |