

LEAD APPELLATE COURT ATTORNEY

DEFINITION

Under direction, provides lead direction and work review to assigned staff, and/or performs specialized legal work in a Court of Appeal; performs related work as assigned.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Lead Appellate Court Attorney is the lead and/or specialized-level class in the Appellate Court legal series. Incumbents may serve in a lead capacity and direct the work of assigned staff, and/or may serve as specialists who work independently and deal with the most technical, complex, and/or time-sensitive projects such as review of extraordinary writ petitions. This class is distinguished from the Supervising Appellate Court Attorney class in that the latter is responsible for supervising legal staff, with effective authority for their selection, retention, and training and development and with responsibility for day-to-day supervision, evaluation, motivation, and discipline of employees.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (*illustrative only*)

- Provides lead direction, training, and work review; organizes and assigns work, sets priorities, and follows up to ensure coordination and completion of assigned work.
- Provides input into selection, evaluation, discipline, and other personnel matters.
- Coordinates judicial resources to meet deadlines for time-sensitive matters, such as writ petitions.
- Reviews, evaluates, and analyzes briefs, petitions, motions, and other pertinent documents filed in a particular case in order to determine factual accuracy, legal issues on appeal, and scope and complexity of issues raised.
- Prepares written statements of facts pursuant to rules of appellate review.
- Analyzes legal issues raised by parties.
- Reads and applies cases, statutes, constitutional provisions, and rules of court cited by parties.
- Conducts independent research for relevant cases, statutes, court rules, and secondary sources not cited by parties.
- Researches legislative history and intent of particular statutes.
- Drafts conference memoranda, opinions, orders, and requests for supplemental briefing.
- Uses citator services to verify precedential value of citations.
- Consults with other attorneys and/or professional staff regarding issues on appeal.
- Attends oral arguments.
- Reviews, evaluates, and analyzes petitions for rehearing.

- Oversees assigned caseload to ensure that the chambers or division meets its production and timeliness standards for appeals and/or writ petitions.
- Serves on court committees as required.
- Conducts special legal research and assignments when requested, including editing of work prepared by court externs.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Work occasional evening and weekend hours.
- May be required to travel statewide as necessary.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic supervisory principles and practices.
- Substantive and procedural legal principles and applications.
- Scope and character of California and federal statutory and case law and provisions of the United States and California Constitutions; California Rules of Court; the legislative process; statutes and constitutional provisions governing the organization, duties, powers, procedures, management, and conduct of the work of the trial and appellate courts.
- Legal research methods.
- Principles of administrative and constitutional law.
- Rules of evidence and procedure in California trial and appellate courts.
- The operation of personal computers and the use of specified computer applications, such as word processing.
- Principles and techniques of preparing effective oral presentations.
- Principles and techniques of preparing a variety of effective written materials.

Ability to:

- Plan, direct, and review the work of others on a project or day-to-day basis.
- Use initiative and independent judgment within general policy guidelines.
- Organize, prioritize, and coordinate work activities and meet critical deadlines.
- Perform complex legal research, including computerized legal research; apply legal principles and precedents to particular sets of facts.
- Analyze legal issues; present statements of facts, law, policy, and argument clearly, concisely, and logically in both written and oral form.
- Draft legal opinions, briefs, and other legal documents and correspondence.
- Interact successfully with justices, court and agency staff, and the public.
- Exercise sound judgment and integrity consistent with representing the judicial branch; maintain confidentiality of work product.
- Operate personal computers and use specified computer applications, such as word processing.
- Communicate effectively in English, orally and in writing.

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.

Licenses and Certificates:

Active membership in the State Bar of California.

Education and Experience:

Active membership in the State Bar of California and the equivalent of eight years of relevant post-bar experience in a legal setting such as a private law practice, corporation, government agency, law school, court, or legal publishing company; *at least two years of the required eight years of qualifying experience must have been in a California appellate court.*

NOTES:

- Work experience as a law clerk to a federal judge after passing a state bar but prior to formal state bar admission will be considered equivalent to post-bar legal experience.
- There is no external-only qualifying experience for this class.