



## SUPERIOR COURT OF ORANGE COUNTY

Department of Human Resources  
700 Civic Center Drive West, Human Resources, P.O. Box 1994  
Santa Ana, CA 92701-1994

### *Paralegal Trainee*

#### **POSITION SUMMARY**

Under general direction and attorney supervision, the Paralegal Trainee assists court attorneys and the public by providing paralegal assistance in the Self-Help Services Unit, Family Law Facilitator Office, and other court units, e.g., Legal Research. The Paralegal Trainee provides legal assistance to one or more attorneys or attorney facilitators; may support, observe, or assists with workshops and educational and informational materials to the public; assists the public and attorneys with completing legal forms; researches and analyzes statutes, legal articles, and case law; assembles, proofreads, and edits legal drafts; and performs related duties as assigned.

#### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

The Paralegal Trainee is the entry level classification in the Paralegal series and is used for training purposes. The classification typically reports to an Attorney/Assistant Facilitator, attorney, or a higher-level management staff. The Paralegal Trainee must demonstrate satisfactory performance and advancement to the Paralegal classification by the end of the twelve (12) month probationary period. There is no permanent status in this classification. Upon advancement to the Paralegal, incumbents are placed on a six (6) month promotional probation period.

Depending on assignment, legal assistance or research work performed, these classifications may be required to preparing educational materials; fact gathering and retrieving information; drafting and analyzing legal documents; collecting, compiling, and utilizing technical information to make a recommendation to the supervising attorney.

The classification is required to exercise excellent independent judgment, and depending on assignment may work with minimal supervision, and perform their duties with the highest degree of integrity in order to uphold the public's trust and confidence in the administration of justice.

#### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

*(These functions are intended as a general illustration of the work performed in this job classification and are not all inclusive for this position)*

1. Learns to provide document review, preparation, and procedural assistance in person, by phone or online in a variety of case types depending on assignment; uses court systems to gather case facts, case status and review applicable law, statutes, rules, and procedures to respond properly to those within the scope of their work.
2. Assists with providing information and educational materials to self-represented litigants concerning various case types; distributes necessary referrals, court forms, provides filing instructions and reviews court forms for completion in compliance with court guidelines; and may assists in the preparation of forms and/or documents under the direction of an assigned attorney.
3. Provides referrals to community agencies and resources that provide services for self-represented litigants.

**Moved down [1]:** 4. Depending on assignment (e.g., Legal Research) drafts and prepares legal documents such as court pleadings and responses, and motions.¶

4. Reviews legal documents and forms for completeness and procedural compliance.
5. Gathers factual information and performs routine legal research on various matters to assist attorneys and self-represented litigants.
6. Depending on assignment (e.g., Self-Help), assists in preparing for and may act as presentation support at educational workshops for self-represented litigants regarding procedures and requirements; may assist in creating, updating, or translating educational materials.
7. Depending on assignment (e.g., Self-Help), assists with specialty calendars and judicial referrals

8. Organizes files and documents, prepares and/or updates forms, and performs general clerical related duties as assigned.

9. Enters, updates, and maintains litigant or case information and/or time tracking stats as needed for statistical gathering purposes.

10. May provide services in a foreign language or translates court notices, educational, and informational materials.

11. Shares and learns assigned area procedures and processes; and supports with employee training activities.

12. Provides support to a variety of classifications and may support deescalating situations with members of the public.

13. Attends and participates in educational conferences, professional and team meetings; stay abreast of new trends and innovations in the related legal field; and performs related assignments within area of responsibility.

#### **FUNCTIONAL ASSIGNMENT AREA:**

*(While the majority of duties assigned to a position typically are listed above, some functional areas may need additional definition which include:*

**\*When assigned to LEGAL RESEARCH (in addition to general duties) duties may include but are not limited to:**

1. Depending on assignment (e.g., Legal Research) drafts and prepares legal documents such as court pleadings and responses, and motions.

2. Depending on assignment (e.g., Legal Research), may review case files and/or docket reports to evaluate eligibility for the requested relief and formulate recommendations consistent with the merits of motions/petitions under review and applicable law.

**Moved down [2]:** 9. Depending on assignment (e.g., Legal Research), may review case files and/or docket reports to evaluate eligibility for the requested relief and formulate recommendations consistent with the merits of motions/petitions under review and applicable law.¶

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#### **EDUCATION AND/OR EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS:**

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS (One of the Certification/Experience/Education Requirements options, as well as the Experience requirement must be met):**

**CERTIFICATION/EXPERIENCE/EDUCATION Requirement:**

Per California Business & Professional Code section 6450 (c)(3) or (c)(4)

A certificate of completion of a paralegal program approved by the American Bar Association.

**OR**

A certificate of completion of a paralegal program at, or a degree from, a postsecondary institution that requires the successful completion of a minimum of 24 semester (36 quarter) units in law-related courses and that has been accredited by a national or regional accrediting organization or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education.

**OR**

A baccalaureate degree or an advanced degree in any subject, plus a minimum of one (1) year of law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney who has been an active member of the State Bar of California for at least the preceding three (3) years or who has practiced in the federal courts of this state for at least the preceding three (3) years, and a written declaration from this attorney stating that the person is qualified to perform paralegal tasks.

**OR**

A high school diploma or general equivalency diploma, plus a minimum of three (3) years of law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney who has been an active member of the State Bar of California for at least the preceding three (3) years or who has practiced in the federal courts of this state for at least the preceding three (3) years, and a written declaration from this attorney stating that the person is qualified to perform paralegal tasks. This experience and training shall be completed no later than December 31, 2003.

**AND**

**EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT:**

Two (2) years of experience with the Orange County Superior Court in a classification comparable to Legal Processing Specialist.

**DESIRABLE REQUIREMENT:**

The ability to communicate orally and/or in writing in a foreign language such as Spanish may be required for some positions.

**OTHER NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS:**

Per California Business & Professions Code section 6450 (d). Every two (2) years, commencing January 1, 2007, any person that is working as a paralegal shall be required to certify completion of four hours of mandatory continuing legal education in legal ethics and four (4) hours of mandatory continuing legal education in either general law or in an area of specialized law. All continuing legal education courses shall meet the requirements of Section 6070. Certification of these continuing education requirements shall be made with the paralegal's supervising attorney. The paralegal shall be responsible for keeping a record of the paralegal's certifications.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS (LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, TESTING, etc.):**

Must submit to and pass a thorough background check. Possession of or ability to obtain a California driver's license by date of appointment and own transportation or other Court approved means of transportation needed to carry out job-related essential functions.

**PREFERRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILL AND ABILITY:**

**Knowledge of:**

Operations, services, and activities of legal processes and procedures related to matters such as family law, small claims, probate, protective orders, unlawful detainer, civil, traffic, and both pre- and post-conviction criminal matters.

Principles, practices, and techniques of legal research methods.

Principles and practices of writing techniques to include editing and proofreading.

Proficiency in family law supportive software programs is desirable.

Standard and specialized legal supportive software programs.

Correct English usage, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Computer systems including Microsoft Office Suite, Outlook, and case management software.

Pertinent Federal, State, and local rules, and regulations.

**Ability to:**

Acquire and organize technical and factual information.

Conduct legal research and apply legal principles.

Read, understand, and interpret laws, rules, and regulations.

Present statements of fact and law as well as analyze clearly and logically in oral and written form.

Maintain confidentiality.

Prepare rulings and other legal documents (depending on assignment).

Utilize various forms of technology to conduct daily business, including standard and legal software and programs including case management software.

Communicate clearly and effectively in person, in writing and on the telephone or video conference to explain legal information.

Prioritize multiple tasks and meet set deadlines.

Understand and follow oral and written instructions.

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

Interpret and apply Federal, State, and local rules, regulations, Court policies and procedures.