

# LEGAL UNIT ADMINISTRATOR

## Tompkins County

**Classification:** Competitive

**Labor Grade:** 12

**Approved:** 0

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

(a.) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered four year college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in paralegal science, human services or a related field **AND** five years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in the planning, management, or delivery of human services; **OR**

(b.) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two year college with an associates degree in paralegal science, human services or a related field **AND** seven years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in the planning, management, or delivery of human services; **OR**

(c) Any equivalent combination of training and experience as described in (a) and (b) above.

**Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.**

### **DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

This is an administrative and supervisory position that involves responsibility for coordination and daily office management of the Legal Unit and Children Services Division. In addition, the incumbent has administrative responsibility for the interaction of the legal unit with other divisions in the agency, the courts, outside entities, and individuals on whom the legal unit depends on for successful outcome of the cases brought before the courts. Direct supervision is exercised over all support staff of the Legal Unit and Children Services Division. Administrative supervision, such as case assignment, coverage, budget planning and implementation, space, equipment, negotiations for professional services etc., is exercised over the Legal Unit's attorneys to ensure that the processing and daily work flow between the Court and DSS is efficiently handled. The incumbent is directly responsible to the Commissioner of Social Services and receives general supervision from the Commissioner involving administrative matters. The incumbent must be familiar with a variety of legal procedural requirements, court rules and all agency and county policies and procedures. Wide leeway is given and expected by the Commissioner in using independent judgment to meet the goals of the agency and the requirements of the department's involvement with the court. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

### **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- Maintains all legal unit records including case files, work orders, court calendars, and current logging of unit activity;
- Independent preparation of petitions, pleadings, legal documents and motions under the supervision of and agency attorney;
- Prepares cases for court including preparation of case records, developing witnesses and preparing them for trial activity, coordination with Caseworkers and supervisors on desired outcomes, as well as preparation, circulation and distribution of court orders;
- Maintains coverage in the legal unit at all times and negotiates with the attorneys or professionals on the scope of work and fees when required;
- Insures legal unit compliance with all departmental, court and statutory deadlines and insures thorough coordination with other agency staff so that they are aware of and meet time frames and goals;
- Meets with other professional staff both inside and outside the agency to solve mutual problems and develop new or improved procedures where necessary;
- Represents the legal unit, when necessary, at senior management meetings;
- Assists in the formulation of policies and procedures for the administration of various services and departmental programs;
- Plans and supervises the collection, tabulation and analysis of statistical and financial data;
- Responsible for all Family Court matters;
- Coordination of legal activity with program policy, planning implementation and monitoring;

- Responsible to plan, coordinate and support functions provided by the clerical staff for the services division;
- Reviews incoming mail and answers general correspondence;
- Participates in professional conference and training programs;
- Explains unit, division or agency functions and activities to community organizations;
- Maintains legal unit compliance with changes in law and procedures, informs and insures that other units within the agency are current with relevant procedural requirements;
- Supervises assigned staff;
- Ensures adequate equipment, supplies and work space;
- Appears at court conferences and court appearances as necessary;
- Attend meetings with Children's Services staff and community agencies as required;
- Ensures that communication between casework staff and attorneys is efficient and effective;
- Ensures that all ASFA timelines are met and that all documents filed with the Court are ASFA compliant;
- Develops policies and procedures for programs directly affected by the Legal Unit;
- Develops, schedules and presents legal training to DSS staff on a monthly basis;
- Provides assistance and consultation to all divisions within the Department of Social Services;
- Researches questions of law and policy.

**FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Thorough knowledge of Social Services Law, the Family Court Act, Family Court procedures, DSS regulations, and Tompkins County Administrative policies and procedures;
- Ability to prepare cases for trial, such as subpoenas, contact witnesses, exhibits, acting as a liaison etc.;
- Thorough knowledge of legal terminology, procedures and equipment;
- Good knowledge of the organization, functions, laws, policies and regulations of the department as a whole;
- Ability to handle routine administrative details independently, including the composition of legal papers, letters and memoranda;
- Ability to review child care cases and take appropriate measures;
- Act as liaison between Law Guardians office, Family Court Clerk's office, Appellate Division, SDSS Fair Hearing Office, SDSS Expungment Office, Surrogates Court and Supreme Court;
- Ability to plan, assign and review the work of others;
- Ability to understand and carry out complex oral and written instructions;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with the multiple units, agencies or individuals inside or outside the department;
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and deadlines under pressure;
- Good judgment in solving complex administrative or clerical problems;
- Tact and courtesy;
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the positions.