

Secretary to the District Attorney - Duties Statement Tompkins County

Classification: Exempt

Labor Grade: Confidential Grade 65

Approved: 11/80 - for Cty. & Dist.

Revised: 7/86; 11/90; 6/91; 9/97; 10/97; 11/16

By: HH, Commissioner of Personnel

SUGGESTED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(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; **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; **OR**

(c) Any combination of education and experience equal to or greater than that described in (a) and (b) above.

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

NOTES:

Certification as a paralegal is preferred.

At least ten (10) years experience working as a paralegal/office manager in a law office or district attorney's office is preferred.

This is an Exempt Class position that will be filled by political appointment. The District Attorney may appoint whomever he or she believes would best perform the duties of the position. All applicants will receive consideration.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This position involves responsibility for assisting the District Attorney in a wide variety of legal, administrative and other functions. The position will involve the preparation and drafting of legal documents and marshaling of evidence and is best filled by a certified paralegal. The position involves the performance of a variety of tasks requiring the exercise of a high level of autonomy, independent judgment, and a general understanding of legal procedures and administrative policies. The work also involves responsibility in assisting the District Attorney and Assistant District Attorneys with the preparation of all legal papers and assisting others in obtaining legal reference material. Work is performed under the general supervision of the District Attorney, with a high level of autonomy and opportunity for the exercise of independent judgment. The employee will supervise the administrative and investigative staff of the department. The Secretary to the District Attorney is the liaison between the District Attorney's Office and the media, and is responsible for the maintenance of content on the office website. The position involves interaction with law enforcement, schools, municipal, and community organizations as the coordinator of the District Attorney's community outreach program. Significant contacts with external agencies and individuals is required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Assists in the preparation of pleadings, orders, petitions, motion papers, contracts, resolutions and other legal documents;
- Obtains legal reference material when requested;
- Drafts letters, memoranda, reports, and other materials related to the District Attorney's office;
- Conducts routine correspondence on matters where policies and procedures have been defined;
- Types, processes, indexes, sorts, records, and maintains confidential and regular correspondence, including affidavits, subpoenas, legal briefs, search warrants and arrest warrants necessary for the operations of the District Attorney's Office;
- Proficient in Word, Excel, Quickbooks, internet legal research and related computer operations;

- Answers telephone, schedules appointments such as arraignments, pleas and hearings, receives callers and refers them to the proper persons, and answers requests for various information from the media, general public, judges, court clerks, attorneys, jurors, etc.;
- Acts as liaison for the District Attorney among key individuals and agencies including State and local police agencies, governor's office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Justice, the U.S. Attorney's Office, Parole Board, Treasury Department and other governmental agencies;
- Maintains security of the District Attorney's safe, which contains crucial trial evidence such as tapes, weapons, money, drugs, and other confidential files and information.
- Acts as the liaison between the District Attorney's Office and the media, coordinating press conferences and maintaining the content on the office website and/or social media presence.
- Organizes and administers the District Attorney's community outreach program.
- Responsible for coordination of District Attorney's interaction with the various constituent groups within Tompkins County.

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;
- Ability to handle routine administrative details independently, including the composition of letters and memoranda;
- Ability to understand and carry out complex oral and written instructions;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with the public and other governmental and private agencies;
- Ability to operate a personal computer at an acceptable rate of speed;
- Ability to perform close, detail work involving considerable visual effort and strain;
- Integrity, confidentiality, good judgment;
- Physical condition and maturity commensurate with the demands of the position.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS:

The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit, use hands to keyboard, handle, or feel objects, manipulate tools, or controls, and reach with hands and arms. The employee is required to see, walk, talk and hear. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 10 pounds. Due to extensive computer usage, the job requires considerable visual effort.

Vision abilities required by this job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus to a mid-range. The employee's physical and mental condition shall be commensurate with demands of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodation.

Psychological demands can be considerable for this position dealing with court deadlines and frequent exposure to distressing human situations. Interpersonal skills must be exercised at a high level in order to persuade, motivate or influence others under adverse and tense conditions. Internal contacts will be with employees of the District Attorney's Office as well as law enforcement professionals within the Sheriff's Office. The work will require paraprofessional collaboration on cases. External contacts are with professional associates, attorneys and witnesses and are necessary in order to assist with delivering a successful outcome for the District Attorney's Office. The work environment has minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

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