

LEGAL ASSISTANT

DEFINITION

The Legal Assistant provides confidential administrative and legal support for the Director of Building, Bylaw, Licensing and Legal Services, and the Municipal Solicitor. The incumbent undertakes a variety of complex work, assuming responsibility for administrative detail and acting with authority and considerable independence in preparing legal documents. The incumbent supports the Department's management team by assisting and coordinating annual budget and departmental plan preparations, reviewing specific work assigned to the Lands and Risk Management Assistant, and ensuring the efficient functioning of the Legal/Lands/Risk Management office. The highest level of confidentiality must be maintained with legal and sensitive information pertaining to departmental and corporate initiatives and issues. Considerable independence of action and judgement is required when providing administrative and legal support, and when dealing with internal and external officials, clients, and stakeholders.

ILLUSTRATIVE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Undertakes administrative duties and provides support for the Director and Municipal Solicitor on a variety of highly confidential, legal, and politically sensitive matters.
- Researches, coordinates, composes, and assists in preparing complex legal documents, including agreements, bylaws, contracts, leases, covenants, affidavits and statements of claim.
- Composes letters, memos, and other communications.
- Processes and responds to enquiries and complaints concerning legal documents, land related issues, legislation, regulations, and departmental and corporate policies and procedures.
- Provides corporate support with respect to legal documents, policies, procedures, and Land Title Office functions and requirements.
- Manages the flow of information, correspondence, and documents, ensuring that matters of legal urgency and political sensitivity are dealt with promptly.
- Conveyance of all property purchased by the municipality.
- Acts as the authorized agent for Land Title issues, conducts land title and company searches, prepares and registers legal documents and plans, and resolves a variety of issues with the Land Title Office.
- Acts as a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits in British Columbia.
- Delegates to and reviews the work of the Lands and Risk Management Administrative Assistant and other administrative staff regarding administrative and legal matters.
- Coordinates and assists with preparation of the annual departmental budget and departmental plan.
- Assists in preparing and monitoring the Legal Division budget, maintains accounts, prepares estimates, and requisitions supplies and equipment.
- Establishes and maintains an extensive, confidential records management system.
- Reviews, develops, and implements new and revised methods, procedures, and systems.
- Performs other related work as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES ON THE JOB:

- Thorough knowledge of the legal documents used in local government and the ability to compose and produce them with the highest level of accuracy and precision.
- Thorough knowledge of Land Title Office practices and procedures, and the forms and documents used in preparing and registering legal instruments.
- Working knowledge of municipal and departmental functions and practices, objectives and procedures, legislation, policies and regulations, relevant to the position.

- Working knowledge of court procedures and relevant legislation and regulations, and the ability to prepare and assemble court documents with the highest level of accuracy and precision.
- Working knowledge of land conveyance and the ability to independently assemble and prepare the necessary documents with the highest level of accuracy and precision.
- Working knowledge of administrative and legal records management principles and practices.
- Working knowledge of standard practices and procedures used in budgeting, and the ability to coordinate, prepare, and monitor budgets.
- Advanced administrative skills including the ability to effectively and efficiently plan, organize and manage workloads and projects, set priorities, meet objectives and deadlines, and work under pressure.
- Ability to deal appropriately with confidential, legal, political, and sensitive issues and information.
- Ability to effectively deal with enquiries, complaints, and requests for information and services.
- Ability to interpret and explain the legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures which govern the work of this position.
- Ability to conduct research, analyze information, evaluate options, and develop effective recommendations.
- Proven problem solving and implementation capacity using creative thinking within tight deadlines and with limited resources.
- Strong interpersonal, communication, and facilitation skills, and the ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with internal and external officials, clients, and stakeholders.
- Ability to plan, assign, and review the work of other administrative staff.
- Ability to effectively use a variety of computer technology and software programs including Microsoft Office, Groupwise, BC Online, Access, RiskPro, GIS, Tidemark, Tempest, and JD Edwards.
- Ability to maintain a high level of confidentiality in a legal and political environment.
- Demonstrates Saanich Core Competencies as they relate to this position (see all behaviour statements):
 - Adaptability - willingness to be flexible in a changing work environment
 - Relationship Building - establishes and maintains respectful and cooperative working relationships.
 - Effective Communications - communicates effectively with others.
 - Problem Solving - recognizes and acts to resolve problems.
 - Customer Focus - provides excellent service to both internal and external customers.

REQUIREMENTS:

- One year post-secondary education in legal administration and three years' experience at a senior professional support level in a legal office, preferably in a local government setting, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Experience in land related document preparation and registration including an understanding of Land Title Office practices and procedures, is preferred.
- Fast and accurate keyboarding skills (60 wpm minimum).
- Must meet qualifications to be accepted as a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits in British Columbia.

STANDARDS:

- Support and uphold the established policies and objectives of the Municipality and the Division in all areas of activity.
- Will not release or discuss non-routine municipal or departmental business without prior authorization.
- Adhere to all established municipal and departmental rules and regulations.
- Maintain the performance levels set by the Division in the execution of all duties and

- responsibilities.
- Maintain a cooperative working relationship with employees, management, Council and the public.
 - Maintain regular communication with the supervisors, keeping them fully informed of all non-routine, urgent and/or controversial matters.
 - Shall not receive or solicit a subscription, gratuity, or fee for or in conjunction with any service or presumed service performed by him/her as an employee.