

## LEGAL ASSISTANT – SOCIAL SERVICES

**Distinguishing Features of the Class:** This is a para-professional position with primary responsibility for assisting a Social Services Attorney by researching, gathering and documenting facts relative to various kinds of petitions or actions presented on behalf of the Department of Social Services. It involves learning the skills and techniques of petition preparation, legal research, collecting evidence and interviewing witnesses and preparing affidavits. The incumbent will be expected to demonstrate the potential for working independently and the ability to think and present information logically. The incumbent does related work as required.

### **Typical Work Activities:**

- Coordinates police information necessary to support JD and PINS petitions;
- Obtains statements and evidence and contacts witnesses in the schools and police agencies to support petitions;
- Contacts other Family Court involved for evidence that is needed for adequate petition and contact the clients when necessary;
- Obtains information from Child and Family Services, caseworkers for preparation of Family Court petitions;
- Obtains witnesses to support allegations of the petition;
- Interviews expert witnesses and staff of other involved agencies to obtain affidavits;
- Gathers information from case records, regulations and agency workers to prepare the cases for Fair Hearings;
- Obtains relevant information from transcripts for preparation of appeals and sends notices of appeals in a timely manner;
- Researches appropriate sections of law for review by attorney;
- Contacts other attorneys regarding settlement of county's claims on estates, within parameters established by agency or county attorney;
- Conducts title searches in the County Clerk's office;
- Manages the day-to-day operation of many Resource Unit responsibilities: (This unit locates and collects monies due the Department through a wide variety of avenues such as liens on personal injury awards to clients, estates, bond and mortgages, repayments from clients etc.) Work includes: creating and filing liens, negotiating with client's attorneys and insurance companies for settlements, figuring repayment amounts, negotiating repayment agreements, assisting the Assistant Attorneys in creating guardianships, and creating and filing bond and mortgages.

**Legal Assistant continued****Full Performance Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Personal Characteristics:**

- Working knowledge of legal documents, procedures and law office routine;
- Good communication skills, particularly in writing clearly and effectively;
- Ability to read and analyze written materials;
- Ability to learn and perform accurate legal research;
- Ability to deal with highly confidential and sensitive cases and material;
- Ability to assist legal staff by performing a variety of routine legal duties;
- Ability to understand and carry out complex written and oral instructions;
- Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

**Minimum Qualifications: EITHER:**

- (A) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered four year college or university with a Bachelor's Degree and one (1) year of full time paid experience in a public or private legal office which shall have involved doing legal research; **OR**
- (B) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two year college with an Associate's Degree and three (3) years of full time paid experience in a public or private legal office which shall have involved doing legal research;
- (C) Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma and five (5) years of full time paid experience in a public or private legal office which shall have involved doing legal research.

**NOTE:** An original transcript is needed for all degrees

10/16/1987

07/03/1991

04/15/1996

06/03/2003

07/02/2007

CLASS:       COMPETITIVE