

CITY OF FRANKLIN

Job Description

Job Title: City Attorney

Department: Legal Services

Reports To: Mayor

Salary Level: Grade 13

FLSA Status: Exempt

Prepared By: Kelly Hersh, Director of Administration, and Dana Zahn, Human Resources Manager

Prepared Date: May 2024

Approved By: Common Council

Approved Date: *TBD (May 21, 2024)*

Summary: The City Attorney plays a pivotal role in our city, being responsible for a diverse range of tasks and managing all legal affairs on behalf of the City. This is in strict accordance with Section 62.09(12) of the Wisconsin Statutes and Section 55-2 of the City of Franklin Municipal Code. As legal counsel, the City Attorney advises and represents all municipal officials, officers, and departments. Additionally, the City Attorney will handle prosecuting cases in Municipal Court. Essential duties include drafting and scrutinizing ordinances, resolutions, policies, procedures, and contracts to ensure strict alignment with relevant state, federal, and local regulations. The role prioritizes expertise in municipal law, civil code enforcement, quality of life concerns, land use and development, zoning regulations, labor relations, claims management, debt collection, contract examination, and legislative interpretation.

The City of Franklin is committed to equal employment opportunities and can help ensure a diverse pool of applicants feel welcome to apply.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide legal counsel and written opinions to the Mayor, Common Council, Department Heads, and Committees on municipal operations, including compliance with ordinances, statutes, case law, and regulations.
- Draft legal documents, including resolutions, ordinances, contracts, and litigation materials.
- Represents the City in administrative proceedings, including prosecution and defense.
- Evaluates and negotiates third-party claims against the City.
- Administers labor and employment legal matters and enforces health and safety codes.
- Provides legal representation in mediation, arbitration, and court proceedings.
- Offers training on legislation and recommends policy changes for legal compliance.
- Coordinates risk management activities with the Director of Administration.
- Attends meetings to advise on legal implications and responds to stakeholder inquiries.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

Qualifications

Education, Training, & Experience

- This position requires emotional intelligence, a strong work ethic, accountability, and initiative to perform the duties effectively.
- Doctor of Jurisprudence Degree from an accredited law school.
- An active member of the Wisconsin State Bar Association in good standing.
- At least ten years of experience providing municipal or related legal services for a City or similar government or organization preferred; 3 to 5 years of experience developing and implementing a department budget; experience in handling public sector litigation.
- Previous experience as a City Attorney or Assistant City Attorney in Wisconsin is strongly preferred.
- Direct counsel experience with tax incremental financing and development agreement negotiating and drafting is strongly preferred.
- Strong leadership, communication, and human relations skills are required.

The City of Franklin reserves the right to utilize equivalencies where deemed appropriate with regard to education and experience requirements. It may consider combinations of education and experience likely to lead to success with essential duties and responsibilities.

Completion of the National Incident Management System's (NIMS) ICS 100, 200, and IS 700 within six (6) months of employment.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

- Extensive knowledge of federal laws, State Statutes, local ordinances, and other legal provisions relating to City Attorney functions and the City Council.
- Comprehensive knowledge of legal procedures, public records, and open meetings law.
- Ability to adapt and learn procedures/laws.
- Ability to read, interpret, explain, and make responsible, independent judgments and decisions in accordance with applicable laws, City policies, ordinances, resolutions, and procedures.
- Knowledge and ability to perform general management functions relating to planning, budgeting, and department leadership.
- Knowledge of organizational sensitivity regarding complex relationships with other City departments and external organizations.
- Ability to communicate information clearly and concisely.
- Ability to establish and maintain an effective and comprehensive records management system.
- Ability to operate equipment necessary for City Council meetings.
- Ability to train, educate, mentor, and motivate employees.
- Skill in fostering an environment where staff strives to improve and streamline current practices.
- Ability to adapt to a continually evolving environment, supporting a data-driven and deadline-oriented workplace.
- Ability to set, implement, and achieve departmental goals consistent with the City's Strategic Plan and Goals.
- Ability to work well under pressure, meet deadlines regularly, manage multiple assignments, and shift priorities, responding with a sense of urgency when issues emerge requiring immediate attention.
- Skill in setting priorities and using organization and problem-solving skills, which support and enable sound decision-making.
- Commitment to ongoing professional development and continuous learning.
- High ethical standards.

- Ability to maintain the confidentiality of records.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with a diverse population of people with varied academic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds using tact, diplomacy, and courtesy, including, but not limited to, supervisors, employees, and the public.
- Demonstrated ability to promote innovation, operational excellence, and continuous improvement.

Certificates, Licenses, Registrations

Valid Driver's License; Law License

Physical Demands

Candidates for the position of City Attorney must possess the physical capacity to perform the duties of the position including, but not limited to, frequent sitting, standing, walking; frequent pushing, pulling, lifting, carrying up to 20 lbs.; occasional lifting up to 50 lbs.; occasional entering and exiting of a personal vehicle; continuous arching of neck; ability to occasionally bend, kneel, twist, stoop, squat, reach, push, pull, climb, etc.; occasional driving in variable and unfavorable weather conditions; ability to continuously focus for long periods on projects or while working on computers.

Work Environment

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is typically in an office building environment. The employee may be required to travel to any of the City of Franklin municipal buildings and is thus periodically exposed to outside weather conditions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

Miscellaneous

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and the employee and is subject to change by the employer as the employer's needs and requirements of the job change.