

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is professional and administrative work of a highly complex and difficult nature involving responsibility for all legal matters in the Social Services Department, including the supervision of Family Court Unit. The work is performed under the direction of the Commissioner of Social Services, but independent judgment is a necessary and integral characteristic of the job. Supervision is exercised over a large number of other professionals, administrative, supervisory and support personnel. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Administers the Family Court, Child Support Enforcement, Fair Hearings, and Legal units in the Department of Social Services, including the assignment of attorneys, review of work and supervision of the completion of appropriate legal and other documents;

Provides legal advice and assistance to department personnel, including direct legal advice and recommendations to the Commissioner;

Represents the department in court in a variety of legal matters and proceedings, including but not limited to highly difficult and/or sensitive Family Court cases, appeals, foster care adoption cases, juvenile delinquent and Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) cases, Article 78 proceedings, legal actions, appeals, conservatorships, etc.;

Represents the department at a variety of meetings, forums, seminars, legislative proceedings, etc.;

Meets with judges and other legal personnel to discuss expedition of cases, problems, etc.;

Supervises and may participate in the review and preparation of contracts and other legal documents (e.g. petitions, briefs, opinions, etc.);

Consults with state and federal agencies in establishing, interpreting, reviewing and administering agency rules, regulations and guidelines;

Prepares appropriate legislation for consideration by local, State and/or Federal legislative bodies;

Provides in-service training for Social Services personnel and outside agencies in interpretation and application of the Social Welfare and other applicable laws, rules and regulations;

Meets with a variety of individuals and officials (private attorneys, police officials, personnel from other public and private agencies, etc.) on matters relating to social services;

May provide general administrative advice, recommendations and information to the Commissioner and other other administrative staff.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of common law and of county, State and Federal laws as they apply to the Department of Social Services; thorough knowledge of civil and family court procedure and rules of evidence; good knowledge of the organization, general functions, operations and administrative activities of the Department of Social Services; good knowledge of administrative practices and procedures; skill in preparing and drafting legal instruments; ability to supervise the work of others, including other attorneys; ability to analyze, appraise and apply legal principles, facts and precedents to legal problems; ability to deal effectively with others, including other law professionals and social service administrators; ability to express oneself effectively, including the use of legal terminology, both orally and in writing; sound professional judgment.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Possession of a license to practice law in New York State and five (5) years of experience in the practice of law, at least three (3) years of which must have been in municipal law. In addition, work experience must have included or been supplemented by two (2) years of law practice (as an Attorney) involving substantial work in a health, social services or related agency and two (2) years of supervisory and/or managerial experience over professional staff including attorneys.

PROMOTION: One (1) year of permanent status as an Assistant Director of Legal Services.

(over)

NOTE: Must provide a current certificate of good standing.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: License to practice law in New York State must be maintained throughout the course of employment in this title.

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Competitive