36th DISTRICT COURT
JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Research Attorney
An At-Will, Exempt Position

REPORTS TO: Judicial Assistant/General Counsel

JOB SUMMARY:

Under the general direction of the Judicial Assistant/General Counsel, the Research Attorney conducts legal research and drafts related memoranda of law; reviews legislation, proposed court rule changes, and developing case law to ensure the Court's compliance and recommends any requisite changes to internal Court procedures; provides legal counsel to the Bench and staff of the Court; and serves as legal counsel in litigation involving the Court as a party.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES & DUTIES:

1. Performs general legal functions for the Court, including, but not limited to researching and drafting opinions, orders, and memoranda of law regarding a wide range of legal topics.
2. Reviews legislation, proposed court rule changes, developing case law and internal policies in order to advise the Bench and Court staff regarding same.
3. Acts as Court's legal counsel in litigation to which the Court is a party by drafting and responding to pleadings, interrogatories and motions, and by appearing in court.
4. Assists in drafting internal Court policies, procedures, local court rules, and local administrative orders.
5. Drafts and reviews contracts, as assigned by the Judicial Assistant/General Counsel.
6. Assists with collective bargaining and labor arbitrations when needed.
7. Performs other duties as assigned.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Juris Doctorate from an accredited law school.
2. Licensed to practice law in the State of Michigan and member in good standing of the State Bar of Michigan.
3. At least four years of progressively more responsible work experience in general litigation, with some criminal law and/or labor and employment law experience preferred.
4. At least four years of legal research and writing experience with the ability to provide answers/opinions to nuanced legal questions quickly.
5. Organizational skills necessary to prioritize work and timely complete work assignments.
6. Leadership skills, interpersonal skills, and diplomacy necessary to communicate with judges and Court staff in the exchange of information and when providing guidance.

7. Positive attitude and professional demeanor to provide courteous and accurate information in response to the inquiries from the Bench, Court staff, and the public.

8. Mental ability to frequently handle pressures related to the simultaneous handling of multiple projects, meeting deadlines, fulfilling scheduling requirements, and completing projects that require concentration and attention to detail.

9. Ability to shift between assignments quickly as priorities change.

10. Initiative and intellectual curiosity to eagerly undertake new assignments, even if in unfamiliar areas of law or areas without prior experience, with a strong sense of pride and ownership in work product.

11. Experience representing governmental agencies, and/or familiarity with municipal and government law is preferred.

12. A desire to contribute to efficiently administering justice based upon the rule of law.

13. Confidence in decision-making, research, and writing abilities.

14. Ability to think creatively and engage in honest and frank discussion regarding legal issues and proposed courses of action.

15. Proficient typing and word processing skills necessary for the creation and compilation of various documents, communications, and reports in a variety of software applications, including MS Word, MS Excel, and MS PowerPoint.

LICENSES, CERTIFICATION, OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Obtains and maintains all required state licenses and certifications necessary to practice law in the State of Michigan and otherwise perform the duties of the Research Attorney.

WORKING CONDITIONS:

1. Normal office environment with little discomfort due to heat, dust, noise and the like.

2. Extended work day beyond 7.5 hours a day. Evening, weekend and holiday hours will be required, as needed to timely complete work assignments.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

1. Physical ability to periodically sit at a computer or stand and walk for long periods of time, perform repetitive movements and work in confined areas. Strength, dexterity, coordination and vision to use a keyboard and video display terminal on a daily basis. Hearing to communicate with the public and court staff. Dexterity and coordination to handle files and single pieces of paper. Occasional lifting of objects weighing up fifteen pounds such as files, stacks of paper, reference and other materials. Moving from place to place within an office. Some reaching for items above and below desk level.

This job description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by a person assigned to this job. It is not to be construed as an exhaustive list of all job duties that may be performed by a person so classified. Determination of equivalent qualifications is within the sole discretion of Management.