

PARALEGAL III

This is specialized paralegal work in a variety of complex, program areas or specialty fields usually in support of the activities of a professional legal position or staff.

Employees in this class perform a wide variety of paralegal functions including drafting complex legal documents and contracts, conducting legal research into complex issues without specific precedence, and acting as a front-end interface with clients, staff, and attorneys for the purposes of screening calls and/or summarizing communications between outside parties and the legal staff. The employee usually has considerable involvement in complex litigation including participation in data gathering and preparation of exhibits, documents, and affidavits. The employee may also be responsible for the scheduling of witnesses, and the organization of supporting documents, exhibits, and evidence. Employees in this class are given considerable latitude in decision-making and decisions frequently must be made in which the consequence of error could have significant impact on the legal office, the agency, its clients, or the segments of the public served by the agency. Work is performed with considerable independence, and in many cases the employee is expected to determine when assistance is required of the professional legal staff.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Employee has a variety of recurring and non-recurring assignments involving many legal matters in several programs or the agency as a whole.

Intricacy - Assignments are typically non-recurring with different legal issues and complex factual situations, which require considerable analysis to reach a final judgment. Assignments of a more frequent or recurring nature often have specialized situations or conditions, which require individual consideration.

Subject Matter Complexity - Employee must have a complete understanding of the various program purposes and objectives, the administrative procedures under which the programs operate, and a full understanding of the paralegal function.

Guidelines - The North Carolina General Statutes, and agency rules and regulations are consulted regularly. Procedures, precedents, and model legal documents are available but considerable interpretation may be necessary.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employee receives general instructions on most assignments with primary goals and objectives stated. If complex legal issues arise, or if situations are identified in which there is potential or negative impact to the agency, the paralegal would seek advice and guidance from the professional legal supervisor.

Nature of Review - Work is carried out with considerable independence. Work may be reviewed upon completion, or in some cases released from the office without review.

Scope of Decisions - Decisions often have a significant impact on agency programs, employees, the general public, and the litigation in which the agency is involved.

Consequence of Decisions - Decisions have potential for causing considerable administrative delay in agency operations and substantial resources or money can be inefficiently utilized if poor decisions are made. At this level the professional legal staff places strong reliance upon support work performed by the paralegal and there is the possibility, through improper or incomplete preparation for litigation, of substantial impact to any parties involved in the litigation.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Contacts are quite varied and may include individuals in the legal office, external legal counsel, program managers, insurance company officials, witnesses, departmental employees, and the general public.

Nature and Purpose - The primary purpose of contacts is to receive the necessary information to prepare legal documents, to gather information relevant to issues or litigation, and to interpret legal writings or documents, assess factual situations, and explain actions taken or decisions made.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Work is conducted in a general office environment.

Hazards - There is no exposure to hazards.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Working knowledge of case, statutory, and common law. Working knowledge of judicial and quasi-judicial procedures and the rules of evidence. General knowledge of the program areas or legal specialties to which the employee will be assigned. Ability to perform legal research in accordance with preliminary instructions as to methods or approach, source material available, and policy and precedent of the office. Ability to summarize facts and evidence, and prepare legal instruments. Ability to communicate clearly and logically in oral and written form. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with persons contacted in the course of work.

Minimum Education and Experience –

Graduation from an accredited school for paralegal training and three years of experience as a paralegal, or graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in English, Journalism, or a degree directly related to the area assigned and three years of substantive paralegal experience; or graduation from high school and seven years of paralegal experience performing delegated, substantive legal work, or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

All degrees must be received from appropriately accredited institutions.

Special Note - This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to identify essential functions per ADA. Examples of work are primarily essential functions of the majority of positions in this class, but may not be applicable to all positions.