

Attorney

CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION

JOB SUMMARY

House Office of the Legislative Counsel (HOLC) Attorneys assist the United States House of Representatives and its Committees and Members in drafting legislation and performing related legal functions on a nonpartisan basis. The legal issues encountered in furnishing this assistance involve constitutional, statutory, and administrative law questions, as well as questions in other fields of Federal law. HOLC Attorneys work closely with clients to understand their policy preferences and to implement those preferences through clear, faithful, and effective legislative language.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Attorney classification is distinguished from that of the Summer Associate in that the latter is available to law students only during the summer before their last year in law school whereby the Attorney classification is a full-time position available to law school graduates, including attorneys with legal experience.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

After an intensive training program, work is performed under general direction with wide latitude allowed for the exercise of independent judgement and applied legal knowledge to specific problems.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Drafts legislation and prepares bills according to statutory style and format standards.
- Drafts bills and amendments at each stage of the legislative process, from introduction through conference.
- Analyzes policy proposals, engages with clients, applies relevant legal principles and court decisions, and conducts research as necessary to prepare effective statutory language.
- Advises clients regarding the legal effect and constitutionality of proposed legislative measures in the context of existing laws and legislative procedure.
- Attends sessions of a subcommittee, full committee, and of a conference committee between the House and the Senate; may respond as requested to questions from legislators and legislative staff; may assist members by being present to provide drafting assistance to members on the House Floor.
- May communicate with various stakeholders, at the request of the Member or Committee, as necessary to draft legislation.
- After gaining necessary experience in these duties and responsibilities, trains newly hired attorneys, provides mentorship to team members, and may assume leadership role on teams.
- On a volunteer basis, may assist with office management initiatives to promote the effective operation of the office.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**Knowledge of:**

- Legal principles, applications, and practices of law.
- Fundamental subjects of law and legal research procedures, on a basic level.
- Principles of constitutional law and law-making in the United States, on a basic level.
- Principles and techniques of preparing clear and effective written materials.

Ability to:

- Engage in an iterative process with clients to ensure that drafts reflect a clear, faithful, and coherent expression of clients' legislative policies.
- Objectively perform legal analysis.
- Understand how the work is affected by the legislative process and the varying roles of the branches of the Federal government and State governments.
- Analyze complex problems.
- Manage demanding situations effectively.
- Understand how the legislative measure may amend, expand, repeal, or otherwise change laws.
- Interpret legal information and reach logical conclusions.
- Understand policy issues.
- Explain legal concepts effectively and persuasively.
- Demonstrate a clear, systematic approach to addressing questions and problems.
- Assimilate oral and written information to solve problems effectively and efficiently.
- Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action.
- Evaluate alternatives and make sound recommendations.
- Exercise initiative, sound judgment, tact, discretion, and integrity.
- Be patient, meticulous, analytically minded, and critically minded.
- Adapt to changing drafting needs in a dynamic legislative environment.
- Effectively conduct research.
- Work independently with little supervision and exhibit willingness to accept criticisms.
- Perform highly technical statute drafting.
- Identify client objectives in the context of applicable substantive law and in the context of the legislative process.
- Understand the interrelationships of statutory schemes, constitutional provisions, and case law specific to the subject.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing in an organized manner, with precision, and simple, clear, and precise language to reduce potential for ambiguity and misunderstandings.
- Organize workload, set priorities, and meet critical deadlines.
- Prioritize multiple tasks, work efficiently within time constraints and deadlines.
- Work effectively under pressure.
- Remain impartial and nonpartisan at all times with respect to the policies to be incorporated into a legislative proposal.
- Develop and maintain collaborative working relationships with colleagues and clients.
- Maintain a professional and courteous demeanor when dealing with clients under all circumstances.
- Use appropriate technology, including online legal resources and drafting tools.
- Learn and effectively use various software applications.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of education, experience, and training that would provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required knowledge and abilities would be:

Education:

Graduation from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association, prior to the commencement of employment.

AND

Experience:

Some experience performing legal work, which may be satisfied by employment during law school.

Required License, Certificate or Training:

- Active membership in the bar of a State or the District of Columbia within one year of employment as a full-time attorney.

Necessary Special Requirements:

- Must be a citizen of the United States.
- Must be prepared to respond to clients on evenings and weekends during periods of intense legislative activity.

HISTORY:

- Approval/Adoption date: May 2022