

OFFICE OF THE COOK COUNTY RECORDER OF DEEDS

Chief Legal Counsel Job Description

Job Code: 0398
Job Title: Chief Legal Counsel
Salary Grade: 24
Division: Legal

Department Budget No. 1301159
Position I.D. # 9501885
Shakman Status: Exempt

Job Summary

The Chief Legal Counsel reports directly to the Recorder of Deeds and Chief Deputy Recorder with general responsibility for providing legal advice and counsel to the Administration and all CCRD personnel on all legal matters which impact the Recorder of Deeds. The Chief Legal Counsel oversees all legal research and writing; researches, interprets and drafts legislation, inclusive of statutes, ordinances, and resolutions; and oversees outside counsel providing services to the Cook County Recorder of Deeds (CCRD). The Chief Legal Counsel interfaces with other government agencies in drafting legislation and intergovernmental agreements, and is the primary contact point for all legal matters for federal, state or local law enforcement agencies, including the Cook County State's Attorney Office. The Chief Legal Counsel drafts, reviews and/or oversees all contracts issued by the County on behalf of the CCRD. The Chief Legal Counsel manages and directs the CCRD Legal Division, inclusive of all Clerical/Support Staff and Attorney Staff. The Chief Legal Counsel also manages the CCRD Property Fraud Unit. The Chief Legal Counsel consults with Deputies Recorder, Directors and Supervisors in developing and implementing long and short-term plans designed to ensure continued improvement and effectiveness of operations. The Chief Legal Counsel advises CCRD personnel to ensure compliance with all legislation and regulations. He or she serves as the final legal review for all policy matters involving the CCRD.

The Chief Legal Counsel is an Exempt Position, and his or her employment may be subject to Political Reasons or Factors. The Chief Legal Counsel to the Recorder's Office shall be selected by the Recorder.

Essential Job Duties

- Acts as internal legal advisor and general counsel to the Recorder, Chief Deputy Recorder, and Deputies Recorder on all CCRD legal matters.
- Responsible for enforcing relevant portions of the CCRD Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual (Manual) for the Legal Division and the Property Fraud Unit, including the preparation and issuance of Incident Reports, providing Counseling and issuing Disciplinary Action when appropriate.
- Oversees Legal Division and Property Fraud Unit Employees' schedules, authorizes time-off requests and schedules shifts due to staffing needs, and reviews and monitors Legal Division and Property Fraud Unit Employees' time usage practices.
- Ensures Legal Division and Property Fraud Unit staff are trained to perform their essential job duties via the Performance Management Policy and process.
- Oversees the Property Fraud Unit, including providing oversight and legal advice pertaining to Property Fraud investigations and administrative cases initiated under the Fraud Review and Refer law and the Mechanic's Lien Demand and Referral law.

- Develops CCRD policy in conjunction with the Executive Staff including but not limited to the Recorder, Chief Deputy Recorder and Deputies Recorder.
- Attends regular meetings with Recorder, Chief Deputy Recorder, and all Executive Staff members in order to discuss policy, confidential matters, and any CCRD initiatives.
- Advises staff on compliance with the CCRD Employment Plan and the Manual.
- Acts as the liaison with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and with outside counsel providing services to the CCRD.
- Oversees CCRD compliance with local, state, and federal laws including but not limited to laws pertaining to the recording process.
- Oversees the responses to all Freedom of Information Act requests and other matters relating to statutes and ordinances affecting the CCRD.
- Prepares reports, legal opinions, and memoranda regarding office policies and practice.
- Conducts and oversees all legal research and legal writing prepared by the Legal Division.
- Oversees CCRD legislative initiatives, including researching, analyzing and drafting legislation and interfacing with other government agencies on behalf of the CCRD.
- Accepts and responds to Service of Process, Summons, Subpoenas, Notices, and Pleadings and oversees all litigation involving the Recorder or the CCRD, including appearing as necessary on behalf of the Office before administrative agencies and courts of law.
- Works directly with Deputies Recorder, Directors, and Supervisors to implement plans for the continued improvement and advancement of the CCRD.
- Oversees outside counsel for the CCRD, including but not limited to the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, regarding pending litigation or other legal issues including evaluating litigation and responding to document requests.
- Serves as Hearing Officer for disciplinary hearings in the Office.
- Responds to complex customer issues in conjunction with Staff Attorney.
- Works directly with Cook County on procurement matters.
- Oversees and reviews all contracts.
- Manages requests for data acquisition and drafts legal agreements regarding same.
- Assists the Human Resources Department with conducting interviews by participating in interview panels as needed.
- Assists with CCRD employee training as needed.
- Attends and participates in CCRD outreach events, as needed.

This list represents the essential tasks performed by the Position. Employees may be assigned additional Position-related duties by management as required.

Minimum Qualifications

- Possession of a J.D. from an accredited law school.
- Currently licensed to practice law in the State of Illinois.
- Five (5) years of full-time paid work experience as a licensed attorney.
- One (1) year of full-time paid work experience with legislative drafting or legislative analysis.
- One (1) year of full-time professional work experience in a supervisory capacity.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Extensive knowledge of local, state and federal laws related to government administration and recording of documents.

- Knowledge of CCRD's Employment Plan, Manual and the Collective Bargaining Agreement between SEIU LOCAL 73 and the CCRD.
- Knowledge of common real estate and other recording-related documents within the CCRD.
- Knowledge of ancillary CCRD programs and services, such as property fraud alerts and recordation and retrieval of Veteran's discharge documents.
- Excellent legal research and writing skills, demonstrating the ability to clearly articulate legal issues and analysis necessary.
- Skill in planning, developing and completing complex assignments with minimal direction.
- Strong leadership and organizational skills.
- Ability to perform highly-specialized drafting work independently, including the composition of letters, memoranda, reports and legal briefs.
- Ability to exercise good judgment in making decisions and solving problems.
- Ability to work with others and utilize excellent interpersonal skills.
- Ability to establish and maintain confidentiality and trust.
- Ability to speak clearly and concisely before large and small groups.
- Ability to meet Office deadlines and effectively utilize time with limited oversight.

Physical Requirements

- Long periods of time working on computer requiring vision and typing capabilities.

COOK COUNTY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER