

Jurisdictional Class: Competitive
Adopted: March 4, 2009
Revised: December 6, 2023

SENIOR SOCIAL SERVICES ATTORNEY

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is professional, supervisory legal work involving responsibility for overseeing the planning, coordination, supervision, and management of the performance and activities of the entire legal unit of the Clinton County Department of Social Services and for providing counsel to the Clinton County Department of Social Services and legal services. An incumbent may also be responsible for prosecuting juvenile delinquents as well as persons in need of supervision (PINS). Work is performed under the general direction of the Commissioner in accordance with overall policies of the department with wide leeway for the exercise of independent judgment in applying legal knowledge to specific problems and in taking appropriate legal actions. The incumbent is responsible for the direct supervision of Social Services Attorneys, paralegals, and staff assigned to the legal unit. The incumbent does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative only)

Responsible for the formulation of policies and procedures which relate to the legal department;
Plans, coordinates, supervises, and manages the performance and activities of the entire legal unit;
Acts as legal consultant to the Department of Social Services;
Represents the department in all proceedings including actions such as child abuse, child neglect, child support, foster care, and termination of parental rights;
Represents the department in adult protective proceedings;
Prepares all legal actions for negotiation and trial;
Prepares cases involving claims against the estates of decedents, those responsible for public assistance recipients, and against legally responsible living relatives;
Initiates suits against fraudulent recipients of welfare assistance;
Directs investigations and legal activities in paternity actions;
Acts as prosecuting attorney and performs the function of Grand Jury for all persons over the age of seven and under sixteen years of age who commit acts, which, if committed by an adult, would constitute a crime, with the exception of Juvenile Offenders as defined in the Penal Law;
Presents cases after diversion regarding persons in need of supervision (PINS) who are less than eighteen years of age who are not in school or are incorrigible, ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of a parent or other person legally responsible;
In cases involving Juvenile Offenders, makes appropriate referrals to and cooperates with the District Attorney;
Appellate practice, to include perfecting and finalizing appeals from Family Court and Supreme Court, as well as preparation of Respondent's Briefs when appropriate.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES & PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practices of common law and of county, state and federal laws as they apply to social services;
Thorough knowledge of civil and criminal court procedures and the rules of evidence;
Thorough knowledge of the general functions and administrative activities of the county Department of Social Services;
Ability to plan, coordinate, supervise and manage the work of an entire unit;
Ability to analyze, appraise, and apply legal principles, facts and precedents to legal problems;
Good command of language;
Sound professional judgment.

Senior Social Services Attorney

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from a law school recognized by the University of the State of New York and eighteen (18) months of experience in the practice of Family Court Law.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT FOR ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS: A license to practice law in New York State.