



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR

December 10, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Aram Kouyoumdjian, Director of Human Resources

Subject: Establish Classification and Salary – Senior Paralegal

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution establishing the job class specification and salary of Senior Paralegal with an hourly salary range of \$47.4636 to \$57.6923, and an annual range of \$98,724.30 to \$120,000.00.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed pay range of \$47.4636 to \$57.6923 will have a fiscal impact of approximately \$98,724.30 to \$120,000.00 annually per full-time position, or \$179,974.40 to \$218,760.00 with added fringe benefits.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The classification of Senior Paralegal will serve as a lead and provide technical guidance to paralegals, bridging the highly technical aspects of litigation management, advice, and counsel between the attorneys and paralegals. The newly created job classification includes the knowledge, skills, and abilities that represent the current industry standards, and mirrors duties performed in surrounding municipalities. The pay range reflects a 10% increase above the Paralegal classification and is reflective of the mean among other agencies that utilize these classifications.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
\$47.4636	\$49.8368	\$52.3286	\$54.9451	\$57.6923

BACKGROUND

Paraprofessional legal work in the City Attorney’s Office is currently performed by the Paralegal classification, but the department has identified a need for more complex duties and lead responsibilities.

The newly-proposed Senior Paralegal classification was submitted to the Personnel Board at its meeting of November 4, 2024 and approved by unanimous vote.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This job class specification is being created to bridge the gap between the Paralegal job classification and the Deputy City Attorney job classifications that involve more complex paraprofessional duties and lead responsibilities.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

Aram Kouyoumdjian, Director of Human Resources, (510) 981-6807.

ATTACHMENTS

1: Resolution

Exhibit A: Senior Paralegal – Job Class Specifications and Salary Range

RESOLUTION NO. XX,XXX- N.S.

NEW JOB SPECIFICATIONS AND SALARY RANGE FOR SENIOR PARALEGAL

WHEREAS, the Human Resources Department maintains the Classification and Compensation plan for the City of Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, job specifications are foundational components of the City’s Classification and Compensation plan; and

WHEREAS, the Human Resources Department developed job specifications for the Senior Paralegal classification with an hourly salary range of \$47.4636 to \$57.6923; and

WHEREAS, the Personnel Board recommended on November 4, 2024 to adopt the new job specifications and salary range for the Senior Paralegal class.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the classification for Senior Paralegal is established with a salary range and classification as shown in Exhibit A, effective December 10, 2024;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senior Paralegal classification have an hourly salary range of \$47.4636 to \$57.6923 over five (5) salary steps:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
\$47.4636	\$49.8368	\$52.3286	\$54.9451	\$57.6923

Exhibit A:
Senior Paralegal – Job Class Specifications and Salary Range

EXHIBIT A

CITY OF BERKELEY SENIOR PARALEGAL

Class Code
TBD

Pay
\$47.46 - \$57.69 Hourly
\$3,797.09 - \$4,615.38 Biweekly
\$8,227.02 - \$10,000.00 Monthly
\$98,724.30 - \$120,000.00 Annually

Established
December 10, 2024

Description

DEFINITION

Under general direction, assist attorneys in the preparation of complex and significant cases for trial and hearing matters. This class serves as the lead-level and is responsible for providing technical guidance to subordinate paralegals. They develop work processes, procedures, facilitate training programs, and serve as a resource for legal matters. Incumbents organize, monitor and schedule work while serving in the lead capacity. This class conducts extensive legal research and interprets pertinent case law, performs the more difficult and complex assignments and prepares exhibits and witnesses for trial, analyzes existing information regarding the case at hand, and develops the content of legal documents as required.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

The Senior Paralegal is the advanced journey-level classification. Positions allocated to this class report to an attorney and are assigned the most complex and difficult legal assignments that are performed under the direction, supervision, and technical review of an attorney. The work performed requires knowledge of legal concepts, principles, terminology and procedures, and the extensive use of legal reference materials. This position processes a wide variety of complex and difficult civil actions and litigation requiring a thorough knowledge of legal formats and mechanisms. The Senior Paralegal is distinguished from the Paralegal by its lead role in overseeing workloads and providing technical guidance, level of responsibility, accountability, complexity of duties, utilization of independent judgment on actions taken, and amount of time spent performing these duties.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

The following list of duties is intended only to describe the various types of work that may be performed and the level of technical complexity of the assignment(s) and is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of duties. The omission of a specific duty statement does not exclude it from the position if the work is consistent with the concept of the classification or is similar or closely related to another duty statement.

1. Serves as lead, to include assigning and monitoring work, training employees in work methods, and providing work direction to Paralegal or other clerical staff.

2. Provides input on work performance evaluations and assists with staff development.
3. Gathers evidence and performs legal research by collecting documents, materials, and reports from witnesses or various stakeholders, including research that is not available through routine sources and requires deviation from established procedures.
4. Provide administrative support for trials, including but not limited to, drafting and managing pleadings, drafting discovery, coordinating witnesses, managing exhibits, coordinating with court reporters, coordinating with court clerks, coordinating with outside counsel.
5. May have responsibilities for highly specialized and complex assignments requiring a high level of independence including the organization, preparation, and analysis of associated memoranda.
6. Assists attorneys in extensive preparation of highly sensitive and complex cases involving criminal, civil or administrative cases at all phases of case preparation.
7. Conducts and reviews client and witness interviews in fact-finding or litigation; reviews information to ensure sufficiency and accuracy and identifies additional information required.
8. Locates statutes and relevant case citations; reviews documents to determine compliance with statutes, court decisions, and other applicable laws.
9. Prepares complex correspondence, reports, memoranda, and file legal documents with court.
10. Analyzes elements of cases to identify legal questions.
11. Directs preparation of subpoenas and assures witness compliance.
12. Attends court and directs preparation of court orders by paralegals.
13. Assists with Budget-related tasks.
14. May develop, conduct, and/or facilitate Paralegal training programs.
15. Performs related duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

Note: The level and scope of the knowledge and skills listed below are related to the job duties as defined under Class Characteristics.

Knowledge of:

1. Principles, concepts and methodology of complex legal research, discovery and fact investigation.
2. Principles and techniques of training of civil and/or criminal legal processes.
3. Law office procedures, legal research, trial procedures, municipal law, and civil procedures.
4. Legal principles and practices.
5. Legal terminology.
6. Principles of legal writing.
7. Content and language requirements of legal documents.
8. Rules of evidence and the conduct of court proceedings.
9. Investigative interviewing techniques.
10. Ethics and legal practice.
11. Preparation of points, authorities, and memoranda.
12. English grammar, spelling, punctuation, and language mechanics.
13. Supervisory principles and practices, including performance evaluation and assessment.
14. Budgetary principles and practices and the development and implementation of goals and objectives.

Ability to:

1. Plan, organize, assign, direct, review, and evaluate the work of professional, technical, and office support staff and manage employees; provide feedback on performance; evaluate progress; determine work priorities; assign work and ensure proper completion of assignments.
2. Perform advanced legal research.
3. Analyze complex legal problems.
4. Interpret and analyze applicable state and federal codes.
5. Extract and organize information from diverse, complex, and obscure sources.
6. Present statements of fact and law and argue clearly and logically in written and oral form.
7. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with members of the legal profession, public officials, and the public.
8. Effectively communicate with a variety of individuals representing diverse cultures and backgrounds and function calmly in stressful situations, which will require a high degree of sensitivity, tact and diplomacy.
9. Produce clear and concise documents.
10. Interpret applicable state and federal codes, laws, and statutes.
11. Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information.
12. Negotiate and resolve administrative issues.
13. Prioritize caseload to meet deadlines.

Minimum Qualifications

A TYPICAL WAY OF GAINING THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OUTLINED ABOVE IS:

Possession of one of the following at time of application:

1. Certificate of completion of a paralegal program approved by the American Bar Association.
2. Certificate of completion of a paralegal program at, or a degree from, a postsecondary institution that requires the successful completion of a minimum of 24 semester, or equivalent, units in law-related courses and that has been accredited by a national or regional accrediting organization or approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education.
3. Baccalaureate degree or an advanced degree in any subject, a minimum of **two years** of law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney who has been an active member of the State Bar of California for at least the preceding three years or who has practiced in the federal courts of this state for at least the preceding three years, and a written declaration from this attorney stating that the person is qualified to perform paralegal tasks.
4. High school diploma or general equivalency diploma, a minimum of **five years** of law-related experience under the supervision of an attorney who has been an active member of the State Bar of California for at least the preceding three years or who has practiced in the federal courts of this state for at least the preceding three years, and a written declaration from this attorney stating that the person is qualified to perform paralegal tasks.

LICENSE/CERTIFICATION

Certificate of completion from a paralegal program approved by the American Bar Association (ABA) at time of application.

Every two years, Senior Paralegal must certify completion of four hours of mandatory continuing legal education in legal ethics and four hours of mandatory continuing legal education in either general law or in an area of specialized law. All continuing legal education courses shall meet the requirements of California Code, Business and Professions Code - BPC § 6070. Certification of these continuing education requirements shall be made with the paralegal's supervising attorney. The paralegal shall be responsible for keeping record of the paralegal's certifications.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Must be able to travel to various locations within and outside the City of Berkeley to fulfill the job responsibilities. When driving on City business, the incumbent is required to maintain a valid California driver's license as well as a satisfactory driving record.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

Personal computer, including various software; phone; calculator; copy and facsimile machine.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL REQUIREMENTS

Frequent walking, standing, sitting, kneeling, squatting, and twisting and bending at the waist. Ability to speak and hear well enough to communicate and take direction in person, over the telephone, and in the courtroom. Ability to read standard text, fine print, various handwritings, view a computer monitor, and to drive. May be required to lift up to 25 pounds. Manual dexterity to handwrite and/or use a computer keyboard. Ability to perform daily tasks with independent body mobility, agility, and stamina sufficient to stand, or sit, walk, stoop, and bend routinely for prolonged periods. Ability to operate office equipment requiring repetitive hand movement and fine coordination, including use of a computer keyboard. Ability to independently reason and analyze data, and to reach objective conclusions. Ability to work under stressful conditions, deadlines, and competing priorities. Ability to work with other individuals successfully and collaboratively.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed in a typical temperature-controlled office environment subject to typical office noise and environment. Positions may be required to work outside of normal business including evenings and weekends.

CLASSIFICATION HISTORY

Classification Code: TBD
Classification Established: TBD
FLSA Status: Non-Exempt (Overtime)
Representation Unit: Unrepresented
Probationary Period: One Year
Workers' Comp Code: 8810

