



City of Des Moines, Washington  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**



## **ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY**

Regular, Full-time

**Salary Grade:** E-32

**FLSA Status:** Exempt

**Union Status:** Non-represented

**EEO Category:** Professional

### **Nature of Work**

The Assistant City Attorney assists the City Attorney in the performance of a wide variety of professional legal duties which include providing services for all departments and governing bodies of the City. Under the direction of the City Attorney, the incumbent performs legal research, prepares legal memoranda and/or legal instruments to process civil matters, and acts as a primary or back-up prosecutor. On occasion, the Assistant City Attorney may be required to assume duties normally performed by the City Attorney, including without limitation attendance at City Council meetings and meetings of other City administrative bodies. Performance is subject to periodic written evaluations prepared by the City Attorney.

The City of Des Moines is the client of the Assistant City Attorney as it pertains to any legal matter involving the City. As such, the Assistant City Attorney may not undertake representation of any client as a private attorney if such representation would pose a conflict to the interests of the City. The incumbent is expected to exercise professional judgment and to act in an ethical manner such as to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

### **Essential Functions**

- Assists in providing legal advice to the City Council, City Manager, committees and staff through direct consultation and written legal opinions, as assigned by the City Attorney.
- Performs legal research and prepares opinions on various legal problems for City departments, governing boards, and agencies at the direction of the City Attorney.
- Represents the City in civil and criminal proceedings.
- Provides assistance or lead responsibility in prosecution; may serve as prosecutor or back up to prosecutor.
- Provides assistance for defense of civil actions brought by or against the City, officials, officers and/or employees including condemnations, local improvement districts, zoning regulations and jurisdictional disputes.
- Assists in negotiating and resolving sensitive and controversial issues involving other departments and outside agencies.
- Participates in the development and administration of the Legal Department's annual budget; assures that assigned areas of responsibility are performed within budget; assures effective and efficient use of budgeted funds.
- Establishes and maintains cooperative, effective working relationships with co-workers, other City employees, and the general public using principles of good customer service.
- Reports for scheduled work with regular, reliable and punctual attendance.

- Performs other duties as assigned, including but not limited to being assigned to work in other functional areas to cover absences or relief, equalize peak work periods, or balance the workload.

### **Necessary Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

- Working knowledge of City, state and federal laws.
- Working knowledge of court rules.
- Working knowledge of the Des Moines Municipal Code, Personnel Manual and other rules, policies, plans, etc. of the City.
- Working knowledge of methods of legal research, including web-based legal research.
- Working knowledge of municipal government structure and operations and the relationship of municipalities to other jurisdictions.
- Thorough knowledge, understanding and appreciation for the Rules of Professional Conduct.
- Ability to participate in deliberative proceedings and to render effective legal counsel as required.
- Ability to analyze, appraise, and organize facts, evidence, and legal authorities.
- Ability to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with officials, employees, general public, courts, and other governmental jurisdictions.
- Ability to be analytical, logical, and innovative.
- Ability to attend night meetings.
- Skill in case presentation, both orally and in writing.

### **Education and Experience Requirements**

- Graduation from an American Bar Association (ABA) accredited law school; must be a member of the Washington State Bar Association.
- Prior work or life experiences sufficient to demonstrate maturity of judgment and ability to work under pressure.
- Two years' experience practicing as an attorney in the State of Washington. Experience in matters pertaining to governmental relations, land use, or administrative procedures would be of benefit to an applicant.

### **Special Requirements**

- Current license to practice law in the State of Washington.
- Possession of and the ability to maintain throughout employment a valid Washington State Driver's License with a good driving record.
- Successful completion of a pre-employment background and criminal history check.
- Because of the known effects of tobacco use, the City of Des Moines does not hire applicants who use tobacco products.

### **Working Conditions and Physical Abilities**

- Work is performed in an office setting. Attendance at night meetings is occasionally required. Occasional travel to off-site locations is required, subject to driving a vehicle to conduct work.
- Mental Activities: The position requires continuous decision making, discretion, problem solving, and the ability to read, understand, write, and speak English. Other necessary skills

include but are not limited to interpersonal skills, the ability to work in a team setting, customer service skills, effective negotiating skills, and the ability to exercise independent judgment. Also the ability to conduct training/supervising, presentations/teaching, mentoring, and performance of basic and advanced math.

- Physical Activities: The position requires frequent talking, hearing, and repetitive motion of hands and wrists; occasional standing, walking, sitting, reaching, and handling; rare stooping, crawling, fingering, feeling, bending, kneeling, climbing, grasping, and repetitive motion of feet. Must be able to push, pull, lift, and carry ten pounds.

### **Equal Opportunity Employer**

- The City of Des Moines is committed to hiring a diverse workforce and all qualified applicants, including all ethnic backgrounds and persons with disabilities, are encouraged to apply. The City is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, color, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability status, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law.
- In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, an employer is obligated to make a reasonable accommodation only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability. In general, it is the responsibility of the applicant or employee with a disability to inform the employer that an accommodation is needed to participate in the application process, to perform essential job functions or to receive equal benefits and privileges of employment.

### **General Information**

- The statements contained herein reflect general details as necessary to describe the principal functions for this job classification, the level of knowledge and skill typically required and the scope of responsibility, but should not be considered an all-inclusive listing of work requirements.
- The physical abilities described above are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.
- The provisions of this job description do not constitute an expressed or implied contract. Any provision contained herein may be modified and/or revoked without notice.
- Updated 2018. Updated 2021.