

Iowa Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise  
Job Classification Description

## General Counsel

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### Definition

Performs administrative/professional legal work representing a state agency as the agency's general counsel; performs related work as required.

*The work examples and competencies listed below are for illustrative purposes only and not intended to be the primary basis for position classification decisions.*

### Work Examples

Assists supervisor by performing such duties as instructing employees, answering questions, distributing and balancing the workload, and checking work; may make suggestions on selection, promotions, and reassignments.

Advises on questions of law or administrative policies involved in the operation of the agency in its engagements with industry, private and professional associations, state or local government agencies, and the general public.

Advises on questions of law, regulations, and opinions of the courts and the Attorney General; outlines the facts and the applicable law.

Serves as the principal agency spokesperson for legal matters relating to agency operations.

Reviews, negotiates, writes, and executes a variety of legal agreements and contracts. Maintains current working knowledge of applicable terms and conditions related to contract law.

Advises and assists legislative committees and their staffs in the drafting of legislation; gives testimony before legislative or administrative bodies. Drafts legislation or prepares complete reports on changes in basic legislation.

Drafts or reviews proposed agency decisions; analyzes the records, including transcriptions of testimony and pleadings, evaluates the facts, determines questions of law, and either recommends adoption of a decision of another attorney or drafts a decision.

Works closely and cooperatively with staff from the Attorney General's Office, as needed.

### Competencies Required

Knowledge:

- Law and Government – Laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.
- Customer Service – Principles and processes for providing customer services, including customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluating customer satisfaction.
- English Language – The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

- Administration and Management – Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.

**Abilities:**

- Inductive Reasoning – Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions.
- Deductive Reasoning – Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
- Memorization – Remember information such as words, numbers, pictures, and procedures.
- Oral Expression – Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- Oral Comprehension – Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- Selective Attention – Concentrate on a task over a period of time without being distracted.
- Speed of Closure – Quickly make sense of, combine, and organize information into meaningful patterns.
- Written Comprehension – Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
- Written Expression – Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
- Speech Clarity – Speak clearly so others can understand you.
- Speech Recognition – Identify and understand the speech of another person.

**Skills:**

- Active Listening – Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- Critical Thinking – Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
- Reading Comprehension – Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- Complex Problem Solving – Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
- Judgment and Decision Making – Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.

**Minimum Qualification Requirements**

Applicants must meet at least one of the following minimum requirements to qualify for positions in this job classification:

- 1) Graduation from an accredited law school, and experience equal to five years of full-time work in the practice of law.
- 2) Graduation from an accredited law school, and experience equal to three years of full-time work in the practice of law in the employing agency.

**Notes**

Employees in this job class must be licensed to practice law in the state of Iowa.

*Effective date: 11/23 SA*