

## SOCIAL SERVICES ATTORNEY

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is professional and administrative legal consultative work involving the handling of legal matters in the Department of Social Services. In accordance with agency policies and procedures, as well as New York State Laws, rules and regulations, the incumbent prepares and reviews legal documents and legal actions, drafts legal opinions, conducts litigation, and provides legal advice. Close cooperation is maintained with the District Attorney's Office and the Child Advocacy Center. Work is performed as assigned by, and under general supervision of, the Director of Legal Services of the agency, requiring exercise of independent judgment in carrying out the details of the work. Supervision may be exercised over subordinate clerical staff. When the incumbent is appointed as an intern, direct supervision is provided by higher level Social Services professionals. Interns will receive practice and guidance in the exercise of sound professional judgment concerning legal actions and decisions, and related matters. Supervision over others is not a responsibility of an intern. Performs related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative only)

Acts as legal advisor for the Department of Social Services;  
Utilizes legal remedies to ensure compliance with New York State Social Services Law (NYSSSL) and/or related laws and regulations;  
Represents the department at administrative fair hearings;  
Prepares legal documents such as petitions, briefs, opinions, contracts, etc., as required;  
Assists all units with legal problems associated with any Department of Social Services related issue;  
Assists Child Welfare unit in preparation, review or defense of petitions for temporary custody of neglected or abused children, petitions for agency adoptions, habeas corpus procedures, consent proceedings of spouses for surrender of children, etc.;  
Reviews all contracts for completeness, accuracy and compliance;  
Provides in-service training for all staff relative to interpretation and application of New York State Social Services Law (NYSSSL) and/or related laws and regulations;  
Works closely with State and Federal agencies in establishing, interpreting and administering agency regulations;  
May interview legally responsible relatives of clients;  
Performs a variety of related activities as required.

*Typical Work Activities are intended only as illustrations of possible types of work that might be appropriately assigned to an incumbent of this title. Work activities that do not appear above are not excluded as appropriate work assignments, as long as they can be reasonably understood to be within the logical limits of the job.*

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Thorough knowledge of the State Social Services law, rules and regulations; good knowledge of the principles and practices of common law and of county, state and federal laws especially as they apply to social welfare; good knowledge of civil court procedure and the rules of evidence; familiarity with the general functions and administrative activities of the County Department of Social Services; skill in preparing and drafting legal instruments; ability to analyze, appraise, and apply legal principles, facts and precedents to legal problems; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships; ability to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing to groups and individuals; good professional judgment; initiative; tact; confidentiality.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Graduation from a school of law with an LL.B. or J.D. degree and six (6) years of experience as an attorney, four (4) years of which must have been in the practice of public welfare aspects of municipal law, including extensive experience with New York State SOS §111-g, New York Family Court Act, New York Child Support Standards Act, Uniform Interstate Family Support Act, and related legislation.

PLEASE NOTE: Education beyond the secondary level must be from an institution accredited or recognized by the Board of Regents of the New York State Department of Education as a post secondary, degree-granting institution.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Possession of a license to practice law in New York State;
2. Minimum of 10 Continuing Legal Education credits specific to public welfare aspects of municipal law.