



COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

JOB TITLE: COUNTY COUNSEL

DATE: JANUARY 1, 2024

EXEMPT (Y/N):	Yes	CLASSIFICATION:	CSC Exempt
DEPARTMENT:	County Counsel	JOB CODE:	089
SUPERVISOR:	Board of Commissioners	SALARY RANGE:	E10
UNION (Y/N):	No	LOCAL:	N/A

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Responsible for professional performance and administration of the County Counsel's Office for Columbia County. Responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the activities of the department.

Fairly enforce all laws, regulations, ordinances, and standards to ensure compliance and to protect the public's health and safety. Plan, organize, and direct all departmental activities, including those with other governmental agencies and private organizations. Work directly with a wide range of community groups, public and private sector officials, county employees, individual citizens, and as part of the county's core management team.

Promote excellence, dependable performance, responsible customer service, pride, initiative, commitment, cooperation, safety, and a team approach throughout the department. Evaluate and define departmental programs and policies along with the development of budget proposals in accordance with the vision of the county as articulated by the Board of County Commissioners. Supervise a staff of professional, technical, and office support and hold them accountable for results.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES include the following. Other related duties may be assigned.

Serve as legal counsel to the Board of County Commissioners. Provide legal research and advise county officials, department heads, employees, commissions, and committees on legal matters. Represent the county before different tribunals, including courts, legislative committees, and other public groups on a wide variety of issues.

Provide legal assistance to the Board of County Commissioners, other county officials, department heads, employees, commissions, and committees in all matters in the form of direct legal advice as well as representation at meetings, hearings, and in court. Pursue all necessary court action with some exceptions, e.g., litigation covered by insurance. Represent all county officials, including elected and appointed department heads.

Represent the county as needed in negotiations with outside governments, agencies, and labor unions. Assist with labor negotiations and contract implementation matters. Assist in the preparation of the county's position. Perform background research on opposing positions. Assist in negotiations or advocating the county's position.

Research, draft, and advise on administrative policy for county departments.

Represent the county in dealings with other units of state, local government and the general public. This includes advice and counsel in general, legislative, and executive decision-making matters.

Pursue specific county projects on short- and long-range bases as requested by the Board, such as bond issues, economic development, and property acquisition.

Conduct property research, draft property transfer documents, and assist at closing.



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Research, study, and interpret the application of laws, court decisions, and other legal authorities and precedents. Prepare legal opinions, memoranda, and briefs.

Review and prepare contracts and agreements. Draft ordinances. Interpret state law and administrative rules.

Manage and monitor tort claims, insurance claims, and litigation.

Review public records requests, research, and advise the records custodian, and redact as necessary.

Maintain professional license as is required by the State of Oregon and the county.

Supervise staff, including assigning and reviewing work, evaluating performance, and training. Provide recommendations on hiring and on disciplinary action when appropriate. Handle employee complaints.

Formulate and present departmental budget for review by the Board of County Commissioners. Monitor and manage fiscal operations of the department to remain within budgetary constraints.

Follow all safety rules and procedures established for work areas. Comply with all relevant county policies and procedures. Ensure departmental compliance with county policies and procedures.

Maintaining regular attendance during the assigned work schedule is an essential requirement of this position. The ability to serve and meet in person with members of the general public, co-workers, and others is required.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES: Directly supervise departmental employees.

- Ensure department plans and goals are effectively communicated throughout the department so that individual work plans maintain progress toward department goals.
- Fulfill role as appointing authority for department to ensure the hire of qualified candidates.
- Ensure each departmental employee receives written, clearly stated goals and expectations.
- Ensure that each departmental employee is held accountable for meeting those goals and expectations and take corrective action if not met.
- Conduct regular, formal and informal, evaluations of departmental employees.
- Provide training opportunities for departmental staff.
- Diagnose organizational needs, designing approaches, and facilitating interventions to optimize departmental communication, cooperation, teamwork, participation, and results.
- Discharge all supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the county's policies and procedures, collective bargaining agreements, and federal, state, and local laws.
- Coordinate all personnel functions with the Human Resources Department.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED: Work is performed with considerable independence and is reviewed by the Board of County Commissioners through conferences, reports, and performance evaluations determining the effectiveness of programs in accomplishing departmental goals and objectives. This position is subject to the direction of the three-member Board of County Commissioners.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The competencies below represent the required knowledge, skills,



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and/or abilities. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE: Graduation from an accredited school of law. Ten years' of increasingly responsible experience in the practice of law. Any satisfactory combination of experience and training, which demonstrates the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be substituted for the above requirements.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS: Three years of experience of legal practice in the public sector, including supervisory experience. Should be self-aware in leading others and navigating challenging situations with grace and empathy. Open to diverse ideas and perspectives, willing to collaborate to find common ground.

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS: Must be a member in good standing of the Oregon State Bar. Should possess a valid driver's license and be insurable under the county's liability policy.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILL, AND ABILITY: Thorough knowledge of a wide variety of legal principles, practices, and terminology, particularly as it relates to Oregon local governments. Considerable knowledge of county departmental functions affected by legislation and court decisions. Extensive knowledge of management principles and practices of human and financial resource management.

Skill in business software programs and Microsoft Office products.

Ability to:

- Plan, implement, and evaluate department activities based on policy guidelines, regulations, and laws.
- Think conceptually and quickly to get to the heart of a problem.
- Set priorities and develop realistic solutions to problems.
- Express ideas effectively, both verbally and in writing. Use sound judgment and not be afraid to take reasonable risks.
- Adapt to change or new situations and openly acknowledge and work through conflict. Accept responsibility and be able to work well with ambiguity.
- Work independently and as part of a team.
- Model positive behavior desired in others and promote collaboration and shared responsibility for departmental success. Look for opportunities for people to contribute, develop skills, take responsibility, and be trusted.
- Provide constructive feedback in a way that is sensitive to the emotions of others.
- Act in such a manner as to maintain the confidentiality of the records and issues and other matters that may be encountered.
- Develop and maintain harmonious and effective working relationships with employees, other agencies, county officials, and the general public.
- Analyze facts, evidence, and precedents and arrive at a logical conclusion. Set forth findings of fact and decision in concise written form.
- Remain calm and use good judgement during confrontational or high-pressure situations.



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SPECIAL NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS: Must be able to pass a pre-employment background screening.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS: The physical demands described here must be met by an employee to perform the essential functions of this job successfully. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

Minimal, involving the movement of files, books, boxes, equipment, etc., seldom exceeding 20 pounds.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

General office environment. Position requires travel to attend meetings and hearings and may require the attendance at evening and weekend meetings.

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform the essential job functions satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the primary job functions herein described. Since every duty associated with this position may not be described herein, employees may be required to perform duties not specifically spelled out in the job description, but which may be reasonably considered to be incidental in the performing of their duties just as though they were actually written out in this job description.

***Columbia County has the right to revise this job description at any time.
This description does not represent in any way a contract of employment.***