

Deputy General Counsel

Office of the Administrative Office of the Courts

Reports To: General Counsel

FLSA Status: Exempt

Location: Judicial Branch Central Administrative Offices

Position Summary:

The General Counsel's Office provides legal guidance to the Judicial Branch, including the Supreme Court, the Superior Court, the Circuit Court, the Judicial Branch's Administrative Council, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and other judicial officers and staff. The General Counsel's Office oversees all legal matters affecting the Judicial Branch, including litigation, compliance, contracts, legislative and government relations, and legal coordination with court partners and external agencies, and ensures that all actions and policies of the Judicial Branch comply with federal and state law and judicial rules.

The role of Deputy General Counsel is a senior-level public policy position involving direct communication and interaction with Judicial Branch leadership, legislators, officials from all branches of state government, and other stakeholders. The individual occupying this position provides legal services with respect to the entire scope of the General Counsel's Office responsibilities, with a special emphasis on ensuring the efficient and effective coordination and oversight of Judicial Branch legislative activities and matters involving public access to information and judicial proceedings. The governmental relations emphasis will include, but not be limited to, drafting, researching, and tracking legislation, as well as providing testimony at legislative hearings and building and maintaining cohesive intergovernmental working relationships. The Deputy General Counsel will report to and coordinate efforts with the General Counsel to ensure effective, cohesive, and efficient legal counsel to the Judicial Branch.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

Legal Services:

- Provide legal advice and representation to the Judicial Branch on a wide range of issues including constitutional, statutory, regulatory, employment, procurement, ethics, and administrative law.
- Draft, review, and negotiate contracts, MOUs, and other legal agreements.
- Work with outside counsel handling litigation or specialized legal matters.
- Represent the Judicial Branch in administrative and judicial proceedings and in interactions with state agencies and legal organizations.
- Coordinate the Judicial Branch's responses to public records requests.

Government Relations:

- Serve as the primary liaison between the Judicial Branch and the Executive and Legislative Branches of government.
- Monitor proposed legislation and regulations that may affect the Judicial Branch; provide legal analysis and develop policy positions.
- Prepare fiscal notes for presentation to the Office of the Legislative Budget Assistant.
- Work with the judicial training coordinator, court administrators, clerks and subject matter experts to analyze and anticipate the effects of proposed legislation on court procedures and substantive law.

- Coordinate testimony and appearances before legislative committees and attend legislative hearings as needed.
- Build and maintain strong working relationships with lawmakers, legislative staff, and executive agencies.
- Prepare annual legislative priorities in coordination with Judicial Branch leadership.

Legal Coordination:

- Lead and coordinate cross-functional legal initiatives with judges, court administrators, clerks, and other stakeholders.
- Ensure consistent interpretation and application of legal standards across court divisions.
- Collaborate with state agencies, bar associations, and legal advocacy groups on legal and policy initiatives.
- Develop legal training and resource materials for judicial officers and staff.

Supervisory Responsibilities:

The Deputy General Counsel may in the future be called upon to provide leadership and oversight for legal interns and contractors when applicable.

Qualifications:

Education and Experience:

- Juris Doctor (JD) from an accredited law school.
- Licensed to practice law and in good standing with the state bar.
- Minimum of 5 years of progressively responsible legal experience, including experience in government, public policy, or judicial systems.
- Prior experience working with or within the legislative or executive branches strongly preferred.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- High degree of integrity, sound judgment, and professional discretion.
- Familiarity with judicial system operations, or the willingness to learn these functions.
- Extensive knowledge of constitutional law and administrative law.
- Strong understanding of legislative processes and public policy development.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Proven ability to analyze complex legal issues and provide clear and practical legal advice.
- Ability to work collaboratively with judges, court staff, government officials, and stakeholders.

Working Conditions:

Standard office environment with some travel required for meetings, hearings, and conferences. May require extended hours during legislative sessions or high-priority legal matters.

Please send replies to: CKeating@courts.state.nh.us or Christopher Keating, One Granite Place, Concord, NH.