

Position Description: Legal Assistant - Collections

Service Type: Confidential - Range M/N

Definition: Under the general direction and supervision of the borough attorney or designee, the legal assistant - collections prepares correspondence and legal documents as necessary in the course of department operations, and functions as the primary paralegal in tax collection matters and also provides paralegal services in other matters as directed. The legal assistant – collections works under the direct supervision of the borough attorney or designee when preparing pleadings, documents or materials relating to matters being handled by them.

Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma or GED; four years of legal secretarial experience, preferably in litigation, to include one year experience in collections work and real property foreclosures; type 50 wpm and must be reasonably proficient with word processing software used by the legal department. Paralegal experience (experience with bankruptcy and collection cases preferred), notary public, and proficiency with electronic spreadsheet program and ten key calculators preferred.

Essential Functions:

1. Works independently to manage the sales and personal property tax collection caseload and with minimum supervision using independent judgment, analyzes sales and personal property tax files and determines action required. Prepares necessary correspondence, pleadings and supporting documents to carry out that action, including writing demand letters, filing complaints, preparing discovery documents, drafting affidavits and other pleadings to secure judgments and payment agreements. Maintains court calendar and deadlines. Independently communicates and negotiates with debtors according to established protocol for resolution of case including explanation of collection procedures, ordinances and policies, and discussions regarding payment options. Coordinates legal actions with court personnel and process servers. Performs research to locate defendants and assets then prepares and files appropriate execution actions against judgment debtors. Prepares collection status reports for distribution to the finance department. Advises Finance Delinquent Accounts staff on small claims process and court procedures as appropriate. Trains attorneys as needed in tax collection procedures and performs legal research regarding historical code interpretations.
2. Receives all bankruptcy notices and case pleadings, and researches borough records to determine if bankruptcy debtor has any tax accounts. Accesses federal court electronic records to review all Alaska bankruptcy cases for borough interests and complies with mandatory electronic filing requirements. Establishes and maintains in-house individual case files and summaries. Drafts, prepares and files timely Proof of Claims with supporting documents when necessary, as determined in consultation with the attorney, and pleadings and correspondence as directed by the attorney. Maintains calendar of court deadlines and sets up telephonic participation in court hearings when necessary. Using independent judgment and expertise in bankruptcy practice, brings issues to attention of bankruptcy attorney as discovered from pleadings and other sources of information. Creates and maintains an electronic list of bankruptcy

cases for tracking, and updates borough's tax computer if necessary. Independently researches bankruptcy court records for case status for use in foreclosure proceedings and collection cases.

3. Coordinates with the appropriate attorney for the borough and other departments the legal process of the annual real property and special assessment foreclosures, including drafting routine pleadings, affidavits, clerk's deeds and exhibit preparation, subject to attorney approval, and assisting with other pleadings. Monitors time deadlines for compliance with AS 29.45 and established borough workflow concerns. Independently reviews foreclosure files to verify that other departments as required by law have followed all pre-foreclosure steps.
4. Develops and uses working knowledge of court rules, forms and procedures; Kenai Peninsula Borough 5.18 (sales tax code), KPB 5.12 (real property tax code), Alaska Statute 29.45, basic bankruptcy court rules, forms and procedures, and legal opinions issued internally regarding tax law interpretations.
5. Develops and uses working knowledge of borough computer systems for sales taxes, property taxes, judgment collections and records. Accesses Internet to acquire up-to-date information on court records and to perform investigation on tax debtors and property.
6. Receives, reviews, processes, and tracks all documentation and requests relating to matters referred from departments, divisions, service areas, and other clients which are assigned to legal assistant's workload. This includes establishing and maintaining files, researching and compiling background on issues, communicating with appropriate persons, drafting and preparing correspondence, agreements, contracts, and other documents as directed by the attorney.
7. Receives and screens visitors and incoming telephone calls; directs each to appropriate attorney or department official or handles calls independently when appropriate.
8. Performs duties required for other caseload litigation or matters handled by borough attorneys. This includes without limitation, independent research regarding legal and associated factual issues, drafting standard pleadings, preparing and filing all pleadings subject to attorney approval, and independently tracking the case calendar and status.
9. Performs typing tasks, including transcription and editing of non-routine complex legal memoranda, filing of general legal papers ensuring compliance with court rules. Organizes portion of in-house files for categories primarily handled by legal assistant – collections.
10. Researches newspaper publications for information about debtors, including Notice to Creditors in estate probates. When found, researches borough tax records for appropriate accounts and prepares and files timely claims against the estate if necessary.
11. Performs duties of other legal assistant when necessary or as requested by

borough attorney or designee.

12. Supervises temporary office assistants in absence of other legal assistant.

Other Functions:

1. Other related duties as assigned.

Physical Demands: While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to use hands and fingers dexterously to operate office equipment, and to communicate orally; regularly required to sit; and occasionally required to stand, walk, and reach with hands and arms. The employee must occasionally transport up to 30 pounds. Specific vision abilities required include close vision and the ability to adjust focus. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Examination: Related skills tests as required.