

**LEGAL ASSISTANT TO JUDGE (OFFICE AUTOMATION)  
(GS-0986-10)**

**INTRODUCTION:**

To provide legal assistance, administrative, and office automation services to support the military and civilian attorneys and other legal specialists assigned to the Chambers of the Judge.

**ORGANIZATION:** U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces

**I. MAJOR DUTIES:**

**A. Duty (Critical):**

Provides legal research support for the Judge and other staff attorneys. Anticipates need for information pertaining to legal matters and prepares materials on own initiative so they are ready for attorney. Refers calls requiring special litigation response to the appropriate attorney. Prepares case files upon receipt of incoming correspondence; annotates files to designate receipt or dispatch of legal documents or correspondence; routes to appropriate attorney; monitors suspense dates; and maintains file until action is complete. Performs legal research in references such as legal source documents, files, computerized legal research database, and law library to answer specific questions; identify precedent cases and legal citations; find statutory references; ensure correct legal format, phraseology, and terminology; and obtain attachments to correspondence. Types, in final form, legal documents and communications such as letters, legal opinions, briefs, regulations, international agreements, and documents pertaining to actions such as courts-martial, litigation, and claims. Maintains all or a portion of the law library by receiving and posting updates; reviewing new materials to determine whether items should be maintained, based on knowledge of the legal office operations and established guidelines; and assuring all library materials are available and current. May also perform routine cataloging, classification, and indexing of law books and associated publications. Keeps the Judge and other attorneys informed on status of cases and projects.

**Tasks:**

A. Performs legal research in source documents, files, and the law library to provide answers, background, and attachments for legal communications and documents.

B. Maintains case files by annotating the receipt/dispatch of legal documents, routing to appropriate attorney, and monitoring suspense dates.

**B. Duty (Critical):**

Reviews and prepares incoming and outgoing administrative correspondence, reports, and messages. Reviews incoming mail, applying expert knowledge of subject matter procedures to determine destination and priority. Uses initiative to obtain clarification of correspondence/documents, when required. Assists Court personnel in interpreting instructions and establishing actions required. Composes and prepares final versions of letters, reports, and

messages. Reviews outgoing correspondence with the Judge's signature for grammar, spelling, punctuation, format, technical and nontechnical terminology, and conformance with established policies and procedures. Ensures legal references are properly cited within correspondence being reviewed. Revises wording or changes phraseology, as necessary, and brings changes to originator's attention for concurrence.

**Tasks:**

- A. Reviews incoming mail to determine destination and priority.
- B. Composes and prepares letters, reports, and messages in final form on own initiative.
- C. Reviews outgoing correspondence to ensure grammatical accuracy, correct spelling, punctuation, format, terminology, legal references, and conformance with established policies and procedures.

**C. Duty (Critical):**

Performs other administrative and clerical duties in support of the Chambers of the Judge. Prepares monthly and annual reports by tracking statistics and assembling and analyzing data. Develops findings, recommendations, and justifications. Establishes and maintains operating files and publications reference library in accordance with established procedures, including cross-referencing of correspondence, reports, publications, and other office records. Searches for and withdraws material as requested. Prepares and maintains office operating instructions. Receives telephone calls and visitors, ascertains nature of call or visit, and refers to appropriate individual. Schedules the Judge's appointments, coordinates arrangements for time, participants, and location of meetings, and determines rescheduling needs. Keeps suspense system on incoming and outgoing correspondence. May monitor, inventory, and order publications and forms to ensure that adequate supply is available. May assist assigned personnel in processing travel order requests and vouchers and may assist visiting personnel with transportation and billeting arrangements. Prepares and maintains itineraries.

**Tasks:**

- A. Maintains operating files and publications library in accordance with established procedures.
- B. Exercises tact, discretion, and judgment in ascertaining nature of calls and visits.
- C. Monitors suspense system to ensure all suspense dates are met.

**D. Duty (Critical):**

Uses multiple office automation software with varied functions to produce a wide range of documents, formats, etc. Specific processing functions involved require a varying number and sequence of steps and use of different functions from one assignment to another. Uses word-processing software to create, copy, edit, store, retrieve, and print forms, memos, and letters; uses existing database or spreadsheet software to create, enter, revise, sort or calculate, and retrieve data for reports; and uses graphic software to provide graphs and charts for reports and presentations. Independently carries out familiar assignments in accordance with

previous instructions, standard procedures for creating documents, or entering or retrieving data, and established use of software packages. Recognizes differences in existing procedures and applications and makes choices from among established alternatives. Steps and procedures differ in terms of the type of document or the existence of prerecorded formats, and other differences of a factual nature. Transmits and receives documents and messages electronically using personal computers or workstations that are networked or linked to other computers or workstations.

**Tasks:**

A. Utilizes multiple automated software programs to update, produce, and maintain accurate and useful documents.

B. Receives, processes, transmits, and/or forwards electronic messages and documents as appropriate.

**II. CLASSIFICATION FACTORS:**

**Factor 1. Knowledge**

1. -- Knowledge of the organization responsibilities, priorities, policies, and programs and a comprehensive knowledge of a body of legal rules and procedures, including both federal and state laws, to process unusually difficult and complicated legal assistant assignments. An in-depth knowledge of the Judge's views and policies in order to effectively assist in preparing for speaking engagements and meetings; to review correspondence for the Judge's signature; answer informal inquiries; and to brief or advise the Judge's staff or others outside Chambers on such matters.

-- Broad working knowledge of complex legal services and terminology to support legal staff.

-- Practical knowledge of guidelines, precedent case actions, legal research techniques, and the programs of the organization, equal to that acquired through considerable work experience or training, to assist the legal staff in locating and identifying precedent cases, legal citations, and statutory references.

-- Knowledge of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and required legal formats to produce legal documents and communications.

-- Knowledge of the nature and capability of word processing software procedures and function keys to perform a substantial range of functions, such as generating tables of contents, importing graphs or databases, creating glossaries, aligning multiple columns, automatically printing document identification or other notations at the top or bottom of each page, and creating form letters and automatically merging these with mailing lists.

-- A fully qualified typist is required.

**Factor 2. Supervisory Controls**

The employee performs difficult and responsible work under general supervision and, to a considerable extent, exercises independent judgment in planning and carrying out the assignments. The supervisor assists with precedent assignments by providing an interpretation of policy or the concepts and theories of the occupation. Completed work is evaluated for appropriateness and

effectiveness in meeting goals and for conformity to policy and requirements.

**Factor 3. Guidelines**

Guidelines such as regulations, instructions, evaluation criteria, and prior case or action files are numerous and varied, but are often not completely applicable or have gaps in specificity, making it difficult for the employee to choose the most appropriate instruction and decide how the various transactions are to be completed. The guidelines often do not apply directly, requiring the employee to make adaptations to cover new and unusual work situations. May require deviation from established procedures to process transactions which cannot be completed through regular channels or involve actions where guidelines are conflicting or unusable. Employee uses judgment in interpreting and adapting guidelines for application to specific cases or problems and bases decisions and recommendations on facts and conventional interpretation of guidelines rather than theory or opinion.

**Factor 4. Complexity**

The employee performs difficult and responsible work related to a special and complex subject matter. Clerical assignments typically entail processing a wide variety of transactions that are subject to different sets of rules, regulations, and procedures and are unusually difficult and complicated in nature. The technical or assistant duties require considerable evaluative judgments within generally-defined aspects of an administrative program or function; duties may be broadly focused and may address multiple actions. The employee usually deals with clerical problems and situations that remain stable and resemble past problems or situations for which there may not be one absolutely correct solution, only a best or most appropriate one. The work involves identifying issues, problems, or conditions, recognizing the dimensions of a problem, and seeking alternative solutions based on evaluation of the intent of applicable legal rules, regulations, and procedures.

**Factor 5. Scope and Effect**

The purpose of the work is to provide legal assistance and administrative support for the office staff and may involve direct assistance to attorneys and other legal specialists by performing a segment of their work or may involve responsibility for a stream of products or continuing processes. The issues examined are such that the course of action has substantive impact on the outcome of the assignment.

**Factor 6. Personal Contacts**

Personal contacts are both within and outside the agency and with the originators of work products within the immediate unit and in support units.

**Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts**

Contacts are for the purpose of obtaining, developing, and providing facts or information regarding the facts; explaining application of regulations; resolving problems relating to the assignment; developing information in order to identify problems, needs, or issues; and/or to coordinate work efforts.

**Factor 8. Physical Demands**

The work is sedentary. Typically, the employee sits comfortably to do the work. However, there may be some walking, standing, bending, and carrying of light items such as papers and books. No special physical demands are required to perform the work.

**Factor 9. Work Environment**

Work is performed in an office setting with adequate heating, ventilation, and lighting.

**III. HOW TO APPLY:**

To apply please send your cover letter and resume to:

Patrice M. Bolton  
Chambers of Judge Margaret A. Ryan  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces  
P.O. Box 77056  
Washington, DC 20013-7056

All questions regarding this position should be directed to Patrice Bolton at 202-761-5215.