

Every employee benefits from having clear expectations of their duties. A job description also supports organizational design, job classification, recruitment, employee performance, learning and development, and succession planning.

The Common Job Description (CJD) is used to describe work where several positions have common core responsibilities and reporting relationships, as well as comparable knowledge needed to perform the work.

FOR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION USE:

CJD LIBRARY #:

EFFECTIVE DATE:

WORKING TITLE: EXECUTIVE LEGAL OFFICER

CLASSIFICATION: JUSTICE LEGAL COUNSEL 2 (AKA LO2)

PAY GRADE:

JOB CODE: M2JLC

CROSS-GOVERNMENT COMMON JOB

DEPARTMENT-SPECIFIC COMMON JOB

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

Briefly describes the purpose for the business operation and how this job fits within the organizational structure (i.e. reporting relationship).

The Court of Appeal is the highest court in Alberta and hears criminal appeals from the Alberta Court of Justice and both criminal and civil appeals from the Court of King's Bench of Alberta and various administrative and regulatory tribunals of particular importance to Alberta's society and economy. The Court of Appeal provides opinions on questions referred to it by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under the *Judicature Act*.

The Court also provides innovative alternatives to traditional appellate hearings including judicial dispute resolution and case management.

The Court's primary responsibility is to create, interpret, and apply the law. The Court's decisions are reviewed only by the Supreme Court of Canada but only rarely. It is, therefore, the final court of resort for almost all the cases it hears. The Court has a vital role in shaping Alberta's legal landscape.

The Court of Appeal of Alberta sits in both Edmonton and Calgary. The Chief Justice and justices also serve on the Courts of Appeal of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Instructions for use: Position works independently for the most part under some guidance and general work instructions as instructed by the judiciary. Administratively, this position reports an Executive Director (LO6) and operationally reports to assigned judiciary.

JOB PURPOSE

Briefly describes why the job exists and its scope (i.e., who is directly impacted by the outcomes of the job).

Executive Legal Officer provides advice and recommendations on a variety of high-profile strategic functions that have a direct impact on the administration of justice and public trust and confidence in the institution. These expert professional services are provided in accordance with the relevant legislation, regulation, legal procedure, and precedent and takes into consideration, at times, opposing perspectives of various stakeholders.

Executive Legal Officer is functionally responsible to the Chief Justice for the delivery of senior level legal and advisory services to the Chief Justice and the judges of the Court when required. Through ad hoc membership on Court Committees, the position supports the Chief Justice and the Court's Executive Committee.

This position reports administratively to the Executive Director and Registrar.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Describes the key responsibilities that make up the majority of the job and the corresponding duties.

The position has the following key responsibilities:

- **Expert Advice:** Support the development of institutional messages and conduct complex research in all areas including historic, current, and emerging trends of both a legal and institutional nature together with legal analysis to prepare assessment reports, speeches, papers, and other internal- and external-related documents. The Executive Legal Officer keeps the Chief Justice apprised of current events and issues of relevance to the Court and the justice system in Alberta.
- **Speech Writing:** Assist the Chief Justice by drafting complex letters, speeches, papers, briefing notes, talking points, and other presentation material.
- **Development of Institutional Level Policy:** Provide high-level legal advice to the Chief Justice on institutional level policy and development.
- **Legal Professional Staff Engagement:** Recruit, guide and coach legal counsel and supervise, train, recruit, guide, and coach law students.
- **Legal Staff Professional Learning & Development**
- **Deliver on the Court's Strategic Goals:** Support Court committees and the Chief Justice to improve the administration of justice and act as legal advisor as required.

The end results and outcomes are:

1. **Expert Advice and Speech Writing:** Support the development of institutional messages for the Chief Justice and judges when required
 - The messages and speeches must instill confidence in the judicial branch and communicate the court or broader justice system goals to inspire and/or educate.
 - Draft speeches and reports involving historic, current, and emerging trends of both a legal and institutional nature
 - Collaborate with the Chief Justice and, as required, members of the judiciary and the legal profession such as the Canadian Bar Association, Law Society of Alberta, Edmonton Bar Association, etc. to ensure accuracy and relevance of information for writing assignments.
 - Guide and conduct complex and thorough research and legal analysis on various topics to ensure relevant, accurate, and credible information required to prepare writing assignments such as introductions, talking points, speeches, papers, and other public-related documents.
 - Conduct all speech writing process from start to finish, which includes fact gathering (research and interviews), identification of the organizational goal, and understanding of the audience.
 - Ensure writing assignments are tailored to the Chief Justice's style and to the audience, events, and goals.
 - Proactively and independently identify emerging issues affecting the delivery of justice and inter-related law foundational legal principles of access to justice, independence of the judiciary, and rule of law.
 - Provide highly autonomous expert advice and interpretation of both historic and emerging issues affecting the Courts.
 - Create and maintain research resources and independently identify research resources to ensure currency in message.
 - Prepare clear and persuasive speeches and papers based on original thought, self-directed research, analysis, and application of law.
2. **Development of Institutional Level Policy:** High-level legal advice to support the development of institutional level policy
 - Monitor and identify emerging trends.
 - Advise on policy and changes as they apply to existing challenges and emerging trends.

- Provide clear and expert advice and interpretation of merging and inter-related applications of law and policy.
 - Provide highly autonomous problem solving on complex legal issues and policy in various areas of law.
 - Conduct interpretative and analytical research of complex fact patterns.
 - Prepare draft documentation based on self-directed research, analysis of legal arguments, and application of the law.
 - Research, review, and synthesize relevant case law, legislation, and policies.
3. Legal Professionals Education:
- Promote: key learning and developmental opportunities in support of staff reaching their full potential.
 - Performance support: including active coaching, mentoring, skill development.
 - Custom Education: Design, develop, and implement education programs for Legal Counsel.
 - Designed Learning Opportunities: Research, coordinate, and implement designed learning opportunities.
 - Develop and maintain related internal resources.
4. Law Student Program
- Support further development and implementation of articling student training program.
 - Support recruitment, orientation, and provide mentoring and advice.
 - Evaluate articling students' work activities, support them with their education plans, and provide feedback as required.
5. Deliver on Court's Strategic Goals: Support Court committees (such as the student program and other committees) to improve the administration of justice:
- Provide legal advice and direction to judicial committees, initiatives, or processes that relate to the effectiveness of the Court.
 - Assist other members of the Court with projects involving legal research, legal memoranda, legal papers, speeches and other materials as required.

The incumbent will perform any other function or work in the nature of barrister and solicitor services for the Chief Justice of Alberta as and when required.

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Briefly describes the required education and the level of knowledge essential to perform the job/above responsibilities (not intended to be an exhaustive listing).

The position requires a law degree from a Canadian jurisdiction and 11+ years of directly related post bar legal experience.

The position requires extensive and broad knowledge and understanding of:

- The strategic business plan, goals and direction of the Court of Appeal.
- The functions and responsibilities of the Court and provincial statutes, regulations, policies, and applicable legislation.
- Internal and external stakeholder community, organizations, committees, advisory groups, senior representatives that are affected by the judicial system.
- Canadian and foreign research tools.

The position requires the following exceptional/excellent skills and abilities:

- Deep understanding of strategic communications.
- Legal research, legal analysis, and legal and creative writing and storytelling skills are required to provide research and analysis on complex and potentially precedent-setting issues.
- Insightfulness and general knowledge of the Alberta justice system, political landscape, and foundational legal principles.
- Exemplary Interview skills – ability to craft appropriate questions, adapt as interview unfolds, understand interviewee's needs.
- Ability to research, monitor, and anticipate future issues and the related impact.
- Ability to build productive relationships within the court system and externally.
- Ability to lead and manage a variety of complex issues/files.
- Strategic thinking skills to assess legal impacts short and long term.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to develop and deliver precise and specific findings, recommendations, and options.
- Ability to work with diverse multi-disciplinary teams and to develop and maintain productive working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

- Ability to manage change, influence outcomes, conflict resolution and mediation skills.
- Ability to work within a broadly defined conceptual framework.
- Leadership skills in modeling the Alberta Public Service values and motivating staff.
- Ability to work on group projects and issues, share knowledge and research, and contribute to the work team.
- Ability to use innovative approaches and find creative solutions to issues.
- Ability to work under tight deadlines while maintaining quality standards.

Member in good standing with the Alberta Law Society provides the position with ensuring that the position practices law competently and ethically as well as to stay up to date on the latest trends and leading-edge professional development.

PROBLEM SOLVING/DECISION MAKING

Briefly describes the types of problems or challenges the job routinely faces or solves and the types of assistance available (e.g., process guides, standard operating procedures, policy documents, availability of experts/specialists, on site supervision, etc.)

The position works largely independently, making recommendations to and with direct accountability to the Chief Justice.

The position will deal with complex problems of a sensitive and high-profile nature, which may affect a diverse group of stakeholders including matters that can impact the relations within the judiciary, other courts, division, Ministry, GoA and cross-GoA.

The position requires superior and demonstrated planning, organization, and leadership skills in:

- Developing and influencing outcomes through consulting, research and analysis to provide recommendations/resolution to legal issues/problems affecting a variety of internal and external stakeholders with varying perspectives, expectations, requirements and priorities.
- Working within a broadly defined conceptual framework to manage multiple complex issues and resolve problems while delivering results.
- Promoting proficiency in all legal skills and motivating others to strive for continual professional improvement.
- Recognizing and leveraging opportunities for collaboration and acceleration of efforts to effectively and efficiently allocate resources.
- Conceptualizing and analyzing information and risks to provide legal advice, options, and recommendations that support the Court of Appeal strategic priorities and business goals.
- Identifying opportunities and championing a culture of integrated, flexible, and adaptive responses to potential complex foundational legal issues.
- Directing and managing a number of complex issues while delivering results.
- Participating in the development of area goals, objectives, and priorities including managing and reprioritizing workloads.

Challenges faced by this position require above average analysis, research skills, writing skills, reasoning, evaluation, judgement, and problem-solving skills. Issues vary and the complexity require creative approaches in providing, directing, and overseeing the research, analysis and provision of robust short-term and long-term issues management strategies.

Deep understanding of adult learning and education to provide leadership in legal staff development, recruitment, and retention strategies to ensure the Court has the appropriate knowledge and skills available to provide legal support services to the judiciary.

Examples of difficult and challenging situations faced by the position include:

- Developing short- and long-term workload management strategies to respond to requirements for services within the constraints of limited resources.
- Assessing and prioritizing opportunities to create efficiencies as well as directing the implementation of process improvements.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders to provide expert advice and recommendations that address varying perspectives and expectations.
- Forward looking in analyzing and assessing issues and trends and collaborating with stakeholders to gather and analyze information where necessary.
- Creating new ways for researching, viewing, and analyzing issues/problems and providing advice, recommendations, and potential solutions.

KEY CONTACTS

Briefly describes the frequency and purpose of regular contact the job makes internally and externally.

Supervisory responsibility: Yes No

Internal:

- Chief Justice of Alberta
Purpose: Take direction from the Chief Justice of Alberta or her delegate
- Justices
Purpose: Takes instruction directly from judges with respect to specific research, writing and editing.
- Executive Director/Registrar
Purpose: Takes instruction directly with respect to work on Court Administration committees and operational projects
- Courts Committees
Purpose: Supporting development and implementation of Court policy
- Legal Counsel/Case Management Officers
Purpose: Learning & development and Engagement
- Student-at-law
Purpose: Support articling student recruitment, orientation, training, and education plans and provide mentoring, feedback and advice.

External:

- Educational bodies such as the Legal Education Society of Alberta
Purpose: May be called upon to draft, design and/or present education materials

POSITION SPECIFIC INFORMATION (Optional)

Briefly elaborate on the business area and/or identify responsibilities or projects specific to the position (e.g. health versus environmental policy area; a specific major initiative the position is leading; the name of the program the position is delivering).

Briefly describe work that meets the exclusion criteria if a request to exclude the position from the bargaining unit is being contemplated.

POSITION SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES (Optional – For Talent Management Purposes)

Identify technical and behavioural competencies, the level of competency, examples of observable action that demonstrates what successful performance looks like at that level, and the ranking.

Competency	Level	Behavioural Indicator	Ranking

