

Working Title Paralegal Officer		Name	
Position Number	Reports to Position No., Class & Level	Division, Branch/Unit TRA/Collections & Recoveries, Crown Debt Collections	Ministry Treasury Board and Finance
Present Class Program Services 3		Requested Class	
Dept ID	Program Code	Project Code (if applicable)	

**PURPOSE:** Give a brief summary of the job, covering the main responsibilities, the framework within which the job has to operate and the main contribution to the organization (see Non-Management Job Description Writing Guide [Pages 7-8](#)).

Reporting to the Team Lead, the Paralegal Officer:

1. Manages a large inventory of overdue receivables belonging to GoA Ministries;
2. Researches, investigates/drafts correspondence and numerous types of legal documents in accordance with Alberta Rules of Court, Provincial legislation and Ministry policy;
3. Analyzes files and obtains judgment on accounts where debtors are not cooperative;
4. Investigates available resources to recover overdue receivables and utilizes legal remedies to maximize recovery;
5. Represents/negotiates the Crown's position at mediation hearings, pre-trial conferences and Provincial Court trials; and
6. Works with various parties/stakeholders to determine resolutions and best practices.

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES:** The purpose of the job can be broken down in different responsibilities and end results. Each end result shows what the job is accountable for, within what framework and what the added value is. Normally a job has 4-8 core end results. For each end result, approximately 3-6 activities should be described (see Writing Guide [Pages 9-10](#)).

1. Manage a large inventory of overdue receivables belonging to GoA Ministries, investigate and analyze financial history and circumstance, determine suitable repayment amounts, negotiate accordingly and monitor for compliance.

Activities:

- Investigate/analyze files and determine next step strategies based on debtor circumstance and financial history, cost-effectiveness of action, location of assets, age of debt, likelihood of success, accuracy/completeness of supporting documentation prior to commencing legal action.
- Advise debtors on available options to resolve debt includes monthly repayment plan; financial and medical hardship consideration; compromise; dispute resolution processes and available debt counseling services.
- Determine suitable repayment arrangements and negotiate appropriate schedules based on family circumstances supported by a completed monthly Income and Expense Statement and other relevant documentation (ie: Notice of Assessment - CRA).
- Document actions taken on accounts in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System and ensure appropriate follow up.

2. Research, investigate, draft and file correspondence including numerous legal documents in accordance with Alberta Rules of Court, Provincial legislation and Client Ministry policy.

Activities:

- Research legislation along with debt history and upon Team Lead approval, initiate legal action for non-compliant debtors, draft and file legal documentation with Provincial or Court of King's Bench. (Statement of Claim or Civil Claim dependent on debt amount).
- Upon approval from Team Lead, arrange for service upon debtors utilizing cost effective solutions (ie:

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personal service by process server) and draft Affidavits of Service and file with Clerk of the Court.

- Draft Ex-parte applications to allow for service by other means (ie: posting to door), extend time for service; amend defendant information (ie: add married name); or allow service out of province.
  - Draft and file Consent Judgments in situations where debtors are cooperative with repayment.
  - Complete Notice of Withdrawals when matter is resolved prior to Judgment and file with Clerk of the Court.
3. Analyze situations and obtain judgment through the Courts on accounts where debtors are not complying with established criteria.

Activities:

- Analyze file history and draft/file Default Judgments and Bill of Costs with the Clerk of the Court when debtors are unresponsive.
  - Advise Team Lead to request Accounts Receivable to adjust account information accordingly. (ie: interest).
  - Draft and file Certificate of Judgments and Writs of Enforcement with the Clerk of the Court.
  - Register Writs of Enforcement with Personal Property Registry (PPR) to lien vehicles/chattels and with Land Titles to attach debtor's real property for security on the outstanding receivable. Ensure timely renewal of registrations and periodic update of balance owing.
  - Draft and file Certificate of Satisfaction when debt is paid in full with Clerk of the Court and discharge registrations with PPR and Land Titles. Provide debtors with discharge verification.
  - Upon approval from Team Lead, prepare package to renew Judgments with the Court of King's Bench and send to Legal Services for finalization of court process.
  - Record actions and file steps taken including communications in a clear and concise manner in CRM System. Maintain diary dates on follow-up steps on debtor files to ensure consistent actions.
4. Investigate and utilize available resources to recover the debt according to departmental policies, legal remedies and investigative findings.

Activities:

- Access sensitive data bases belonging to government ministries and private sector organizations (ie: credit bureaus) and commence further investigations to determine information on debtor's physical location and/or available assets, including income sources.
  - Draft and file Garnishee Summons and Affidavits in Support with the Clerk of the Court and arrange for service upon income source (bank or employer). Upon approval from Team Lead, requisition cheque for payment to income source for fee payable in accordance with Alberta Rules of Court. Communicate with parties to ensure compliance with Alberta Rules of Court.
  - Monitor for payment of garnishee funds from Clerk of the Court and ensure application to debtor account.
  - Draft Garnishee Renewal Statement within applicable time-lines and arrange for service of same.
  - Upon Team Lead approval, based on debtor circumstance and account history, draft Assignment of Wages to suspend garnishee actions for the purpose of accepting direct payments from employer. The Garnishee action will resume upon any unpermitted default in payments.
5. Represent/negotiate the Crown's position at mediation hearings, pre-trials conferences and Provincial Court trials to resolve disputed actions and communicate developments/resolution with stakeholders.

Activities:

- Investigate debtor's argument outlined in the Dispute Note or Statement of Defense and determine next step or appropriate resolution strategy.
- Recommend resolution options to client Ministry and obtain supporting documentation. Recommend write-off of debt or compromise settlement offers to Team Lead in accordance with established criteria and policies. Confer with Team Lead on complex or difficult situations.
- Under Team Lead direction, represent and negotiate the Crown's position at mediation hearings, pre-trial

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conferences and Provincial Court trials for disputed actions, arrange for witnesses and requisition of witness fees, if necessary.

- Refer disputed legal actions to Team Lead for handling with Justice in situations when a Statement of Defence has been filed by the Defendant for matters in Provincial Court involving highly sensitive situations which can impact the Ministry as well as for matters over \$50,000 in Court of King's Bench. Provide instruction based on client Ministry policy and maintain liaison until completion of action.
- Document all actions taken on account in CRM System.

6. Work with various parties/stakeholders and determine resolutions/best practices.

Activities:

- Meet with Team Lead/Mgmt, recommend revisions to policies/procedures to enhance cost effectiveness/accountability and maximize recoveries.
- Work with GoA Ministries regarding debt particulars, accounting details, debtor disputes and/or appeals, settlements, court appearances, and recommend resolutions.
- Work with collection agencies/team members regarding investigative findings and respond to enquiries.

**SCOPE:** List specific information that illustrates the challenges, problem solving and creativity requirements and decision making capacity of the position. Also identify the internal or external areas the job impacts (see Writing Guide [Pages 11-12](#)).

Paralegal Officer manages a high volume of inventory belonging to GoA Ministries. Involves investigating file history, negotiating resolutions to maximize recovery (with supporting documentation). The Paralegal weighs the likelihood of success and cost effectiveness as well as the availability of complete supporting documentation before making the decision to proceed with legal activity or enforcement action on a file.

The Paralegal Officer represents the Crown in Court to resolve disputed actions. This role requires a solid knowledge of court procedures, the ability to act under pressure in a stressful situation, and the ability to maintain the Crown's position in a professional manner with stakeholders. Court costs can be ordered against the province in situations where the Paralegal does not complete due diligence and sound decision-making practices and proceeds with a legal action the Courts deems to be without merit.

It is critical that legal documentation be accurate and filed/renewed with the Courts within strict timelines and in accordance with Rules of Court/legislation so that high dollar overdue receivables are secured and loss of revenue is minimized. Position requires the incumbent to have extreme attention to detail and a high level of accuracy as this position has access to highly sensitive information and proceeds with enforcement action against parties (ie: garnishee of wages).

Position communicates with a wide audience from the disadvantaged or vulnerable debtors to professionals (ie: lawyers) and professional ethical approach is maintained to ensure no breach of privacy or misrepresentation occurs. Strict adherence to FOIP and department policy is imperative.

Paralegal must be aware of actions that may lead to volatile situations or escalations to the Minister's Office including actions that may result in Media attention.

The impact of the work in this position extends to GoA Ministries such that revenues are generated and accounts are identified for discontinuation of collections.

Paralegal work adheres to processes/criteria outlined in the Paralegal Services Manual, checklists and Ministry policy.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:** Include information on required diplomas and degrees along with identifying the most important knowledge factors, including knowledge about practical procedures, administrative, technical or professional techniques, technical, scientific or program related processes, etc. Detail specific training if there is an occupational certification/registration requirement for the position. Specify the type of experience required for the position (see Writing Guide [Pages 12-14](#)).

**Knowledge:**

- University graduation in a related field plus two years of related experience (or a legal assistant diploma with four years of related experience)
- GoA Ministry business processes/policies
- Alberta Rules of Court
- Freedom of Information and Privacy Act
- Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act
- Fair Trading Act
- Civil Enforcement Act
- Personal Property Securities Act
- Financial Administration Act
- Limitations Act
- Debtors' Assistance Act
- Government Organization Act
- Judgment Interest Act/Regulation(s)
- Student Financial Assistance Act/Regulation(s)

**Technical Knowledge:**

- Agency Collection Tracking and Reporting System (ACTRS)
- Advanced Education's system (SFS)
- GoA search tools such as but not limited to - Personal Property Registry, Corporate Registry, Motor Vehicles, Vital Statistics, Credit Bureau and Bankruptcy and Insolvency
- Full working knowledge of Microsoft Office Word and Excel

**Skills:**

- Strong organizational and time management skills to effectively manage high volume inventory.
- Strong communication (written/verbal) and interpersonal and administration skills
- Effective listening and negotiating skills when dealing with a wide range of stakeholders

**Abilities:**

- Ability to interpret information provided by debtors, their counsel, the courts and other GoA Ministries and an understanding of how it impacts the collectability of an account
- Ability to interpret applicable GoA legislation
- Ability to deal with sensitive situations, act while under pressure and in stressful situations and resolve conflicts using sound judgement
- Able to maintain a flexible, helpful and professional manner in a fast paced environment

**CONTACTS:** Identify the main contacts the position communicates with and the purpose of the communication (See Writing Guide [Pages 14-15](#)).

- GoA Ministries to discuss/provide information on files
- Debtors, lawyers, trustees, or third party representatives to negotiate resolution on files
- External collection agencies to discuss files
- Justice-Legal Services to provide information on files
- King's Bench, Provincial Court, Enforcement agencies to arrange for filing of legal documents and the removal of legal instruments
- Process servers to arrange for service of legal documents upon debtors
- Banks/financial institutions and/or other creditors to negotiate lien payouts and/or arrange for the removal of legal instruments