

## Job Description/Specification

<b>Identification:</b>	<b>J0172</b>	<b>TFEU/BCTF Joint Salary Committee Decisions</b>
<b>JOB/POSITION TITLE:</b>	Paralegal	<b>FORMER TITLE/DEPARTMENT</b> Legal Assistant/CAPS
<b>DIVISION/DEPARTMENT:</b>	Legal Services	<b>PAY GRADE:</b> 5
<b>SUPERVISOR'S TITLE:</b>	Legal Services Supervisor	<b>DATE APPROVED:</b> September 1, 2009

---

### Function and Purpose

Under the supervision of staff lawyers, paralegals provide a complete range of legal support services including compiling information, preparing documents, co-ordinating related procedures, and relieving Federation lawyers of routine demands.

### Principal Duties and Responsibilities (a)

1. Assists in establishing the work schedules and priority planning of the lawyers in Legal Services. Establishes and maintains systems of tracking and case management, co-ordinating commitments, and scheduling various types of case hearings. Drafts a wide range of correspondence in relation to arbitrations (regular and s. 104 expedited), BC College of Teachers ("College"), human rights, BC Labour Relations Board, privacy/freedom of information, and other litigation files, and projects for which Federation lawyers have conduct.
2. Provides a wide range of assistance in the preparation for hearings at which Federation lawyers are counsel, including (under the direction of Federation lawyers) conducting preliminary interviews with witnesses and obtaining notes of evidence; drafts case chronologies and outline statements of facts; prepares briefs of documents and volumes of case authorities; and co-ordinates of attendance of witnesses at hearings.
3. Undertakes problem-based or subject-based legal research; assembles jurisprudential material from print and electronic sources; and prepares legal memoranda, including reaching conclusions based on research and analysis of the law by summarizing cases, periodical articles, and court documents.
4. Manages in-house Federation legal materials as determined by Federation lawyers from time-to-time, including the materials in the legal/arbitration library and case law precedents (courts, College, and labour tribunals) in areas of law affecting the work of teachers.
5. Provides information to Federation staff, locals, members, and a wide array of external firms and individuals on the status of cases and expediently providing a full range of requested correspondence, documentation, case law, regulations, and statutes.

6. Ensures necessary levels of confidentiality and preservation of solicitors' privilege in communications.
7. Provides a wide range of administrative support services.
8. Assesses the nature and specific purpose of incoming telephone calls and makes appropriate referral where necessary; takes detailed and confidential particulars for Federation lawyers; and ensures that emergent situations are dealt with in a timely way when Federation lawyers are unavailable.
9. Gathers particulars and marshals potentially relevant documentary evidence in preparation for hearings, such as arbitration, Labour Relations Board, and College. Exercises judgment re: relevance and pursues issues with diligence and tact.
10. Assists with the maintenance of legal information on the Federation's web site under the heading, "Legal Updates." Takes the initiative to obtain the necessary information from individuals within as well as external to the Federation.
11. Maintains the Arbitration Awards Database, including obtaining and distributing award summaries. Updates the Federation's web site version of this database. Responds to requests for information on the awards.
12. Maintains complicated and voluminous legal files and their supplementals (often over a period of years) in a logical, well-documented, and organized manner.
13. Proofs other Legal Services support work as required. Provides leadership, mentoring, and guidance on legal matters to more junior staff within Legal, and trains new staff as required.

## **JOB REQUIREMENTS**

**This section sets out the minimum requirements in the areas of EXPERIENCE, EDUCATION, TRAINING, CERTIFICATES, AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS necessary to perform the job.**

### **Experience preferred (b)**

Three years' paralegal work experience in a law firm, trade union office, or similar organization, in addition to at least four years' senior administrative experience, preferably in a legal or labour relations environment.

A good working knowledge of the structures and policies of the BC Teachers' Federation, the system of public education in BC, and exposure to the collective bargaining system would be valuable assets.

Work history must demonstrate ability to: independently set work priorities, understand legal/analytical concepts, make apt and timely decisions, use effective oral and written communication skills, act in a tactful, efficient, calm, and diplomatic manner in stressful situations relating to time-driven emergencies, proficiency in legal writing, and deal regularly with individuals who are facing personal or professional crisis. Must possess excellent typing and proofreading skills, an exceptional work ethic, and a high proficiency at detail-oriented work.

### **Education and training (c)**

Completion of:

1. A comprehensive Paralegal Program of at least 2.0 FTE years' study, inclusive of coursework providing paralegal-level background in general legal theory, administrative law concept, contract law, criminal law process, the principles of evidence, labour law, legal research methods, and legal writing.
2. One year's training in generalist office/administrative methods and procedures; and
3. Secondary school (Grade 12).

Ongoing professional development in employment and administrative law subjects as well as legal research methods and software.

### **Licenses or Certificates required (c)**

Paralegal Certificate (Capilano University Certificate or Diploma Program, or equivalent).

Eligibility for membership in a professional association with a code of ethics (BC Paralegal Association).

### **Environment (g)**

Physical/emotional environment limited to conditions normally associated with professional and administrative work such as communication, research, collaboration, and critical thinking skills, equipment operating dexterity, and scheduling pressures.

## **JOB CHARACTERISTICS**

**This section is a key component of the Salary Determination process. This section also forms part of the job description and describes some of the conditions under which the work is performed.**

### **Contacts and relationships required (d)**

Regular contact with all levels of Federation staff, political officers, is required to exchange and explain complex information.

Critical contacts and relationships with individuals external to the Federation office are regularly required and involve dealings with local presidents, members, and skilled professionals, who are often adverse in interest to the members represented by the Federation, or parties to internal Federation disputes: lawyers, arbitrators, members of the public, staff of various public bodies, and provincial government ministry staff. Other external contacts include police staff, court staff, other teacher organizations and Colleges across Canada, psychiatrists, doctors, universities throughout Canada, post-secondary students, and suppliers of legal research tools and publications.

These contacts and relationships require diplomacy, judgment, and confidentiality.

### **Machines, equipment, and work aids used**

Computer, telephone, voicemail, fax machines, copiers, printers, scanners, label printer, Cerlox binding machines, extensive Federation library materials, a wide variety of computer programs used by the Federation from time to time, and LexisNexis Quicklaw. The Federation's file management software is used extensively for file management.

### **Positions supervised (e)**

None

### **Physical and/or mental effort required (f)**

This position is subject to the continual stress of a constant high volume of work, including the handling of special or emergent projects on a regular basis, that demands the need for speed, accuracy, and confidentiality under strict deadlines.

### **Working conditions**

Exposure to extensive periods of video display screen glare. Overtime may be required in shifting amounts to handle heavy workloads or critical deadlines.

**Note:** Please also refer to attached Appendix. (Page 5)

## **APPENDIX to Paralegal Job Description (J0172)**

### **Complexity and Judgment**

Ability to work independently and keep files moving towards favourable resolution or hearing, exercising initiative, knowledge, judgment, high level thinking, and analytical skills.

An appreciation, gained through training and education, of the importance of a high level of accuracy in protecting members' legal rights and the Federation.

Proactive in keeping up-to-date with changes relating to legal research methods and areas of law (labour, human rights, College, etc.) affecting the work of teachers.

Adherence to the duties to maintain confidentiality and preserve and safeguard members' property entrusted to Federation lawyers.