



JOB DESCRIPTION:

The **Associate Attorney** will be responsible for handling a full caseload of parent or child clients at all stages of juvenile dependency proceedings, as brought pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code § 300. These cases involve allegations of parental abuse or neglect, and often involve, domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health.

Duties: Representation includes client interviews, maintaining frequent client contact, responding to calls, texts, and electronic mails in a timely manner, conducting ongoing investigations and continual assessment of the cases, and preparing for and participating in all hearings. The attorney works collaboratively and meets regularly with a multi-disciplinary team which includes in-house social workers and senior attorney mentors. Associate attorneys are expected to communicate frequently with their mentor, ask questions, and follow given advice. Attorneys meet with and interview clients at various places including the attorney office, court, or a place most convenient for the client. Minor clients must be seen in their home, placement or school and the attorney must assess their placements as well as their physical and emotional well-being.

Attorneys are expected to advise clients of their rights and explain the legal proceedings in a developmentally appropriate and trauma informed way. Attorneys empower clients, help remove barriers to reunification or permanency and assist them in arriving at the appropriate course of action. Attorneys take all necessary and appropriate legal steps to best represent clients. This may include looking into ancillary issues such as criminal cases, housing, and qualification for government assistance as necessary to protect client's interests. Attorneys will engage in lay witness and expert witness contact. Attorneys perform legal research and writing, and subpoena witnesses determined to be relevant. Attorneys correspond and communicate with interested parties such as relatives, opposing counsel, service providers, court appointed special advocates, and social services personnel regarding placements, the case status and rights of clients; and address all issues needed. Attorneys conduct frequent contested and non-contested appearances, pre-court staffings, hearings, and trials for parties in proceedings.

These matters involve strict and fast paced timelines. Attorneys are expected to make a strong record and seek necessary appellate relief from the decision of the Dependency Court by preparing and arguing writs and preparing notices of appeal. Attorneys participate in regular meetings with DLS staff and the DLS Executive Team and participate in program development activities. The attorney will

participate in ongoing, intensive trainings to build their knowledge of the law, strengthen courtroom skills and develop a deeper understanding of issues germane to dependency practice. Attorneys participate in general office duties, including maintaining electronic files and data entry of case information in the Juvenile Court Automated Tracking System (JCATS). Attorneys may make public appearances or presentations to assist in the advancement of issues benefiting clients.

Minimum Qualifications: • Active Member in good standing of the State Bar of California. Candidates awaiting bar results are encouraged to apply. • Strong written and verbal skills. • Demonstrated interest and ability in working with parents, children, and youth, and with low-income diverse ethnic communities. • Ability to work independently and be self-motivated. • Ability to drive with valid driver's license, auto insurance, and access to use of an automobile.

Knowledge and Abilities: • Willingness to learn California statutory and constitutional law, including California Welfare and Institutions Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Evidence Code, and related case law, legal principles and procedures followed in the handling of dependency including rules of evidence, rules of court, trial litigation, and appellate procedure. • Basic personal computer systems. • Research from published and electronic legal source materials. • Willingness to learn concepts related to forensics, psychology, substance abuse, child development, family law, and juvenile law. Ability to: • handle multiple clients in a fast paced and high stress environment • Perform legal research quickly. • Work collaboratively with colleagues and representatives of other agencies. • Model professional behavior for clients • Follow written and oral instructions. • Prepare written legal arguments in a logical and concise manner. • Legal research • Understand and apply legal principles to factual situations. • Communicate effectively with clients, lay witnesses, expert witnesses, child welfare workers, co-workers, and other lawyers and Judges. • Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action. • Elicit, analyze, and apply legal information and evidence. • Appropriate decision making. • Interpersonal sensitivity and flexibility. • Establish working relationships with clients of diverse racial, cultural, socio-economic and age backgrounds and inspire their confidence. • Utilize litigation techniques, preserving the trial record by making timely and appropriate objections and motions, with demonstrated facility in writ procedures. • Present legal arguments clearly, logically, and effectively in oral and written form. • Handle legal correspondence and procedures with tact and accuracy. • Meet deadlines. • Appear at court early before the calendar start to be prepared and receive new information or developments. • Maintain records, JCATS database system and case files. • Accurately report mileage and time off.

Benefits Package and How to Apply: The Attorney position starts at \$70,000 depending on experience and location. DLS has an excellent benefits package that includes 10 vacation days and 10 sick days in the first year. In addition, we observe all California state holidays and have generous Family and Medical Leave, health plans and a 403(b) retirement plan with up to 6% match.

To apply for this position, send resumes to john@dependencyls.com. There, you can upload your resume and attach a cover letter.

A detailed cover letter indicating why you are interested in and qualified for this position is required.

A valid California driver's license, reliable automobile, automobile insurance as required by California law, are required at all times while working for Dependency Legal Services.