

Chief Legal Counsel

Posted:	April 25, 2024	Status:	Full-Time Hire
Department:	Office Chief Legal Counsel	Schedule:	Monday—Friday
Location:	Harrisburg	Salary:	\$150,000 - *

*Commensurate with experience

The Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, an intermediate appellate court of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania, is seeking a Chief Legal Counsel. Established in 1968, the Court is unique in that its jurisdiction focuses on matters involving state and local government. In addition to being an intermediate appellate court, it also has extensive original jurisdiction in actions brought by or against the Commonwealth. You will have a leadership position in a distinguished and well-respected organization offering competitive compensation, excellent benefits, and opportunities to learn and grow.

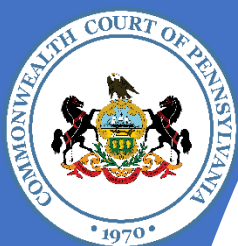
The Chief Legal Counsel plays a pivotal role in ensuring the effective operations of the Court. This position offers a rewarding opportunity to contribute to the administration of justice and provide legal guidance to judicial officers. Working in close collaboration with the President Judge and senior staff, you will contribute expertise and insight across a broad spectrum of legal and administrative domains.

This position is responsible for managing the operations of the Court's Office of Chief Legal Counsel. As the head of this department, you will lead and mentor a team of accomplished attorneys and administrative professionals. Together, this staff coordinates judicial assignments, conducts in-depth research on complex legal matters, attends court proceedings, provides legal support to judges handling single-judge assignments, and drafts orders and opinions addressing a wide variety of legal matters. Exceptional leadership, supervisory, and interpersonal skills are paramount in this role.

Because of the Court's unique jurisdiction, the successful candidate must possess an in-depth knowledge of administrative agency law, appellate jurisprudence and procedure, and have experience as a civil litigator. Strong legal writing and editing skills are required, as well as the ability to express thoughts clearly, both orally and in writing.

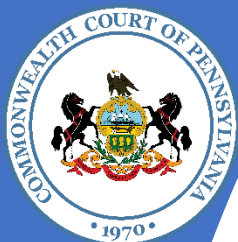
The ideal candidate will embrace innovation and implement changes diplomatically. This candidate will cultivate a positive work environment and demonstrate strong interpersonal skills and outstanding legal acumen to navigate complex challenges effectively. The candidate must also be discrete and maintain confidentiality and the highest ethical standards.

The selection process will include a first-round interview with a hiring committee in early summer 2024. Second-round interviews for selected candidates will be scheduled by mid-summer 2024 and will be conducted before the full Court. The Court plans to make a final selection in July 2024.



Primary Duties/Duties of Office of Chief Legal Counsel

- Manage staff attorneys and support personnel in the Court's Office of Chief Legal Counsel, ensuring smooth workflow and operational efficiency.
- Perform management duties required of a department head, including interviewing, making hiring recommendations to the President Judge, coaching, mentoring, and reviewing performance of office staff.
- Review filings requiring Court action, such as applications for relief and motions, and draft orders for presentation to a Judge.
- Identify and alert the President Judge and other appropriate personnel to high-priority or potentially high-profile cases or matters requiring expedited resolution.
- Prepare file notes to inform the Court of special circumstances in cases at any stage of proceedings.
- Coordinate the scheduling of single-judge duty week arguments and hearings.
- Provide legal, case management, and administrative support to duty judges, including supervising staff attorneys.
- Supervise staff attorneys who support single-judge assignments, and specially assigned matters; manage election court cases in collaboration with the Prothonotary.
- Assist with case management and administrative support for judges assigned to the Finance & Revenue and Insurance Liquidation dockets.
- Provide legal support to chambers in need of additional assistance under the direction of the President Judge.
- Support staff who review docketing statements to recommend cases suitable for mediation, address issues not covered by the Prothonotary's review.
- Recommend cases suitable for oral argument or submission on briefs and prepare case summaries for the President Judge.
- Review draft opinions, provide recommendations, and compile and circulate daily lists of opinions.
- Supervise administrative staff who process applications for reconsideration and applications to publish unreported opinions.
- Monitor Pennsylvania Supreme Court case law developments and circulate memoranda to the Court.
- Disseminate legislative summaries, conduct legal education programs, and serve as a liaison with other courts, agencies, and the public.
- Consult with the Board of Judges on Court operations and advise relevant committees.
- Attend Court sessions and related activities as required, and perform additional duties as directed by the President Judge.
- Other duties as assigned.



Qualifications

- Graduation from an accredited School of Law and possession of a certificate of admission to the Bar of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.
- Minimum of 7 years of progressively responsible legal experience, including experience as an appellate practitioner and litigator.
- Experience with administrative and management duties.
- Knowledge of the workings of the Commonwealth Court and the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania.
- Ability to pass a satisfactory background check.

Additional Preferences / Requirements

- Knowledge of the principles, methods, materials, and practices of legal research.
- Knowledge of the applicable Rules of Court with emphasis on the Pennsylvania Rules of Appellate Procedure.
- Skill in analyzing, appraising, and organizing facts, evidence, and case law and presenting such material clearly and logically for oral or written presentation as opinions, memoranda, or orders.
- Ability to be flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances, including being available for emergencies.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with Judges, Court staff, the Bar, and the public.
- Experience with court management.

Employee Benefits

- Full medical, dental, and vision benefits begin on first day of employment.
- Generous annual and sick leave plus thirteen scheduled holidays per year.
- Retirement plan with the State Employees' Retirement System.
- Other benefits and full details can be found at www.pacourts.us under Human Resources

Interested individuals should email their resume, cover letter/letter of interest, references, and writing sample of no more than five pages by May 20, 2024 to: CommonwealthCourtJobs@pacourts.us

Unified Judicial System Hiring Policy

The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania recruits, employs, and promotes the most qualified applicants without regard to their political affiliation, race, color, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, or other non-merit facts or considerations. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to applicants with disabilities as may be necessary to ensure that all applicants are given a fair and equal opportunity to compete for all employment positions. Applicants who need accommodation for an interview should request so in advance. UJS hiring and employment policies and procedures are intended to conform to all applicable state and federal laws governing fair and non-discriminatory hiring and employment practices and are subject to change as necessary to remain in compliance with such laws.