

Attorney Advisor (Utility Regulations)

Date Posted: 04/09/2021

Closing Date: Open until filled

Hiring Agency/Seniority Unit:: Office of People's Counsel / DC Government

Division/Unit: Litigation

Work Shift/Work Hours:: Day Shift

Days of Work: Monday – Friday

Travel Required: Limited Travel

Salary Range: \$102,712 – \$178,626 annually

Classified Status: Full time- At "Will" Appointment

FLSA Status: Exempt – Legal Services

Who May Apply: Open to all qualified job seekers

How to apply: Serious applicants forward resume to: HR@OPC-DC.GOV

The Office of the People's Counsel ("OPC" or "Office") is an independent agency of the District of Columbia government. OPC is headed by the People's Counsel. By law, the People's Counsel is the advocate for consumers of natural gas, electric and telephone services in the District. District of Columbia law designates the Office as a party to all utility-related proceedings before the Public Service Commission. The Office represents the interests of District ratepayers before federal regulatory agencies and establishes agency goals, objectives, policies and legal strategy.

The mission of the Office of the People's Counsel is to advocate for the provision of safe and reliable quality utility service and equitable treatment at rates that are just, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory; assist individual consumers in disputes with utility providers; provide technical assistance, education and outreach to consumers and ratepayers, community groups, associations and the Consumer Utility Board; and provide legislative analysis and information to the Council of the District of Columbia on matters relating to utilities. In defining its positions, the Office is further required to consider "the public safety, the economy of the District of Columbia, the conservation of natural resources, and the preservation of environmental quality, including effects on global climate change and the District's public climate commitments."

This position is located in the Office of Peoples Counsel, Litigation Division. The Litigation Division is responsible for litigating cases involving utility companies before the Public Service Commission, federal regulatory agencies, and the DC Court of Appeals. The Assistant People's Counsel works under the supervision of the Supervisory Trial Attorney and, at the direction of the Director of Ligation. The incumbent serves as a senior Trial Attorney and provides guidance, advice, and assistance to lower-graded Trial Attorneys in addition to independently performing the full range of legal activities, including public utilities-related trial and appellate services in support of the mission and regulatory requirements of the Office of the People's Counsel.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Case Management: The incumbent is responsible for managing assigned cases and matters related to proceedings involving complex issues regarding the rates, terms, and conditions of service of natural gas, electric, water, and telephone utilities; developing policies to benefit utility consumers, and reviewing and analyzing opposing parties' pleadings. The incumbent must have demonstrated ability to manage a utility rate case from beginning to end including providing recommendations for the provision of outside legal and technical consultants and development of a legal strategy to address each issue in the case. Additionally, the incumbent must have the ability to manage a case involving policy issues including,

but not limited to, climate and affordability. The incumbent will also be required to provide guidance to lower graded attorneys in the development of case strategies and legislative initiatives.

When litigation is undertaken, the incumbent is responsible for preparing, presenting, or providing legal guidance during the litigation of OPC's case before the Commission, federal agencies or appellate courts. The incumbent will be responsible for preparing pleadings and memos incident to the litigation of the case; participates in pre-trial or prehearing conferences, argue motions before the Commission and may cross-examine witnesses. In some instances, the incumbent may assist another attorney in preparation for trial.

The incumbent will also work with technical consultants in examining and outlining the factual and legal issues, drafting discovery and discovery responses, and developing exhibits.

Incumbent must maintain knowledge of emerging public utility issues, cases, and legal developments and providing the Directorate with weekly reports on case activity.

Legislative and Agency Rule Review: Evaluates existing and proposed local and federal legislation in terms of its impact on OPC's policies. Drafts new or amends existing local legislation to advance OPC's policy positions. Similar functions are performed with respect to existing and proposed local rules, regulations, or policies applicable to proceedings to which OPC is a party.

Contract Management: Prepares appropriate D.C. Code Ann. § 34-912 documents for the procurement of outside technical consultants. Identifies, recommends, and evaluates expert technical consultants and attorneys for participation in formal cases or investigations. Directs and coordinates the work of independent contractors and technical consultants to ensure timely implementation of OPC policy. Verifies contractor billings and works with the Technical Services Division to ensure timely payment of contractors.

Interdivisional Communication: Maintains ongoing dialogue and communication with supervisors, managers and staff to ensure the timely exchange of information and coordination of Office activities. Initiates, and upon request, conducts and participates in internal briefing sessions on substantive issues affecting consumers and attends inter-divisional meetings.

External Communication Outreach: Attends various public and community hearings before legal or legislative forums as scheduled, including evenings and weekends, throughout the District of Columbia. Disseminates utility regulatory and consumer information to community groups and organizations, legislators, District officials, utility companies, the Commission, and other interested and affected parties. Initiates and maintains contact with the community to solicit and to identify consumer concerns and issues, particularly those which may generate litigation and/or legislative initiatives. Promotes and fosters strong positive relationship between the Office and the community; plans and attends various community meetings and other forums throughout the District of Columbia to explain and to discuss Office policies and positions on utility issues. Provides assistance in the development of Office publications.

QUALIFICATIONS

Applicant must possess one (1) year of specialized experience equivalent to LA-13 grade level of the District of Columbia government service or its non-District equivalent that demonstrates knowledge, ability and a proven track record.

Applicant must possess some experience with utility regulations

Must be a graduate of law school fully accredited by the American Bar Association.

Must be an active member in good standing of the District of Columbia Bar or the ability to waive in and be admitted within 360 days of appointment.

A minimum of 4 years as a practicing attorney.

- In-depth knowledge of utility regulatory principles. Ability to interpret data and to disseminate information. Mastered the skill of persuasive oral and written communication. Broad research, analytical and evaluation skills. Extensive range of litigation skills, including skills related to discovery, motions practice, brief/pleading writing, and administrative litigation.
- Oral advocacy experience and comfort speaking in varied settings, ranging from working groups to conferences.
- Strong interpersonal and consensus-building skills, including the ability to work collaboratively with clients and colleagues from diverse backgrounds.
- Expertise in conducting detailed legal research and in analyzing the impact of legal issues/findings/rulings on policy.
- Ability to communicate with all consumers and staff of government agencies, including the ability to listen and to relate to differing viewpoints.
- Extensive knowledge of District and Federal laws, regulations, guidelines, principles, practices and techniques

EDUCATION

Graduate of law school fully accredited by the American Bar Association.

LICENSE AND CERTIFICATION

District of Columbia Bar or the ability to waive in and be admitted within 360 days of appointment.

WORKING CONDITIONS/ENVIRONMENT

Work is primarily performed in an office setting

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

The incumbents of this position will be subject to enhanced suitability screening pursuant to Chapter 4 of DC personnel regulations, Suitability.

EEO STATEMENT

The District of Columbia Government is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, matriculation, physical handicap, or political affiliation.