

**COURT OF APPEALS**  
**Job Description**

**STAFF ATTORNEY**

**DEFINITION**

Staff attorneys assist the court in resolving all types of motions and cases before the court and in handling court administrative matters as requested. They draft prehearing memoranda and opinions, rulings, and orders.

**TYPICAL WORK**

**Note:** The following is a listing of **typical** duties; the actual duties of a position may not include all those listed or may include other work of a similar nature.

Personal Restraint Petitions - Initially reviews personal restraint petitions to determine whether petition is procedurally barred or response is required; reviews petition, responses, and record; requests supplemental responses and record where appropriate; recommends appropriate disposition of motions; researches issues; consults with Chief Judge or Acting Chief Judge; and prepares appropriate orders and/or opinion.

Anders cases - Reviews Anders brief and response; reviews entire record provided by counsel; requests supplemental record where appropriate; researches issues raised by counsel and nonfrivolous issues not raised by counsel; consults with judges where appropriate; and prepares memorandum and per curium opinion or order; with clerk's office maintains list of pending and ready Anders cases.

Nonoral argument cases – Reviews briefs and record; researches issues; consults with judges where appropriate; prepares prehearing memorandum or draft opinion; with secretarial assistance, finalizes opinion or order; addresses motions for reconsideration as requested by judges.

Oral argument cases – Prepares prehearing memorandum and draft opinion in cases that present multiple issues and/or lengthy records; responsibilities include those for nonoral argument cases; and provides editorial comments on opinions in circulation.

Motions on the Merits and other motions – Reviews and assists judges and commissioners in preparing rulings and orders on various motions, including motions on the merits, motions for discretionary review, motions for accelerated review of juvenile and adult sentences, emergency motions and motions to modify.

Screening and Calendar Setting – Screens all briefs filed, identifying key issues and tentatively designating appropriate calendar for disposition; monitors recurrent pending issues; consults with judges, commissioners and clerk's office where appropriate; determines whether to recommend a stay or possible certification; recommends weight to be allocated to certain oral argument cases; prepares orders setting motions to dismiss or to determine mootness where

appropriate; with clerk's office sets the oral argument calendar; and maintains informal statistics of allocation of cases across calendars.

Court administration – Assists with training of law clerks and other court personnel; participates in court CLE presentations; serves on division and court-wide committees; assists in developing court programs such as the pro bono program; regularly reviews Supreme Court opinions and disseminates excerpts/summaries to commissioner's office; and prepares case summaries for the court's web page.

Other - Assists the judges, court commissioners and clerk's office as requested; duties may include assisting on oral argument cases, assisting pro tem judges, monitoring emergency motions in the commissioners' absence, and assisting in developing and maintaining technological support.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES**

Knowledge of: Washington State law and the judicial system, including the rules governing court procedures and the appellate process; relevant citation and cite-checking sources; strong command of legal writing and research skills; and experience with word processing.

Ability to: Work independently and with others, usually under time pressures; interpret and apply court rules; understand complex legal issues; apply legal principles; exercise sound legal judgment; communicate effectively, orally and in writing; maintain confidentiality; and develop working knowledge of significant legal problems and trends. Finally, the job requires establishing and maintaining effective relationships with judges, commissioners, court personnel, the legal community, and others.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Graduation from an accredited law school; **AND** a member in good standing in the Washington State Bar Association; **AND** four years' experience in public or private appellate practice, an appellate court, or judicially related system.

### **FEDERAL FAIR LABOR STANDARDS/WASHINGTON STATE MINIMUM WAGE ACT**

This position is either exempt from or not covered by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act and the Washington State Minimum Wage Act.

**Range            69**

**12/87**

**Revised: 3/00**

**Revised Salary Range: 7/07**

**Revision Adopted by COA Personnel Committee 6/07**