

# LEGAL SECRETARY



State of California  
DEPARTMENT OF  
JUSTICE  
P.O. BOX 944255  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

## OPEN NONPROMOTIONAL SPOT – LOS ANGELES CONTINUOUS TESTING

CALIFORNIA STATE GOVERNMENT • AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER TO ALL REGARDLESS OF RACE, COLOR, CREED NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY, SEX, MARITAL STATUS, DISABILITY, RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL AFFILIATION, AGE OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION.

IT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA TO ACHIEVE A DRUG-FREE STATE WORK PLACE. ANY APPLICANT FOR STATE EMPLOYMENT WILL BE EXPECTED TO BEHAVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS OBJECTIVE BECAUSE THE USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE LAW OF THE STATE, THE RULES OF GOVERNING CIVIL SERVICE AND THE SPECIAL TRUST PLACED IN PUBLIC SERVANTS.

**CONTINUOUS TESTING** Testing is considered continuous as dates can be set at any time. Examination Applications (Form STD 678) will be continuously accepted and will test applicants as needs warrant. Applications must have an original signature.

**WHO CAN APPLY** Persons who meet the minimum qualifications by the written test date and have not taken the Legal Secretary, DOJ examination within the last **12** months may apply for this examination.

**HOW TO APPLY** Examination Applications (Form STD 678) may be downloaded from the State Personnel Board's website at [www.spb.ca.gov](http://www.spb.ca.gov). Applications must be mailed to or filed in person with:

**Mailing Address:**  
Department of Justice  
Testing and Selection Unit  
P.O. Box 944255  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

**File in Person:**  
Department of Justice  
Testing and Selection Unit  
1300 "I" Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Lobby  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**DO NOT SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO THE STATE PERSONNEL BOARD, ONLINE,  
VIA INTER-AGENCY MAIL OR FAX.**

**RECRUITMENT SURVEY** As part of the application process, please follow [this web link](#) to complete a recruitment survey. If you are viewing this in paper form, visit the following website at [www.ag.ca.gov/careers/exams.php](http://www.ag.ca.gov/careers/exams.php).

**SPECIAL TESTING ARRANGEMENTS** If you are an individual with a disability and need reasonable accommodation to participate in this examination, please mark the box in question #2 on the "Examination Application". You will be notified in writing to determine what assistance can be provided.

**TESTING PERIOD** **THE TESTING PERIOD FOR THIS CLASSIFICATION IS 12 MONTHS. ONCE YOU HAVE TAKEN THIS EXAMINATION, YOU MAY NOT RE-APPLY FOR 12 MONTHS.**

**SALARY RANGE**  
Range A \$3038-\$3692\*  
Range B \$3190-\$3878\*

Legal Secretaries hired in **Los Angeles** will start at \$3,692 and receive annual salary increases up to a maximum of \$4,275 as authorized by the geological pay differential for that location.

\*The salaries used in this bulletin are the latest available from the State Controller's Office, but may not reflect the most recent salary adjustment.

**ELIGIBLE LIST INFORMATION** Names of successful competitors are merged onto the eligible list in order of final scores, regardless of the test date. Eligibility will expire **18** months after it is established unless the needs of the service and conditions of the list warrant a change in the period.

Positions exist with the Department of Justice in **Los Angeles**.

**CONTINUE TO THE NEXT PAGE**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR  
ADMITTANCE TO THE  
EXAMINATION**

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All applicants must meet the education and/or experience requirements for this examination by the written test date. All applications/resumes must include "To" and "From" employment dates (Month/Day/Year), time base, and applicable classification titles. Applications/resumes received without this information will be rejected. State employees who are currently appointed to a permanent position and have attained permanent status at the Legal Secretary level or higher, may not take this examination per Government Code Section 18935(b).

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

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**EITHER I**

One year of experience in the California state service performing the duties of a Senior Legal Typist, Range B.

**OR II**

Two years of experience in a private law firm, corporation law office, or a legal program in a governmental agency performing a full range of legal secretarial duties, which requires the preparation of legal documents for filing and service. [(1) Academic education above the 12<sup>th</sup> grade may be substituted for six months of the required experience on the basis of either (a) one year of the general education being equivalent to three months of the required experience; or (b) one year of education of a business or commercial nature being equivalent to six months of the required experience; or (2) Completion of a certificated legal secretarial program at either a regionally accredited college or a business school approved by the Bureau of Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education and accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent colleges and Schools may be substituted for one year of the required experience.]

(Candidates who are within six months of satisfying the experience requirement for this class will be admitted to this examination, but they must fully meet the experience requirement before being eligible for appointment.)

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

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The ability to type at a rate of 45 words per minute and transcribe accurately difficult dictation involving a variety of legal terms from a dictating machine is required. Successful competitors will be required to provide proof of proficiency and/or be tested for both prior to appointment.

**DEFINITION OF TERMS**

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The words "**performing the duties of...**" means the applicant must have the amount of experience in State service in the class specified (or on a training and development (T&D), limited term, or approved out-of-classes assignment to the class).

The words "**full range of legal secretarial duties**" includes preparation of legal correspondence, petitions, briefs, motions, depositions, legislative measures, legal opinions, pleadings, decisions, judgments, findings, awards and orders or other similar activities normally found in a legal office.

The word "**preparation**" includes the performance of a combination of necessary stenographic/typing and clerical functions directed toward processing legal documents into final form. (Simply assembling documents which are already in final form does not constitute "preparation" of legal materials.)

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**

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Incumbents in Range A perform the full range of legal secretarial work. Under general supervision, in a secretarial capacity, incumbents type, format, file, and serve legal pleadings in multiple jurisdictions, including State, Federal, and appellate courts or Office of Administrative Hearings; perform complex clerical work; and coordinate and schedule court-related services with specific instruction.

Incumbents in Range B perform the most complex legal secretarial work. Under the direction, incumbents independently perform the most difficult and responsible legal secretarial and clerical work, with minimum instruction, involving either: (1) work in a legal office with Level IV attorneys; or (2) work for a chief legal administrator with major administrative responsibility for a complex legal program and a large professional staff.

**EXAMINATION  
INFORMATION**

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This examination will consist of a written test weighted 100%. In order to obtain a position on the eligible list, a minimum rating of 70% must be attained.

**WRITTEN TEST – WEIGHTED 100%**

**SCOPE:**

A. Written Communication and Reading Comprehension

1. Basic knowledge of the English language to effectively produce a variety of written work products. Includes knowledge of grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure, organization, and appropriate vocabulary.
2. Intermediate skill to proofread and edit documents for accuracy and completeness.
3. Ability to attend to details in order to perform work in an accurate and thorough manner.
4. Knowledge of how to prepare clear and effective formal correspondence to a variety of recipients (e.g., clients, opposing counsel, courts, etc).
5. Knowledge of how to prepare or edit written documents, e.g., internal memos, summaries of facts, and narrative reports, in a clear, concise manner and in a logical format.
6. Skill to read, and comprehend complex written documents such as court filings, codes, court rules, and laws.

B. Legal Document Creation, Editing, and Filing

1. Knowledge of proper filing techniques to create and maintain an organized series of necessary files of varying types to store and retrieve hardcopy information.
2. Knowledge of the entire process of formatting, filing, and serving legal documents.
3. Knowledge of the judicial process and legal terminology to effectively interact with and understand the requests of the attorney.
4. Knowledge of proper filing techniques to create and maintain an organized series of necessary files of varying types to store and retrieve electronic information.
5. Knowledge of both state and federal court systems to file pleadings and other legal documents correctly, and on time.
6. Knowledge of how to prepare the most common types of legal documents in an effective manner (e.g., briefs, motions, pleadings), including how to apply rules regarding content, citations, order of presentation, formatting, page limitations etc.
7. Knowledge of state and federal court structure.
8. Knowledge of the Harvard Blue Book and California Style Manual to ensure proper formatting of case citations.
9. Skill to use the Harvard Blue Book and California Style Manual to ensure proper formatting of case citations.
10. Knowledge of legal process related to filing legal documents in state, federal, and appellate courts and administrative law forums (i.e. office of administrative hearings).

C. Workplace Scenarios

1. Skill to effectively communicate, in writing, complex principles, facts, and position(s) in a logical, respectful, and articulate manner to various audiences using tone, vocabulary, format, and grammar appropriate to the circumstances.
2. Skill to behave towards others with respect, courtesy, and tact to enhance communication and help ensure a positive reputation for the department.
3. Basic skill to see assistance from supervisors and other co-workers to ensure job duties are performed properly and efficiently.

**EXAMINATION  
INFORMATION  
(CONTINUED)**

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C. Workplace Scenarios (Continued)

4. Basic skill to work cooperatively and productively as a member of a team in order to achieve work goals.
5. Ability to work quickly in order to complete "rush" or urgent projects without prior notice to produce a quality work product with a quick turnaround.
6. Ability to independently prioritize incoming work.
7. Ability to think and act quickly to resolve time-sensitive problems.
8. Ability to maintain a considerate work environment that enables co-workers and supervisors to maintain and continue your work product in the event of your absence.

**SPECIAL PERSONAL  
CHARACTERISTICS**

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A demonstrated interest in assuming increasing responsibility, mature judgment, loyalty, poise, tact, and discretion.

**ADDITIONAL DESIRABLE  
QUALIFICATIONS**

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Education equivalent to completion of the twelfth grade.

**VETERANS PREFERENCE**

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Veterans Preference Credit will be added to the final score of those competitors who are successful in this examination and who qualify for, and have requested, these points. Due to changes in the law, which were effective January 1, 1996, veterans who have achieved permanent civil service status are not eligible to receive veterans' credits.

**CAREER CREDITS**

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Career Credits will be granted in this examination. If you receive Veterans Preference Credits, you will not also receive career credits.

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Department of Justice reserves the right to revise the examination plan to better meet the needs of the service if the circumstances under which this examination was planned change. Such revision will be in accordance with civil service laws and rules and all candidates will be notified.

It is the Candidate's Responsibility to contact the Department of Justice, (916) 324-5039, TDD (916) 952-8396 three days prior to the written test date if he/she has not received his/her notice.

For an examination without a written feature it is the candidate's responsibility to contact the Department of Justice, (916) 324-5039, TDD (916) 952-8396 three weeks after the final filing date if he/she has not received a progress notice.

If a candidate's notice of oral interview or performance test fails to reach him/her prior to the day of the interview due to a verified postal error, he/she will be rescheduled upon written request.

Applications are available at the State Personnel Board Offices ([www.spb.ca.gov](http://www.spb.ca.gov)), and local Offices of the Employment Development Department ([www.edd.ca.gov](http://www.edd.ca.gov)).

If you meet the requirements stated on the reverse, you may take this examination, which is competitive. Possession of the entrance requirement does not assure a place on the eligible list. Your performance in the examination described on the other side of this bulletin will be compared with the performance of the others who take this test, and all candidates who pass will be ranked according to their scores.

**Examination Locations:** When a written test is part of the examination, it will be given in such places in California as the number of candidates and conditions warrant. Ordinarily, interviews are scheduled in Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. However, locations of interviews may be limited or extended as conditions warrant.

**Eligible Lists:** Eligible lists established by competitive examination, regardless of date, must be used in the following order: 1) subdivisional promotional, 2) departmental promotional, 3) multi departmental promotional, 4) servicewide promotional, 5) departmental open, 6) open. When there are two lists of the same kind, the older list must be used first. Eligible lists will expire in from one to four years unless otherwise stated on this bulletin.

**General Qualifications:** Candidates must possess essential personal qualifications including integrity, initiative, dependability, good judgment, and ability to work cooperatively with others; and a state of health consistent with the ability to perform the assigned duties of the class. A medical examination may be required. In open examinations, investigation may be made of employment records and personal history and fingerprinting may be required.

**Interview Scope:** If an interview is conducted, in addition to the scope described on the other side of this bulletin, the panel will consider education, experience, personal development, personal traits and fitness. In appraising experience, more weight will be given to the breadth and recency of pertinent experience and evidence of the candidate's ability to accept and fulfill increasing responsibilities than to the length of his/her experience. Evaluation of a candidate's personal development will include consideration of his/her recognition of his/her own training needs; his/her plans for self-development; and the progress he/she has made in his/her efforts toward self-development.

**Veterans Preference:** California law limits the granting of veterans preference credits to entrance examinations. When credit is granted it is as follows: 10 points for veterans, widows or widowers of veterans and spouses of 100% disabled veterans; and 15 points for disabled veterans. Directions for applying for veterans preference are on the Veterans Preference application form which is available from State Personnel Board offices or written test proctors.

**High School Equivalence:** Equivalence to completion of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade may be demonstrated in any one of the following ways: 1) passing the General Education Development (GED) Test; 2) completion of 12 semester units of college-level work; 3) certification from the State Department of Education, a local school board, or high school authorities that the candidate is considered to have education equivalent to graduation from high school; or 4) for clerical and accounting classes, substitution of business college work in place of high school on a year-for-year basis.

**Career Credits:** In open, nonpromotional examinations, career credits are granted to: 1) State employees with permanent civil service status, 2) full-time employees of the State who are exempt from State civil service pursuant to the provisions of Section 4 of Article VII of the California Constitution, and who meet all qualification requirements specified by the Board and have 12 consecutive months of service in an exempt position, and 3) individuals who have served one full year in, or are graduates of, the California Conservation Corps (eligibility shall expire 24 months after graduation from the California Conservation Corps). Three points are added to the final test score of those candidates who meet the above criteria, and who are successful in the examination. Such examinations cannot be for managerial positions described in Government Code Section 3513. Competitors not currently employed in State civil service who have mandatory reinstatement rights may also be eligible for career credits, but they must explain their civil service status in the appropriate section of the application Form 100-678. (Section 4 of article VII of the California Constitution is posted at the State Personnel Board, 801 Capitol Mall, Sacramento.)

If hearing impaired, call the California Relay Service.  
1-800-735-2929 (From TDD Phone)  
1-800-735-2922 (From Voice Phone)

TDD is Telecommunications Device for the Deaf and is reachable only from telephones equipped with a TDD device.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
TESTING AND SELECTION UNIT  
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SACRAMENTO, CA 94255-2550  
(916) 324-5039