

IDENTIFICATION

<i>Position Number</i>	<i>Position Title</i>	
82-2027	Senior Judicial Executive Assistant	
<i>Department</i>	<i>Division/Region</i>	<i>Location</i>
Justice	NWT Courts (S.C. Judges' Chambers)	Yellowknife

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

Provides confidential executive and administrative assistance to the highest level of the judiciary in the N.W.T. Acts as executive assistant to the Senior Judge and the four other judges of the Supreme Court. Ensures the effective and efficient coordination of work. Fulfills liaison role between Supreme Court judiciary and the executive branches of the territorial and federal governments, the legal profession and the general public.

SCOPE

This position is located in a secured area in the Supreme Court Judges' Chambers at the Courthouse Building in Yellowknife, the judicial centre of the N.W.T. The incumbent, together with one other (subordinate) judges' executive assistant, provides executive assistant and administrative support services to the judges of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal – primarily to the five resident judges but also to visiting, non-resident deputy judges (approximately 50) and the Chief Justice and other judges of the Court of Appeal (approximately 20). In addition, in acting as executive assistant to the Senior Judge, the incumbent must provide front-line liaison between that office and the executive branch of the G.N.W.T., the Government of Canada (primarily federal Department of Justice), Court staff, Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, Chief Judge of the Territorial Court, Canadian Judicial Council, National Judicial Institute, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canadian Bar Association, Law Society of the N.W.T., Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs, Senior members of the Canadian judiciary, members of the legal profession, media and the general public.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Acting as executive assistant to the Senior Judge of the Supreme Court. Representative activities include:**
 - Responding to correspondence and other communications/requests from the Canadian Judicial Council and its various committees, or on behalf of the Senior Judge.

- Providing general assistance to the Senior Judge in his capacity as Chairperson of the Judicial Council.
- Keeping the Senior Judge informed and briefed on a regular basis on any developing issues of concern to the Supreme Court or Court of Appeal, following emerging issues and providing an analysis of how such emerging issues might impact the Courts, e.g., on the Courts' independence or the constitutional functions of the Courts.
- Assisting the Senior Judge in maintaining the Judicial Assignment Roster and Court Calendar.
- Compiling statistical data on various matters for the assistance of the Senior Judge, including pending cases in Yellowknife and other N.W.T. communities.
- Assisting Senior Judge in his capacity as resident representative of the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, e.g. scheduling of appeals, court calendar, etc.
- Maintaining general knowledge of administrative policies in the Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs with respect to judges' compensation, benefits, expenses, travel claims, personnel policies, educational training, language training, etc.
- Holds statutory appointment as a Deputy Clerk of the Supreme Court and as a Notary Public.

2. Liaison. Representative activities include:

- Fulfilling liaison role between the senior level of the Supreme Court judiciary and senior levels (Minister and Deputy Minister) of the executive branches of the G.N.W.T. and Government of Canada.
- Fulfilling similar liaison role for Senior Judge with Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, Chief Judge of the Territorial Court, and senior officers of the legal profession, both territorially and nationally.
- Tactfully, but firmly, maintain the independence of the judiciary and protect the judiciary from interference or unwarranted interruptions in the discharge of their functions.
- Liaising/contact with outside agencies, e.g. R.C.M.P., often on sensitive issues, on behalf of individual judges.

3. Legal:

- Conducting legal research and/or coordinating extensive research by library staff in Court Library, QuickLaw or Internet.
- In the absence of any staff legal officer, the incumbent has responsibility of determining what legal, procedural or litigation issues brought to Supreme Court Judges' Chambers are/are not properly within the purview of the Supreme Court judiciary and private judges' chambers vis-à-vis other offices and venues, e.g.:
 - dealing with unwarranted attempts by litigants, lawyers, media, etc. for access to Supreme Court judges,
 - referring inquiries to the proper source or venue – Clerk of the Court, the formal courtroom, other courts, Court official, etc.

- 4. Confidential administrative support to the Supreme Court judiciary. Representative activities include:**
 - Preparation of formal judgments, orders and other legal documents in an accurate format, timely and professional fashion and in accordance with the Rules of Court, Judgments Standard, Canadian Citation Standards, etc. and filing and distribution of judgments.
 - Dealing with all correspondence, telephone and electronic enquiries on behalf of the judiciary and taking action and/or making referral as appropriate.
 - Liaising with members of the bar in arranging and scheduling for individual judges' pre-trial conferences, case management conferences, and appointments generally.
 - Making travel arrangements for individual judges for court circuits, education seminars, etc. and completing travel claims as required.
 - Preparation and processing of travel claims and other reimbursable expense claims in accordance with federal policies and guidelines.
 - Liaising with Court staff on behalf of the judiciary and also with other departmental staff, e.g., technical support for judges' computers, etc.
 - Maintaining confidential filing system for judges – judgments, correspondence, topical, etc.
 - Maintaining a confidential filing system for the Judicial Council of the Northwest Territories (which deals with complaints against Territorial Court judges pursuant to the *Territorial Court Act*).
 - Maintaining judges' library (updates, etc.)
- 5. Supervisory role with respect to subordinate judicial executive assistant position in Supreme Court Judges' Chambers. Representative activities include:**
 - General supervision
 - Recruitment
 - Training
 - Performance evaluations
 - Delegation of tasks and monitoring of tasks to ensure timelines are met.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- A. The responsibilities of the position require a thorough understanding of the respective roles of the executive branch of the government and the judiciary, i.e., the principle of judicial independence. This is essential, as the incumbent must be capable of balancing, in a delicate and professional manner, the fact of employment by the executive branch of the G.N.W.T. while working in a highly confidential position for the senior level of the judicial branch in the N.W.T.

Fulfilling the responsibilities of the position requires extensive knowledge of:

- The court structure in the N.W.T. and Canada, and the role and functions of various officers of the Court in the administration of justice;
- Legal, social, cultural and political issues in the N.W.T. relating to the administration of justice;
- The types of cases/disputes/litigation brought before the Supreme Court – criminal, civil, judicial review, etc.;
- The statutory role and function of Judicial Council of the N.W.T., and various external agencies, e.g., Canadian Judicial Council, Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs, National Judicial Institute, etc.

B. To fulfill the executive assistant, administrative and secretarial support responsibilities the incumbent requires the following knowledge and skills:

- Ability to effectively manage and coordinate activities of other (subordinate) judicial executive assistant, and of library and Court staff in support of the work and objectives of the Supreme Court judiciary;
- Advanced knowledge of legal terminology, practices and procedures and formats for Court judgments and other Court documents and correspondence;
- Highly proficient knowledge of the *Rules of Court*, Practice Directions, *Judicature Act*, *Jury Act*, etc;
- Excellent word processing and proofreading skills;
- Excellent shorthand and Dictaphone experience;
- Advanced skills in legal research for both case law and statute law, via Court Library, Quick Law, Internet.
- Ability to conform to electronic Judgment Standardization & Canadian Citation Standards when processing judgments;
- Working knowledge of Court Information Management System (FACTS);
- Ability to accurately complete travel and expense claims for the Senior Judge (Federal Government forms);
- Knowledge of the *Financial Administration Act*, purchasing guidelines, contract authorities, etc. in order to accurately and effectively manager the corporate purchasing card.

This level of knowledge can be attained by post-secondary paralegal training or equivalent, and several years of experience in a legal environment, or as an executive assistant to a Minister, Deputy Minister, Chief Executive Officer, or equivalent level.

C. The position requires an incumbent who has developed an ability to work with senior level officials in utmost confidence on important matters, some of which are highly sensitive. The individual occupying the position must display maturity, good independent judgment, have excellent interpersonal skills and be able to communicate effectively and tactfully with members of the legal profession, Court staff, senior government officials and the general public on behalf of the Supreme Court judiciary. As front-line representative of the judiciary,

must display highest standards of probity and professionalism.

TYPICALLY, THE ABOVE QUALIFICATIONS WOULD BE ATTAINED BY:

(This is not a standard, but rather a "typical" way of learning the required knowledge, skills and abilities.)

*Years of experience do not necessarily directly correlate to years of learning. Experience is one way of learning. It is possible to have ten years of work experience but not have the equivalent amount of learning. It is not what one **does** that counts, it is what one **learns** from what one does that counts.*

- An in-depth understanding of the respective roles of the executive and judicial branches of government;
- Comprehensive knowledge of court structures and processes;
- 10 years experience in executive/legal environment (or formal paralegal training plus eight years experience) combined with several years of experience in word processing, research, preparing correspondence/reports, etc.;
- Executive assistant/paralegal courses at college level.

Of paramount importance is the application of these skills with the personal traits of a highly organized, effective, efficient and committed individual.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

	Frequency	Duration	Intensity
Much of the incumbent's time is spent in a sitting position with frequent opportunity to move about.	Daily	5-6 hours/day	Medium
There is a great deal of constant keyboarding associated with the position.	Daily	5 hours/day	High
Heavy boxes and files have to be handled for documents requiring action by the judges.	3-8 times/week		Medium

Environmental Conditions

	Frequency	Duration	Intensity
As typically associated with an office environment.			

Sensory Demands

	Frequency	Duration	Intensity

There is a need for concentrated levels of attention in particular when preparing and proofreading Reasons for Judgment and correspondence for the signature of the judges. These are subject to close scrutiny and 100% accuracy is essential.	Daily	5 hours/day	High
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Mental Demands

	Frequency	Duration	Intensity
The workload can be heavy at times. There are sometimes pressures or stresses imposed because of deadlines or time constraints for the preparation of judgments.	3-5 days/week	4-7 hours/day	High
Some mental stress may be experienced because of the disturbing nature of the cases required to be dealt with by the judiciary.	3-5 days/week		Medium

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