



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Justice	Executive Legal Officer	
Position Number(s)	Community	Division/Region(s)
82-16824	Yellowknife	Court Services/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The incumbent provides legal advice and support to the judiciary on matters of general application to the courts and on specific issues arising through court proceedings. Duties include legal research, preparing legal opinions, drafting court policies, practice directions and other materials for the Court's and the public's use, and liaising with media and Court Services.

SCOPE

This position is located in Yellowknife and reports to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on operational matters pertaining to the Court and to the Director of Court Services on administrative and financial matters.

The Courts of the Northwest Territories are an independent branch of government, responsible for adjudicating civil and criminal disputes and delivering written and oral decisions thereon. The Supreme Court has inherent jurisdiction to determine the governance of court processes and proceedings through the Rules of Court and Practice Directions.

The Executive Legal Officer is an expert in law and court procedure. By providing a variety of services, including legal advice, research and other support on an array of issues the Executive Legal Officer positively contributes to maintaining confidence in the administration of justice by:

- Providing timely and accurate legal advice to the judges of the Court.
- Ensuring that court decisions and processes are consistent with current law.
- Making recommendations for consistency with other jurisdictions in matters of court rules, policies and procedures, including those relating to the implementation of new technology in court processes.

- Ensuring accurate and timely publication of judicial decisions.
- Writing media releases and responding to media inquiries with respect to the work of the courts to facilitate accurate and balanced reporting.
- Ensuring that the judiciary's views are conveyed accurately to committees and working groups within the Department of Justice which affect the Court's operations and keeping the judiciary apprised of developments on various committees, such as the Court Services Transformation Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Legal Officer provides the following core services:

- Providing accurate and timely legal advice to the judiciary on matters of both specific and general application to the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories and proceedings before it; including procedural and substantive issues in the areas of criminal, family, civil and administrative law, and in matters related to the discharge of judicial duties under federal and territorial statutes.
- Analyzing pleadings and arguments; preparing verbal and written legal opinions on complex legal issues as required by members of the judiciary.
- Responsible for the legal and technical editing of Court judgments.
- Acting as a legal resource to Supreme Court Registry staff on policies and procedures, including the *Rules of Court*, the *Criminal Procedure Rules*, the *Estate Administration Rules*, the *Divorce Rules*, the *Court of Appeal Rules*, and other statutory and regulatory instruments.
- Working with the judiciary and stakeholders on matters affecting Court operations, including amendments to documents, forms, and procedures.
- Drafting and updating court policies, Practice Directions and Practice Notes as directed and ensuring they are compliant with current law.
- Preparing media releases and liaising with media outlets on matters pertaining to or arising out of Court proceedings, including screening media inquiries.
- Review and analyze complex cases; prepare speeches and presentations for the judiciary.
- Researches and gives legal opinions on very complex issues.
- Representing the judiciary on various committees (e.g. Court Website Committee, Rules Committee, Law Reform Committee, Access to Justice Committee).
- Assisting in judicial education by keeping the judiciary informed of issues of relevance to the courts, including significant changes in legislation and case law.
- Creating reference materials for the judiciary.

- Overseeing publication of judgments on the Courts' website and ensuring compliance with publication bans and relevant privacy guidelines.
- Tracking publication bans on decisions and ensuring decisions are published if and when the publication ban is removed, modified or expires.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

No unusual demands.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Full working knowledge of and experience in:

- The relevant laws of Canada and the Northwest Territories.
- Criminal and civil court procedures.
- Indigenous and northern issues in general and experience in a northern setting.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Extensive knowledge of the Canadian Court System.
- Ability to work and act independently, with little or no supervision.
- Excellent research, writing, and analytical skills.
- Strong organizational and time management skills.
- Legal drafting skills to develop rules, practice directives and forms
- Ability to work well with the judiciary, court services staff, lawyers, government officials, the media and public
- Demonstrated advanced proficiency in the entire Microsoft Office Suite; Adobe Acrobat, and legal research databases such as: Westlaw and Quicklaw, CanLII.
- Experience developing policies.
- Ability to work well in a cross-cultural environment

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

Completion of a law degree from a recognized Canadian University – LL.B. or J.D.; Membership in good standing in a Canadian law society and eligibility for membership as an active member of the Law Society of the Northwest Territories; Combined with a minimum of seven (7) years of practice with an emphasis on legal writing, research and litigation.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☐ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☒ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☒ French preferred

Aboriginal language: To choose a language, click here.

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred