

POSITION TITLE: Deputy General Counsel

DEPARTMENT: Executive

STATUS: Exempt

LEVEL: Salary \$80,000 - \$100,000 annually

ABOUT THE WHA:

At the Worcester Housing Authority (WHA), our mission is to enhance the Worcester community by creating and sustaining decent, safe, and affordable housing that champions stability and self-sufficiency for our residents. As the second largest housing authority in New England, widely recognized for our innovative and progressive programs, we're not just providing housing – we're building futures. We're looking for candidates who are mission-focused, goal-driven, and passionate.

The WHA is committed to developing and supporting a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community both inside and outside of the workplace. Representation is important; our clients come from all walks of life and, not unintentionally, so do our staff. We hire great people from a wide variety of backgrounds, not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it makes our agency stronger.

ABOUT THE POSITION:

The Deputy General Counsel (DGC) assists the WHA's General Counsel in leading and managing the legal matters of the WHA, including landlord-tenant proceedings, litigation matters, insurance claims, fraud, MCAD/Fair Housing Act claims, employment issues, union matters, regulatory compliance, and contracts, among other legal and court proceedings. Additionally, the DGC manages legal matters related to the WHA's Leased Housing (Section 8) programs, including termination proceedings, reasonable accommodation requests, regulatory compliance, and Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA) compliance. The DGC works across departments to assist in the review and revision of WHA policies, as well as other legal and compliance-related issues, as assigned.

This is a full-time, fully benefited, onsite (not remote) position with normal business hours of Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. The position may occasionally require work outside of normal business hours for meetings or events.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Reviews leases and contracts and works with landlords and their attorneys to ensure compliance with WHA policies.
2. Assists General Counsel with litigation involving the WHA, gathering information, drafting necessary documents, preparing witnesses, and representing the WHA in court or before governmental agencies, or in coordination with external legal counsel as needed.
3. Drafts, reviews, and negotiates a variety of contracts, including those related to procurement, construction, grants, services, employment, and partnerships.
4. Conducts participant pre-termination meetings and negotiations and works with WHA staff to draft and sign repayment agreements, track progress, and prepare termination notices.
5. Attends administrative hearings and presents to Hearing Officer as needed.
6. Assists with domestic violence-related matters including transfers and requests.
7. Stays abreast of changes to federal and state law, administrative hearing law, municipal ordinances, case law, and other regulatory changes; conducts legal research and analysis on

matters impacting WHA programs; advises General Counsel of any necessary changes and updates to WHA policies, procedures, and documents.

8. Provides training to program staff on policies that impact their work, as well as protocols, regulations, or state / federal required trainings.
9. Assists the Admissions and Public Safety departments in investigating cases of fraud, unauthorized occupants, and other suspected violations and takes necessary action.
10. Assists the Compliance and Legal departments in policy writing, implementation of new/revised policies, and the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Administrative Plan and Admissions & Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP).
11. Manages the reasonable accommodation request (RAR) process, including scheduling hearings, conducting hearings, making determinations, and notifying all parties timely.
12. Works with the General Counsel to respond to FOIA requests and prepare necessary documents, respond to MCAD claims, and assist with other litigation, contract, insurance, union, or employment matters, as requested.
13. Identifies and assesses legal risks and develops strategies for mitigation.
14. Participates in all other legal-related matters as requested, including contract review, collective bargaining, personnel issues, and construction development / real estate transactions.

OTHER REPOSIBILITIES:

1. Performs similar job-related duties, as assigned.

EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS REQUIRED:

1. JD degree required and active bar license in good standing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
2. Knowledge of MA landlord-tenant and leased housing policies, protocols, and regulations, HUD/DHCD program regulations and eligibility requirements, and contract law preferred.
3. Ability to interact professionally and courteously with people of different social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds.
4. Superior interpersonal communication skills, both verbal and written, as well as presentation, public speaking, and negotiation skills.
5. Strong leadership skills: ability to facilitate, coach, and influence people in problem solving and collaboration.
6. Ability to exercise sound, practical judgment, and common sense, and to maintain professionalism in tense situations.
7. Ability to work independently and under tight timelines and to plan, prioritize and organize multiple cross-functional tasks.
8. Proficiency with Microsoft Office programs, including Team, Excel, Word, and Outlook.
9. Excellent analytical skills: ability to review, understand, and translate complex policies, laws, and regulations into terms that are easily understandable for persons at all levels.
10. Bilingual (English/Spanish) candidates preferred.
11. Ability to be relied upon to be available for work daily and punctually.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Ability to spend prolonged periods sitting at a desk and working on a computer.
2. Ability to spend occasional periods standing and walking, including climbing stairs, as well as balancing, stopping, kneeling, crouching, and/or crawling.
3. Ability to occasionally lift, push, or pull up to 20 pounds.
4. Ability to bend, handle materials, tools, or equipment, and reach with hands and/or arms.
5. Work may be performed with or without reasonable accommodation to a known disability.