

HOUSING SETTLEMENT MASTER

DEFINITION

Under direction, performs professional legal Mandatory Settlement Conference work by designing, planning, coordinating and facilitating alternative dispute resolution activities which assist attorneys and/or potential litigants in determining alternate resolutions to Civil, housing-related disputes; plans, develops and implements program policies and procedures; coordinates program activities with other Court units; acts as the neutral Housing Settlement Master in Civil housing-related disputes; may perform other related work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This professional level attorney classification does not offer legal advice and must always remain neutral while assisting attorneys and/or potential litigants in the Mandatory Settlement Conference process.

TYPICAL TASKS

- Plans, develops, recommends and implements operational procedures for an alternative dispute resolution program, ensuring maximum utilization of available staff and financial resources
- Coordinates the activities of the program with those of related Court programs and other community resources
- Reviews Court files, documents and related materials to assess cases and plan for Mandatory Settlement Conference sessions
- Facilitates Mandatory Settlement Conference sessions acting as a neutral Housing Settlement Master
- Records pertinent details of Mandatory Settlement Conference sessions
- Drafts legal correspondence and/or documents necessary to effectuate legal resolutions
- Holds pre-hearing conferences for the settlement or simplification of issues; assists parties to develop a shared understanding of the conflict and to work toward building a practical and lasting resolution; offers multiple and flexible possibilities for resolving a dispute and for the control the parties have over the resolution
- Advises litigants, attorneys and Judicial Officers on the status of cases; provides procedural information, answers inquiries and explains Mandatory Settlement Conference processes; assists individuals in locating material and information helpful to the settlement of their dispute

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Knowledge of:

- Conflict resolution methods
- Working with difficult situations
- Conflict of interest
- Resources appropriate for the provision of advice clientele may need

- Legal terminology
- Court rules and procedures
- Requirements of Court documents
- Laws, policies, and procedures associated with civil proceedings, and specifically related to housing law
- Federal, State and/or local laws, regulations and/or requirements related to housing law
- Computers, computer applications and automated databases

Ability to:

- Meet and comply with all Federal, State and/or local laws, regulations and/or requirements for the conduct and practice of legal alternative dispute resolution
- Inform participants as to the process of alternative dispute resolution in a clear, concise and effective manner
- Adopt a neutral stance towards all parties to the Mandatory Settlement Conference
- Conduct the Mandatory Settlement Conference in an impartial manner
- Maintain confidentiality
- Utilize sound judgment in performing Court-related duties
- Identify and remove him or herself from conflict of interest issues
- Pay attention to detail and organize work tasks
- Establish and maintain professional, courteous working relationships with staff, legal community, and the public; establish work priorities
- Communicate effectively both orally and in written form
- Use a computer and associated equipment, and applications to complete the work of the Court

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Strength, dexterity, coordination and vision to use a keyboard and video display terminal on a daily basis
- Hearing sufficient to communicate effectively in an office, a Courtroom environment, and with the public and Court staff
- Dexterity and coordination to handle files and single pieces of paper
- Personal mobility to:
 - work in various office and Courtroom locations
 - move objects weighing up to 20 pounds such as files, stacks of papers, reference and other materials
 - move from place to place within an office
 - sit and/or stand for prolonged periods of time

EXPERIENCE/EDUCATION

- Graduation from an accredited school of law; AND
- Active membership in good standing with the State Bar of California; AND
- Two years of full-time equivalent experience as a licensed attorney, in the area of housing law and which preferably includes specific training in the practice of alternative dispute resolution **OR**
- Graduation from an accredited school of law; AND
- Active membership in good standing with the State Bar of California; AND

- Any combination of training and experience equivalent to the above listed tasks, as determined by the Court, that would provide the required knowledge and abilities.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

- Two or more years of full-time equivalent experience in the practice of alternative dispute resolution is highly desired.
- Two or more years of full-time equivalent experience as a licensed attorney in the State of California practicing in housing law is highly desired.
- Ability to communicate effectively in both English and Spanish is highly desired.
- 40 hours of alternative dispute resolution training is highly desired.