

New York State Department of Civil Service
Division of Classification & Compensation

Tentative Classification Standard

Occ. Code 6506200

Assistant Counsel, Grade 25	6506200
Associate Counsel, Grade 28	6506400

Brief Description of Class Series

Positions in these titles provide legal assistance and support to agency program administrators by analyzing legal opinions, briefs and other material, preparing memoranda of law and conferring with programs party to legal action to mediate, negotiate, or settle legal issues. These positions may function either as specialists in a single program governed by law or in a more general atmosphere with laws governing numerous programs. Incumbents in this class must be admitted to the New York State Bar. Positions in these titles are in the non-competitive or exempt jurisdictional class.

These positions are classified at multiple State agencies.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Positions in this class may perform a wide range of assignments, and the tasks performed may vary considerably within the framework described in this standard. There are some positions that serve as members of a very small legal office and receive a wide range of assignments, while others, usually in larger offices, may receive a limited variety of specialized work.

Assistant Counsel: performs the full range of legal activities in support of one or more programs in a State agency; serves as a legal advisor to program administrators and managers in the day-to-day operation of an agency's programs.

Associate Counsel: performs the full range of legal activities in support of one or more programs in a State agency; supervises a staff of lower level Attorneys; provides legal advice and legal services in matters that are novel, sensitive, potentially precedent setting, or involve a considerable amount of money; regularly serves as a legal advisor to program administrators and managers; performs all legal work with little supervisory review.

Illustrative Tasks

Assistant Counsel

Performs difficult professional legal work in the analysis and interpretation of laws related to the work of a State agency and in the development of the agency's legislative program.

Prepares, assembles, and analyzes evidence in cases to be heard by administrative bodies; attends hearings.

Prepares legal memoranda and findings of fact with respect to administrative decisions.

Personally conducts and directs investigations.

Assists in the study, review, revision, and preparation of the rules and regulations promulgated by State agencies.

Assists in drafting and reviewing proposed legislation.

Prepares responses to correspondence on complicated questions of law.

Associate Counsel

Assists the Counsel of a State Department or Agency, or head of a legal unit of a State agency.

Represents the agency in legal proceedings in all courts including litigation.

Prepares briefs and legal papers.

Performs necessary legal research; and renders opinions and confers with officials on questions of law.

Confers and corresponds with outside agencies on questions of law and procedure.

Conducts administrative hearings in connection with regulatory proceedings.

Prepares and conducts hearings involving disciplinary action against employees.

Reviews and analyzes records of hearings.

Supervises the work of subordinate attorneys.

Minimum Qualifications

Assistant Counsel

Non-Competitive: Admission to, and member in good standing of, the New York State Bar and two years of subsequent professional legal experience.

Associate Counsel

Non-Competitive: Admission to, and member in good standing of, the New York State Bar and four years of subsequent professional legal experience.

Note: Classification Standards illustrate the nature, extent, and scope of duties and responsibilities of the classes they describe. Standards cannot and do not include all the work that might be appropriately performed by a class. The minimum qualifications above are those required for appointment at the time the Classification Standard was written. Please contact the Division of Staffing Services for current information on minimum requirements for appointment or examination.

06/2026

LEM