

General Counsel**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS**

The General Counsel is responsible for acting as the lead advisor for all legal matters affecting the Niagara Falls Water Board, reporting directly to the Board and working closely with senior staff. This role requires an individual with the knowledge, experience, personal confidence, legal acumen, and business savvy required to operate in a highly regulated industry where it is necessary to negotiate multiple constituents, including ratepayers, elected officials, and regulators, and complete clarity is not always obvious. The General Counsel will exercise sound judgment and decision making to provide actionable legal advice, sometimes with limited information and tight timeframes.

The General Counsel will provide legal input to and support the Board's compliance with the myriad of laws applicable to a corporate municipal instrumentality of the State. General Counsel will interface with and build relationships with constituents and will drive general legal matters. General Counsel will develop legal initiatives, and personally will handle certain legal matters, including litigation where appropriate. General Counsel will provide counsel on board governance, labor relations, procurement, regulatory, and other issues. General Counsel will be responsible for rate and rule filings with the Department of State, and for drafting Board resolutions and other documents. General Counsel will provide legal guidance regarding contracts, including assisting with collective bargaining agreements, and will assist in business and compliance initiatives. As appropriate, General Counsel will coordinate outside law firms retained by the Board, and will review legal bills as requested by Board staff.

The General Counsel also shall serve as Secretary to the Niagara Falls Water Board at the Board's pleasure. If designated as the Board's Secretary, General Counsel will ensure that Board members have the proper advice and resources for discharging their statutory and fiduciary duties, and will advise the Board on its roles and responsibilities. General Counsel will ensure that the records of the Board's meetings satisfy the requirements of law, and will attend Board meetings. General Counsel will facilitate the orientation of new Directors and assist in training and development of the Board, in addition to providing occasional training, bulletins, and other resources to Board staff.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

1. Provides counsel and guidance on legal matters and on legal implications of all matters referred to General Counsel.
2. Serves as key lawyer/legal advisor on all major initiatives and projects, or ensures that appropriately qualified outside counsel handles Board matters.
3. Judges the merits of court cases filed against or on behalf of the Board, works with the appropriate staff and Board members to investigate and resolve disputes.

4. Provides advice, drafting, and/or review on procurement and employment contracts, government procurement requirements, employer-employee and labor relations, open meetings, and public records.
5. Represents the Board in state and federal courts and before administrative agencies, or ensures that appropriately qualified outside counsel handles Board matters.
6. Regular attendance at Board meetings, and attends staff meetings or makes appropriate investigations as required to maintain general familiarity with and understanding of Water Board operations and their legal needs.
7. Develops relationships with regulators, outside suppliers of professional services, and elected officials, and works with these to attain Water Board objectives.

Competencies:

1. Customer/Client Focus.
2. Collaboration Skills.
3. Communication Proficiency.
4. Leadership.
5. Problem Solving/Analysis.
6. Thoroughness.
7. Time Management.

Supervisory Responsibility

This position leads the Legal Department and may have supervisory responsibility over one or more positions.

Work Environment

This job operates in a professional office environment. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, filing cabinets, and fax machines.

The nature of this position requires the General Counsel to be present at treatment plants and other locations of Water Board work, and to attend off-site meetings at a variety of locations. The position often requires accessibility and responsiveness outside of normal working hours, including responding to emails and telephone calls. The General Counsel must be prepared to respond to extraordinary incidents or emergencies at any hour. General Counsel may be permitted by the Water Board to work remotely. There is no residency requirement for this Exempt position, however the General Counsel is expected to attend regularly to duties at the Water Board's physical locations.

Physical Demands

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to talk and hear. The employee is frequently required to move between offices and sites; to input and edit text; to

operate a computer and telephone; and to review plans, photographs, charts, diagrams, and other materials.

Required Education and Experience

1. Juris Doctor degree from an American Bar Association accredited law school.
2. Admission to practice law in the State of New York.
3. A minimum of seven years' experience as a practicing attorney in a law firm, government agency, or corporate legal department.
4. Experience handling legal issues for a government entity, including an understanding of government tort liability and experience providing advice on the Open Meetings Law.
5. Experience with the government procurement process.