

NEW CASTLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Number 0176

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CLASS SPECIFICATION

Date 7/27/15

Title: CHIEF DEPUTY REGISTER OF WILLS

Approved:



GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Performs responsible management and supervisory work overseeing the office of the Register of Wills from an administrative standpoint; or, overseeing the role of the office as clerk to the Court of Chancery; does related work as required.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: An employee in this class may be appointed by the Chancellor of the Court of Chancery, pursuant to 12 Del.C. § 2507, to serve as clerk of the Court of Chancery for estate-related litigation. This employee guides personal representatives of estates toward fulfillment of their legal obligations in administering estates, develops and re-evaluates best practices and models for estate administration to be followed statewide, and gives public presentations to educate citizens on the role of and services offered by the Register of Wills. Alternatively, an employee in this class may be appointed by the elected Register of Wills to manage the daily operations of the office, including management of personnel, financial transactions, technology and public outreach, to assure the public's compliance with Delaware's probate laws and timely and efficient administration of estates of the deceased.

EXAMPLES OF WORK: (Illustrative only)

- Manages the daily operations of the office to include supervision of employees, writing evaluations, maintaining documentation of employee performance, administering discipline in accordance with promulgated personnel policies, approving leave slips/timesheets/payroll, preparing financial justifications for personnel selections, conducting interviews and new employee orientations, designing and implementing employee training, responding to employee complaints/problems/conflicts/ideas, enforcing merit system rules, personnel policies, union rules and office policies, preparing agendas/summaries for and leading staff meetings and Deputy meetings;
- Provides direction to deputies and clerks on issues within the department;
- Manages changes in safety policies and/or evacuation procedures, coordinating responses to safety/security threats and serving as liaison with building security/police;
- Accounting duties include analyzing manual bank reconciliations and voided transactions, signing checks for timely payment of the office's financial obligations to third parties, controlling access to the safe, serving as liaison with financial institutions and couriers for deposit-related issues, evaluating and rendering spending decisions, budget preparation and monitoring;
- Assists the elected Register of Wills in presentation of budget to County Executive and County Council, compiling monthly statistics necessary for budget justification and for use by the Court of Chancery and the State of Delaware, tracking and monitoring revenue and expenditures, collaborating with County auditor and external auditor to answer questions and prepare documents related to the audit for review;

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- Technological duties include posting statutorily required legal notices on the public website, website maintenance, creation and revision of fillable forms, managing the probate-specific Wills program/computerized forms, conducting technology training for employees and managing usage of the Lexis Nexis server; creating and maintaining Wills user accounts, coordinating Wills enhancements and procedures with Information Systems and staff;
- Preserves archival integrity of estate documents through transmittal of files to State Archives;
- Maintains quality control of scanned documents, running database clean-up functions and issuing daily database status reports;
- Coordinates the implementation of electronic recording filing initiatives and standards;
- Public outreach duties include preparing brochures/pamphlets, managing information disseminated through the website, assuring responses to phone, voicemail, e-mail and letter inquiries, and managing general announcement email list, and giving public presentations to educate citizens on the role of and services offered by the Register of Wills;
- Interacts and works with other County offices and State offices to provide combined efficient services to the public;
- Serves in liaison capacity between the office, attorneys, title searchers and general public and with Local, State and Federal government agencies;
- Assists in preparation of legislation and acts as liaison with County Council and the General Assembly, monitors legislation for items that may impact probate, and incorporates those changes to the Probate Process;
- Writes, implements and maintains policies and procedures to improve efficiency, answers questions and provides information regarding office and procedural policy, and responds to inquiries, correspondence and requests for information;
- Interprets the Delaware Code and New Castle County Code as they relate to laws affecting the Office of the Register of Wills;
- Conducts legal research and prepares written memoranda on issues arising from estates administration including admissibility of wills to probate, competing personal representatives' authority to administer estates, and deductibility of expenses on estates' accountings;
- Manages the Court's Escheat fund for abandoned estate property, including accounting for deposits, withdrawals, and the annual report of abandoned estate funds to the State;
- Conducts the final audit of each estate on behalf of the Court of Chancery, which includes verifying calculations on final accountings, compliance with State tax obligations, and proper notice to beneficiaries of each estate;
- Serves as clerk of the Court of Chancery for estate-related litigation (docketing the estate files that are in litigation, drafting case summary memoranda for the Judicial Officer, preparing the court for the hearing session, cataloguing evidence presented to Court, and assuring parties' compliance with outcome of litigation);

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- Serves as clerk of the Court of Chancery at all routine hearing sessions (uncontested estate matters, such as discovery disputes, Rules to Show Cause, and petitions to pay or withdraw inheritance);
- Carries out projects and assignments as directed by the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellors, the Masters, and the Register in Chancery;
- Studies management methods in order to improve work flow, simplify office procedures, and implement cost savings;
- Reviews documents for legality and proper recording format;
- Activates support staff on closing of delinquent estates that bring revenue into the County's General Fund;
- Directly responsible for communication, implementation and supervision of all projects that involve office building maintenance;
- Promotes an ongoing attitude of dedication to excellent public service and ensures that external and internal customers are provided with highest quality of service;
- Operates a personal computer and other related equipment in the course of the work.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES: Thorough knowledge of Delaware law as it relates to probate, real estate and estate administration, including court procedure and court clerk protocol; thorough knowledge of modern principles and practices of business, office management and accounting practices; thorough knowledge of administrative principles; thorough knowledge of laws and regulations relating to the activities of wills and will processing; ability to plan office systems and to establish complex administrative procedures; ability to draw valid conclusions; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with department general managers, the legal community, and the general public; ability to communicate courteously and effectively, both verbally and in writing; demonstrated ability to manage operational functions and supervise personnel with tact and diplomacy.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Possession of a Bachelor's Degree in accounting or a related field from an accredited college or university and at least five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in accounting and personnel management; or an equivalent combination of experience, education or training directly related to the required knowledge, skills and abilities.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS: Juris Doctor from an American Bar Association accredited school, admission to the Delaware bar and at least five (5) years of experience as an attorney.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: Must pass a Class III County physical examination and background check.

HISTORY OF REVISIONS:
Established: 7/27/15