VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
Montana University System
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
560 N. Park Ave • PO Box 203201 • Helena, MT 59620-3201

Position Title: Associate Legal Counsel
Location: Helena, Montana
Salary Range: $89,000 to $99,000

The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) in the Montana University System (MUS) invites applications for the position of Associate Legal Counsel.

The MUS is the state-supported system of higher education in Montana governed by the Board of Regents and administered by the Commissioner of Higher Education. The MUS enrolls more than 40,000 students at 16 public universities and colleges in one of the most beautiful and geographically diverse states in the nation.

This position is a full-time, term-contract position renewable annually in accordance with Board of Regents personnel policies. The position is eligible for employee benefits (health insurance, sick leave and vacation leave, state holidays, retirement program, staff & dependent tuition waivers in accordance with state law and Board of Regents policy). Helena, the state’s capital city, is located along the Rocky Mountains continental divide near the scenic Missouri River about half-way between Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks.

Overview
The Associate Legal Counsel reports to the Chief Legal Counsel for the Montana University System and performs legal work for the Commissioner’s Office in Helena. The legal staff work closely with personnel on all campuses of the University System to coordinate compliance with state and federal laws and system policies.

Key Duties and Responsibilities
The successful candidate will perform a wide range of legal duties, working collaboratively with campus legal counsel, MUS managers, and Commissioner’s staff in ways that include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting legal research and providing advice and opinions based on the results of research.
- Writing legal memos and opinions.
- Analyzing laws, regulations and proposed legislation for possible impact on the MUS.
- Preparing and/or reviewing legal documents necessary for the operation of MUS business, including contracts, grant documents, requests for proposals, letters of appointment, notices of termination, waivers, releases, etc.
• Playing an integral role in the development and maintenance of policies and procedures necessary for compliance with state and federal laws and regulations.
• Participating in the development and presentation of training opportunities for staff and faculty on a variety of legal topics.
• Collaborating with internal and external legal counsel to handle claims and litigation or obtain legal opinions.
• Preparing for and participating in administrative and legislative presentations and hearings.
• Handling of student appeals and other necessary proceedings and cases.
• Providing preventative and responsive legal advice on matters including: university governance, academic and student issues, policy formation, program operations, employment issues and grievances, employee benefits, legislative hearings, intellectual property issues, real property transactions, and commercial transactions.
• Assisting in all aspects of the legal work of the Commissioner’s Office.

Qualifications
The successful candidate will have:

• Law degree from an accredited law school.
• Legal experience, preferably including state public service, some litigation and transactional experience, with 3 to 5 years of experience preferred.
• Licensed to practice law in Montana and be in good standing.
• Strong analytical, problem solving and research skills.
• Ability to work cooperatively and collegially within a small administrative office and with a decentralized university system.
• Strong oral and written communication skills.
• Excellent interpersonal skills.
• Good computer skills and ability to work without administrative assistance.
• Ability to perform work independently with a high degree of accuracy and close attention to detail.

Positive professional references are essential, especially with regard to the competencies of: flexibility (e.g., ability to see merit in various perspectives and to select appropriate strategies for complex situations); forward thinking (e.g., anticipates the implications and consequences of a situation, takes appropriate action to be prepared for possible contingencies); personal credibility (e.g., conveys a command of relevant information with demonstrated concern for reliability and trustworthiness); analytical thinking (e.g., weighs costs and benefits of risks, identifies many possible causes of a problem, notices discrepancies or incompleteness in available information); and, attention to written and oral communication (e.g., clear, concise, persuasive, appropriately tailored to the audience or situation).
Application Requirements
Please submit (1.) a cover letter that addresses the candidate’s qualifications and abilities to perform the listed duties and responsibilities (2.) a comprehensive resume including relevant education and experience, and (3.) a list of three professional references. Applications may be mailed to OCHE (Attention: Human Resources), PO Box 203201, Helena, MT 59620-3201, or emailed to OCHEhr@montana.edu, or submitted on the State of Montana Careers website (https://statecareers.mt.gov/). Electronic submission of application materials is encouraged.

The position is open until filled. Candidates should submit applications by 5:00 p.m. on June 25, 2021, to receive early consideration in an initial screening of applications. This position is eligible for veterans’ preference in accordance with state law. Approval will be obtained before contacting the candidates’ current employer.

Reasonable Accommodations: Under state and federal law qualified applicants with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Modifications or adjustments may be provided to assist applicants to compete in the recruitment and selection process. An applicant must request an accommodation when needed. If you need any such accommodation, contact the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education at 406-449-9155. TDD users may use the relay service by dialing 711.

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