



County of Sonoma (CA) Retirement Staff Attorney

SALARY	\$72.77 - \$88.45 Hourly \$5,841.53 - \$7,100.22 Biweekly \$12,656.64 - \$15,383.81 Monthly \$151,879.72 - \$184,605.76 Annually	LOCATION	Santa Rosa, CA
JOB TYPE	Full-Time	JOB NUMBER	26/04-0443-O
DEPARTMENT	Sonoma County Employees' Retirement Association (RET)	OPENING DATE	04/28/2026
CLOSING DATE	5/12/2026 11:59 PM Pacific	BARGAINING UNIT	50

Position Information

Are you an attorney with an interest in public pension law?
Advance your legal career and serve your community as a Retirement Staff Attorney with the [Sonoma County Employees' Retirement Association \(SCERA\)](#)!



Starting salary up to \$88.45/hourly (\$184,605/annually) and a competitive total compensation package!*

Join Our Team

The Sonoma County Employees Retirement Association (SCERA) is a small office that values customer service, collaboration, professionalism, consistency, proactive planning, flexibility, and innovative problem-solving. We are committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace where individuals from all backgrounds are welcomed, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.



The Retirement Staff Attorney provides legal advice and counsel to SCERA staff regarding the administration of retirement benefits and the interpretation of retirement laws. They are a key member of SCERA's management team, supporting disability retirement and benefit appeal cases. This position collaborates closely with Member Services and works directly with the Board of Retirement and external partners. While not a supervisory role, it offers significant influence in case strategy and organizational planning. Additional responsibilities include:

- Providing legal advice on retirement benefit administration and interpretation of applicable laws
- Researching and applying federal and state laws impacting public pension systems, including County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL), Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA), and disability retirement law
- Preparing legal documents and representing SCERA in administrative hearings and related court proceedings
- Analyzing medical, employment, and system records to support disability retirement and benefit appeal determinations
- Advising the Board of Retirement, collaborating with Member Services on case strategy, and supporting organizational planning
- Consulting with the Assistant Chief Executive Officer/Chief Legal Counsel on complex matters to ensure alignment with organizational policies and legal strategy

As the ideal candidate to join the SCERA team, you will demonstrate strong strategic and creative thinking abilities. While not mandatory, experience practicing law within a public agency, administrative, or governmental environment is highly desirable. Additionally, you will possess many of the following:

- The ability to interpret and apply public pension and retirement law, including CERL, PEPRA, and other public agency statutes, such as relevant provisions of the Labor Code or the Brown Act
- Experience preparing and presenting cases in administrative hearings, mediations, or litigation, including analysis of medical and employment records for disability-related matters
- The ability to advise government agencies or boards and communicate complex information in a clear, compelling manner
- Strong legal research and writing abilities, including using major research tools and producing well-crafted memoranda, briefs, motions, and hearing documents
- Analytical skills to interpret complex statutes, case law, medical evidence, and large volumes of documentation

What We Offer

Working at the County of Sonoma offers expansive opportunities for growth and development, the ability to be a part of a challenging and rewarding work environment, and the satisfaction of knowing you're working to better our communities. You can also look forward to flexible work arrangements and excellent benefits* including:

- **Salary Advancement** - A salary increase after 1,040 hours (6 months when working full-time) for good work performance; eligibility for a salary increase for good performance every year thereafter, until reaching the top of the salary range
- **Paid Time Off** - Competitive vacation and sick leave accruals, 12 paid holidays, and an additional 8 floating holiday hours per year
- **Staff Development/Wellness** - Annual benefit allowances of up to \$2,000 and ongoing education/training opportunities
- **County Paid Health Premium Contributions** - 100% premium contribution for the majority of employee-only and employee + family health plan options
- **Post-Retirement Health Reimbursement Arrangement** - County contributions to help fund post-retirement health insurance/benefits
- **Retirement** - A pension fully integrated with Social Security
- **Incentive Retirement Savings Plan (IRSP) and 457 Voluntary Deferred Compensation** - 3% of salary County contribution to a 401(a), in addition to the County matching up to 1% of base salary in a 401(a), based upon employee contribution

- **Paid Parental Leave** - May be eligible for up to 8 weeks (320 hours) after 12 months of County employment
- **Hybrid Telework** - A schedule that meets the needs of our staff, department operations, and the communities we serve may be available depending on the assignment
- **Additional Benefits:** Excellent dental, vision, disability, life insurance, employee assistance program, professional development, and more
- **Student Loan Debt Relief** – County employees may be eligible for [Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#) through the U.S. Department of Education

*Salary is negotiable within the established range. Benefits described herein do not represent a contract and may be changed without notice. Additional information can be found in the [Salary Resolution \(SalRes\)](#) and our [Employee Benefits Directory](#)

This recruitment is being conducted to fill a Retirement Staff Attorney position in SCERA. This employment list may also be used to fill future full-time, part-time, or extra-help (temporary) positions as they occur during the active status of the list. **Qualified County employees who wish to be considered for future positions should consider applying to this recruitment.**

Application submissions require the Supplemental Questionnaire to be completed.

Minimum Qualifications

Experience and Education: Any combination of experience, training, and education which would provide an opportunity to acquire the knowledge and abilities listed herein. A typical way to qualify is:

One (1) year of legal experience as a licensed attorney practicing law.

Professional License: Current active membership in the State Bar of California.

The position advertised on this announcement does not require possession of a valid California Driver's License.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Knowledge of: principles, methods, and practices of legal research and discovery; legal principles governing the administration of a benefit program like worker's compensation, disability benefits, or pension benefits; rules of evidence, civil procedure, and the conduct of administrative hearings and state court writ proceedings; legal principles governing family law, wills, trusts, and probate matters; legal principles governing contracts; California statutory and constitutional laws; provisions of laws and rules of procedures governing the conduct of hearings before administrative bodies; provision of the Ralph M. Brown Act, CERL of 1937, PEPR, and other laws governing public agency administration and/or a public employee retirement system; office procedures, equipment, technology, and related software applications; English usage, spelling, grammar, and punctuation; techniques for communicating effectively with culturally diverse stakeholders; techniques of preparing business correspondence and reports.

Ability to: research, analyze, and apply legal principles and practices; prepare, present, and conduct administrative benefit hearings and state court writ proceedings; prepare legal documents, including pre-hearing statements, briefs, motions, and legal opinions; present statements of fact, law, and argument clearly and logically in written and oral form; conduct comprehensive and analytical reviews of medical records and communicate complex medical and legal concepts; represent SCERA on various committees, with employee and community organizations, and in meetings; communicate orally and in writing in a clear, concise, and effective manner for audiences with varied backgrounds; understand and accept differences in human behavior; effectively interact with all populations, such as individuals from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, educational, generational, and/or socio-economic backgrounds; establish and maintain effective working relationships with SCERA staff, external partners, and stakeholders; work independently and as a

member of a team with minimal supervision; demonstrate strict confidentiality, integrity, professionalism, and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations; effectively use computer systems, applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.

Selection Procedure & Some Helpful Tips When Applying

- Your application information and your responses to the supplemental questions are evaluated and taken into consideration throughout the entire selection process.
- You should list all employers and positions held within the last ten years in the work history section of your application. Be as thorough as possible when responding to the supplemental questions.
- You may include history beyond ten years if related to the position for which you are applying. If you held multiple positions with one employer, list out each position separately.
- Failure to follow these instructions may impact your competitiveness in this process or may result in disqualification.

Please visit [Getting a Job with the County of Sonoma](#) to review more detailed information about the hiring process, including the application process, examination steps, and department selection process.

Application submissions require the Supplemental Questionnaire to be completed.

Responses to supplemental questions will be scored using position-specific criteria. Please provide specific and detailed responses of a reasonable length to allow for a thorough assessment of your qualifications. Responses that state, "See Resume" or "See Application" may be considered insufficient and therefore may not be scored.

The selection procedure will consist of the following examination:

An **Application and Supplemental Questionnaire Appraisal Examination** (weight 100%) will be conducted to evaluate each applicant's application and supplemental questionnaire for satisfaction of minimum qualifications (pass/not pass); and for educational coursework, training, experience, knowledge, and abilities which relate to this position. Personally identifiable information (PII) is removed from the standard application fields and applicable attachments. This PII blind screening practice redacts a candidate's personal information that could potentially influence or bias the scoring process. Personal information includes the applicant's name, former last name, address, phone number, email, driver's license number, school name, education start and end dates, age, date of birth, gender, and race. This PII blind screening practice helps contribute to a fair and equitable examination process.

Each applicant will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Relevance of work history, related experience, and achieved level of education and/or training as described in the application and responses to the supplemental questions.

Candidates demonstrating possession of the minimum qualifications will be placed on an employment list in order of most qualified to least qualified based on the achieved score received in the Application and Supplemental Questionnaire Appraisal Examination. Scores may be adjusted based on such factors as the number of candidates, anticipated vacancies, past practice, and natural breaks in the scores achieved by this group of candidates.

Additional Information

A background investigation is required prior to employment. Candidates referred to departments for a selection interview are typically required to sign authorization and release forms enabling such an investigation. Failure to sign prescribed forms will result in the candidate not being considered further for that vacancy. Reference information will not be made available to candidates.

Additional requirements, such as successful completion of a physical exam, drug screen, etc., may apply, depending on the duties and responsibilities of the position. If you receive a conditional job offer for the position, the requirements upon

which the offer is contingent will be outlined in the conditional job letter. You may also review the [Job Classification Screening Schedule](#) to determine the requirements for this position.

[How to Apply](#)

Applications are accepted online at www.yourpath2sonomacounty.org. Paper applications may be submitted by person, fax (707-565-3770), email, or through the mail. All applications and appropriate supplemental information as outlined in the job bulletin must be received by the time and date specified on the first page of this job announcement.

Continuous recruitments may close without notice at any time that a sufficient number of qualified applications have been received. Applications received after the recruitment closes will not be accepted.

The County of Sonoma values diversity and is dedicated to creating a workplace environment that provides individuals with a sense of belonging. We are committed to having a diverse workforce that is representative of the communities we serve. The County is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer where all aspects of employment are based on merit, competence, performance, and business need.

HR Analyst: JT

HR Technician: VH

Benefits

Important Note: Benefits described herein do not apply to Extra Help positions.

County of Sonoma Benefits: Management*

These are some of the excellent benefits the County offers:

Paid Time Off: Competitive vacation accrual and sick leave accruals; additional management leave annually; 12 paid holidays, and an additional 8 floating holiday hours per year; and may be eligible for up to 8 weeks (320 hours) of Paid Parental Leave after 12 months of County employment.

Health Plan: Choose from nine health plans (three HMOs, three deductible HMOs, and three HSA-qualifying plans) with a generous County contribution to the premium (the contribution amount varies by bargaining unit). For more information, please see the appropriate MOU.

Retirement: Fully integrated with Social Security. For more information regarding eligibility, retirement contributions, and reciprocity with prior public service, please visit <https://scretire.org/active-/-deferred/when-you-are-hired>.

IRS 457 Plan: Pre-tax employee contribution up to the IRS annual maximum.

Retiree Medical: County contribution to a Health Reimbursement Arrangement to help fund post-retirement employee health insurance/benefits.

Student Loan Debt Relief: County employees may be eligible for [Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#) through the U.S. Department of Education.

Plus, excellent dental, vision, disability, life insurance, professional development, and more.

For answers to specific questions regarding the employment process and more details about benefits or retirement, please contact Human Resources at (707) 565-2331. Additional details about benefit and compensation packages can be found in the MOUs located at [Labor Agreements & Salary Resolution](#). For specific information about health and welfare benefits, including plan options, coverage, and premium amounts, go to [Human Resources](#) or contact the Human Resources' Risk Management-Benefits Office at benefits@sonomacounty.gov or (707) 565-2900.

*Important Notes: Benefits described herein do not represent a contract and may be changed without notice.

Employer

County of Sonoma (CA)

Address

575 Administration Drive, Suite 116B

Santa Rosa, California, 95403

Phone

(707) 565-2331

Website

<http://www.yourpath2sonomacounty.org>

Retirement Staff Attorney Supplemental Questionnaire

*QUESTION 1

How did you first learn about this opportunity?

- Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)
- California State Bar Association
- California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
- Careers in Government
- College or University
- County of Sonoma Human Resources Office
- DiversityJobs
- Employee of Sonoma County
- Facebook
- Glassdoor
- GovernmentJobs.com
- Handshake
- Indeed
- Instagram
- Job Fair
- La Voz
- Latino Service Providers
- LinkedIn
- Los Cien
- Press Democrat
- sonoma-county.org/www.yourpath2sonomacounty.org
- Start Here!
- X (Twitter)
- Veterans Services Office
- Women's Organization or Group

- Other Internet Site
- Other Publication

***QUESTION 2**

Please indicate if you would also be interested in future part-time or extra-help (temporary, intermittent, or seasonal employment) positions should they become available. Check all that apply.

- I would also like to be considered for future part-time positions
- I would also like to be considered for future extra-help positions
- I am only interested in full-time positions

***QUESTION 3**

This eligible list may be used for future bilingual (English/Spanish) positions. Please indicate if you are interested in bilingual positions and your level of proficiency.

- Yes, I have basic (conversational) English/Spanish bilingual skills
- Yes, I have fluent (reading, writing, and conversational) English/Spanish bilingual skills
- No, I do not have English/Spanish bilingual skills, and/or I do not wish to be considered for a bilingual position

***QUESTION 4**

Do you possess current active membership in the State Bar of California? (If you respond, "Yes" please ensure you have included your Bar Number and Date Issued in the "Certificates and Licenses" section of your application materials).

- Yes
- No

***QUESTION 5**

For this question and all subsequent questions, provide sufficient information to allow for a thorough evaluation of your qualifications. Responses to supplemental questions may be scored using position-specific criteria and may be reviewed by hiring managers. Please describe your one year or more of experience providing legal counsel to client(s). Highlight if you have worked in an advisory, litigation, transactional, and/or another capacity for public sector cases.

***QUESTION 6**

Please describe your experience researching and interpreting complex statutes, regulations, or case law and providing legal advice to clients, management, governing bodies, or other decision makers. Include a brief example of written work such as legal memoranda, briefs, or policy guidance.

***QUESTION 7**

Please describe a situation where you had to explain a highly technical legal concept to a non-expert stakeholder to form a persuasive argument. How did you tailor your message while ensuring risks were understood and what was the outcome?

* Required Question