



# TRUSTEES FOR ALASKA

PROTECT | DEFEND | REPRESENT

**Position Title:** Legal Director  
**Supervisor:** Executive Director  
**Position Status:** Full time, Exempt

## **General Description of Position:**

The Legal Director is responsible for ensuring that the legal work conducted by Trustees for Alaska is carried out in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations and the highest standards of professional practice. The Legal Director supervises (directly and indirectly) and directs the legal staff in all legal work. The Legal Director must be a skilled manager and a team builder with strong collaborative and strategic thinking skills, and be comfortable with public speaking.

In addition to supervising and overseeing the legal staff, the Legal Director may also engage in substantive work on a limited number of cases and issues, as time allows. The Legal Director should be a skilled and experienced litigator and preferably be familiar with environmental and administrative law.

An important goal of the Executive Director and the Board is to create a powerful legal team to protect Alaska's environment. Meeting this goal requires a dynamic partnership between the Legal Director and the Executive Director. Together with the Executive Director, and with input from the legal staff, the Legal Director must be capable of making and supporting strategic case selections and legal work. The Legal Director must be creative and strategic in using available resources to advance the core values and mission of the firm.

The Legal Director also works closely with the Operations, Development, and Communications staff to ensure foundation funding and proper financial, personnel, and office systems management, and supports Trustees' communications efforts.

This position requires a commitment to social equity, racial justice, and to understanding how these issues play out in communities impacted by pollution, industrialization, and the climate crisis.

## **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Required**

- Excellent leadership, mentorship, supervision, and management skills;
- Excellent legal writing and analytical skills;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Critical and creative thinking, and problem-solving skills;
- Ability to mentor, supervise and oversee staff attorneys, legal fellows, interns, externs, and legal assistants.
- Ability to provide strategic advice and perspectives regarding litigation and legal components of campaigns and coalitions;
- Ability to work independently, effectively strategize and prioritize tasks, and flexibility to adjust when circumstances require;

- High degree of professional integrity;
- Courtesy and diplomacy in dealing with colleagues, clients, opposing counsel, and government agencies;
- Strong emotional intelligence and the ability to foster, work within, and support a collaborative, team-based environment; and
- Humility and strong understanding of the importance of resiliency.

**Education and Experience Desired**

- Law degree from accredited law school;
- Significant experience in law practice, preferably with public interest, administrative, natural resources or environmental law, including demonstrated litigation experience and strong foundational skills in case development and management, client management, and communications;
- Experience supervising legal staff;
- Experience working within coalitions or collaborating with different entities, stakeholders, etc. to achieve a common goal; and
- Membership and good standing of a state bar, and a willingness to gain membership into the Alaska Bar, and to be admitted to practice in front of the Federal District Court of Alaska, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court, as necessary.

**Working Conditions**

- 40-hour work week, using a flexible work-from-home and in-office hybrid model, and with additional night and weekend hours, occasionally necessary;
- Dog- and child-friendly office;
- Collegial and supportive work environment; and
- Occasional travel, including infrequent travel to remote areas.

The Legal Director will work collaboratively with the Executive Director to provide leadership and strategic vision for the organization in addressing major natural resource issues facing Alaska and in carrying out the following responsibilities.

**Primary Tasks and Areas of Responsibility****Case and Legal Matter Management, Planning and Coordination with Executive Director and Board (85%)**

- Collaborate with, mentor, and support legal staff to develop and implement legal strategies for legal issues and cases, including legal work planning;
- Ensure that all legal work of Trustees is conducted in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and accepted rules of professional conduct;
- Participate in hiring process for legal staff and work with legal staff to make recommendations for hiring to the Executive Director; establish annual performance objectives; conduct annual evaluations of staff attorneys, and oversee annual performance objectives and evaluations of legal assistants, fellows, and legal interns and externs;
- Conduct weekly to bi-weekly check-ins with all staff attorneys;

- Collaborate with staff attorneys and review substantive work product (major pleadings and comments on Trustees letterhead) in accordance with iterative and collaborative principles and processes;
- Ensure attorneys are well prepared for all work functions, including oral arguments, client meetings, media opportunities, and public hearings;
- Oversee supervision (conducted by senior staff attorneys) and work plans of legal assistants, fellows, and legal externs and interns;
- Develop requests in collaboration with staff attorneys and the Executive Director for approval by the Board of Directors to proceed with litigation in selected cases;
- Prepare regular reports to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors on the status of selected cases and legal work;
- Participate in board meetings; and
- Regularly communicate necessary information regarding status of litigation and other legal and policy work to the Executive Director.

**Case Intake and Client Relations (10%)**

- Review, evaluate, and respond to, or oversee the review of, requests for legal counsel, after consultation with the Executive Director and staff attorneys;
- Work with Executive Director and staff attorneys to set priorities and manage workloads each fiscal year, and work with staff attorneys to manage workload and identify areas for adjustment as necessary throughout the year;
- Maintain relations with non-Trustees lawyers to ensure Trustees' work fits into broader legal frameworks and strategies;
- In consultation with the Executive Director, and in collaboration with staff attorneys, develop, maintain, and fulfill written contracts with client groups, contract attorneys, experts, and other organizations; and
- In consultation with the Executive Director and staff attorneys, periodically consult with clients to ensure that Trustees' legal strategies support clients' advocacy, campaign, and education efforts.

**Litigation, Administrative Work, and Campaign or Coalition Participation (?%)**

- Provide representation on a limited number of selected legal issues, including litigation, administrative matters, or legislative efforts, as time allows and after collaboration with the Executive Director and staff attorneys about workload.

**Public Policy, Education, and Outreach (5%)**

- Work with the Alaska conservation community and other client bases to ensure efficient use of Trustees' legal resources and to help craft responses to emerging opportunities and challenges;
- In consultation with the Executive Director, and in collaboration with the staff attorneys, represent the positions of Trustees and the needs of its clients and constituents to public policy makers and government regulatory bodies at the local, state, and federal level;
- Prepare written material and oral presentations to educate client groups and the general public about environmental law;

- Participate in public interest law forums and assist in the presentation of legal workshops and forums;
- Work with Executive Director and development staff to assist in fundraising work and ensure correlation between fundraising targets and work priorities;
- Work with Executive Director and administrative staff to ensure all office systems – including computer, accounting, and billing – meet attorney needs; and
- Work with the Communications Director in communicating Trustees’ legal work to the public, Trustees supporters and funders, and media outlets.

**Results and Outputs Expected**

- Strategic, proactive, and forward-looking work planning;
- A legal staff that has the resources needed to provide excellent legal representation;
- Foster a collaborative culture and resilient legal staff that is well-mentored and supervised, where individuals feel supported and encouraged to continue to grow and hone legal skills and to lead in their work;
- Excellent legal work product, including memorandums, briefs, motions, proposed legislation and regulations, agency comments, and white papers from legal staff;
- Effective and timely communication with staff, board, clients, allies, opposing counsel, and agencies;
- Diligent timekeeping practices with accurate and detailed recording of all potentially fee-recoverable work and cost tracking;
- Compelling oral advocacy and public speaking; and
- Foster a collaborative and supportive culture, where individuals feel valued and part of a team across the organization.

**Behaviors Expected for Success**

- Leadership founded on creative and collaborative competencies;
- Treat others with dignity and respect;
- Be timely and professional in all interactions;
- Demonstrate initiative and accountability;
- Provide mentorship, supervision and oversight;
- Communicate unmet needs for achieving work goals;
- Provide robust and timely feedback to colleagues;
- Protect confidences of clients and Trustees; and
- Flexibility and a commitment to resiliency.

**Decision-Making Authority****Independent (no need for approval by Executive Director)**

- Supervision of legal staff;
- Docket management, including oversight of all substantive legal filings and submission of agency comments;

- Support collaborative discussions with staff attorneys in adopting new legal strategies or significantly departing from established legal strategies (report to Executive Director); and
- Spending for budgeted case-related costs up to \$750.

**Dependent (require approval by Executive Director)**

- Taking on a new matter or new issue;
- Legal work plans and allocation of legal staff resources to particular legal matters;
- Expenditures for experts, contract attorneys, etc.;
- Expenditures for legal trainings that exceed \$150; and
- Expenditures for travel costs.

**Collaborative (in support of staff attorneys)**

- Ensuring staff attorneys maintain contact with clients, agencies, and opposing counsel; and
- Ensuring staff attorneys are providing strategic legal advice to organizations, clients, coalitions, and colleagues.

**Input Only (involvement in decision is limited to providing input or recommendations)**

- Hiring;
- Budgeting; and
- Initiation of litigation or notice of intent to bring litigation.

**Disclaimer:**

This job description is meant as a general guide to the position and may not be inclusive of all responsibilities, expectations, and conditions that arise during employment. The Legal Director is also responsible for other duties as assigned.