



JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION: General Counsel

FLSA: Exempt

DATE: 08/2024

REPORTS TO: Executive Director

DEPT/DIV: Legal/Executive

GRADE: 15

RIHousing strives to ensure that all people who live or work in Rhode Island can afford a healthy, attractive home that meets their needs. A good home provides the foundation upon which individuals and families thrive, children learn and grow, and communities prosper.

To achieve our mission, we:

- Offer competitive and innovative single family and multi-family lending programs.
- Provide housing related education to consumers and others.
- Finance development that builds healthy, vibrant communities.
- Invest housing grants and subsidies to Rhode Islanders with the greatest need.

RIHousing uses its resources to provide low-interest loans and grants to help Rhode Islanders find, rent, buy, build, and keep a good home. Created by the General Assembly in 1973, RIHousing is a privately funded public purpose corporation.

RIHousing requires its employees to be highly motivated and knowledgeable, have a sound understanding of the changing needs of Rhode Island's housing market, be willing to work within and toward a smoothly integrated operation, demonstrate a commitment to serve the people of Rhode Island, especially those with low and moderate incomes in need of safe and affordable homes, and possess a high level of integrity and a deep respect for all Rhode Islanders, including customers, partners and fellow employees.

JOB SUMMARY

This key leadership position serves as the Chief Legal Officer for RIHousing. This position is responsible for the general administration and management of the RIHousing legal department. This position will oversee all legal functions for RIHousing and manage the agency's in-house legal staff and outside legal counsel. This position will be responsible for setting the direction and future of the legal department, and providing legal advice, counsel, and representation to RIHousing. The position is a member of the senior executive team, reports administratively to the Executive Director, with a client relationship with the Board of Commissioners.

JOB FUNCTIONS

This leadership position is responsible for the coordination, administration, and supervision of the legal functions for RIHousing. The incumbent will serve as a member of the senior Executive Team, provide insight and assistance with the implementation of RIHousing's strategic initiatives and maintain strong interdepartmental working relationships. The incumbent is responsible for providing substantive legal advice and services to RIHousing on a broad range of issues affecting the agency, including finance, real estate and development, homeownership, loan servicing, intergovernmental relations and policy, state and federal rental programs, human resources, as well as general corporate and corporate governance matters. The position entails legal, administrative and policy functions. The incumbent will serve as the Assistant Secretary of the agency, with primary responsibilities which shall include preparing and authenticating corporate resolutions, advising the Board of Commissioners on legal matters, and additional duties as determined by the Board of Commissioners. The



incumbent will also serve as Ethics Officer for the agency, with primary responsibility for ensuring the integrity of the agency and fostering an awareness of ethics laws and obligations. The incumbent will work closely with the Chief Admin Officer to develop and implement a formal compliance program for the agency, which will ensure RIHousing's ongoing compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The responsibilities of this position are essential to preventing and minimizing RIHousing risk exposure. The position will lead the development and implementation of legal matters that support RIHousing's mission, vision, strategic objectives, and core values. The incumbent must exhibit a strong customer focus and communication with all internal and external customers. Additionally, the incumbent is responsible for fostering and cultivating a high performing team that supports RIHousing's goals and values.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Lead and manage the legal functions of RIHousing. Coordinate and supervise the activities of the Deputy General Counsel, Senior Counsel(s), Legal Assistant/Paralegals, legal externs/interns and other regular or temporary department staff, as well as the activities of outside legal counsel.
- Provide substantive legal advice, interpretation, and counsel to RIHousing senior staff with respect to finance, human resources, real estate and development, homeownership, loan servicing, intergovernmental relations and policy, state and federal rental programs, public records, procurement, privacy, as well as general corporate and corporate governance matters.
- Provide advice to the Board of Commissioner, Executive Director, and Senior Staff in all legal matters relating to the administration and operations of RIHousing, including debt financing and housing tax credits, and render opinions when needed.
- Regularly attend meetings of the Board of Commissioners and other committees to provide legal analysis and advice pending matters, and preparing, reviewing and presenting corporate resolutions for consideration by the Board of Commissioners.
- Provide guidance to RIHousing's Commissioners, officers and employees in the interpretation and implementation of ethics laws and serve as a resource on ethics questions.
- Monitor and ensure RIHousing's ongoing compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- Provide legal analysis and opinions on laws, issues, and proposed legislation relevant to RIHousing and its programs and activities.
- Provide guidance in developing new programs and initiatives, and the creation of relevant form documents.
- Provide representation to RIHousing in state and federal courts and before administrative agencies and oversee outside counsel involving labor and employment, real estate, and loan transactions, public entity, and regulatory matters.
- Responsible for reviewing and drafting agreements, forms, policies related to RIHousing programs and ensuring that all documents comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
- Negotiate, prepare, review, approve and interpret contracts, real estate and loan documents and other legal instruments.
- Draft regulations and guidelines for the implementation of laws enforced by RIHousing.
- Responsible for the preparation and administration of the budget and oversee the resources of the legal department within agency parameters.
- Responsible for the professional development and management of legal department staff.
- Other duties and special projects as assigned by the Executive Director.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Juris Doctorate (JD) required from an ABA accredited law school
- Admission to the Rhode Island Bar required
- Degree or course work in housing, real estate, finance, public finance, or related fields highly desirable.
- Minimum ten years of legal experience in real estate finance, housing or related field and preferred background in municipal bond financing and/or mortgage-backed securities
- Minimum ten years of experience in and a proven record for successfully managing and developing professional employees
- Extensive knowledge and proven expertise in the relevant legal areas, including tax exempt and taxable debt issuance and mortgage-backed securities, low-income housing tax credits, real estate / commercial lending / housing law, information security and employment matters
- Broad knowledge of federal housing programs, laws and regulations preferred
- Proven understanding of general financial management principles, including experience in managing a budget
- Ability to think strategically with a visionary focus on future growth and stability
- Strong analytical/problem solving skills, including process analysis and improvement
- Strong ethical decision-making skills
- Proven leadership skills that are collaborative in setting a clear direction and supportive environment to ensure that goals and objectives are met while inspiring outstanding performance
- Complex problem-solving skills using a high level of creativity and ingenuity to drive the agency's operations while understanding and advising on the varying degrees of risk
- Skill in effective listening, communication, and presentation skills where all messages from and to diverse audiences can be heard and/or articulated in layman terms that inspire a high level of confidence.