



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Justice	Paralegal, Property Registries	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
82-12432	Yellowknife	Legal Registries

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Paralegal, Property Registries (“Paralegal”) supports the Registrar of the Property Registries (“Registrar”) with the administration of the Land Titles Office and the Personal Property Registry (“Registry”). The Paralegal has specialized training and skills in real estate transactions based on extensive experience in commercial law and land administration. The Paralegal ensures the work of lawyers, paralegals, or comparable GNWT positions (Land Administrators, Lands Specialists, Land Administration Officers, or Public Trustee Officers) was completed correctly, and in compliance with statutory or registry requirements.

## SCOPE

The Paralegal reports to the Paralegal Team Lead, Property Registries, in Yellowknife and works with 2 other Paralegals, 1 Paralegal Intern, and 2 Paralegal Assistants. The Paralegal holds statutory appointments as Deputy Registrar under the *Land Titles Act* and the *Personal Property Security Act*.

The Land Titles Office is responsible for the review and approval for registration of all property interests in privately owned land in the Northwest Territories, which includes land owned by municipal and Indigenous governments. These interests are defined and governed by the *Land Titles Act*, *Condominium Act*, *Northwest Territories Lands Act* and a wide variety of other Territorial and Federal legislation. The Personal Property Registry supports a legal system where financiers of personal property protect their interest in the property collateral by filing notice of their interest in order to establish legal priority against other creditors or subsequent purchasers of the property.

As legal staff, the Team Lead is a representative of the Registrar and must be reliable to maintain the confidence of the office. The Paralegal’s powers are defined by legislation and the Registrar’s delegations and instructions, in a workplace where precedents are available, but

when in doubt, questions are referred to the Paralegal Team Lead or Registrar.

The Paralegal is responsible for the legal review of documents submitted for registration. The documents are of varying complexity and must be carefully examined to ensure they comply with statutory requirements and the common law. Most submissions are lengthy, detailed, and written with formal legal language. In conducting the examination, the Paralegal must be able to accurately review a lawyer or other paralegal's work to identify errors, a skill obtained after extensive training or experience. This level of examination, to know and understand documents and make a decision if the submitter's work was correct, and to explain legal and registry systems, requires the Paralegal to have knowledge, skill, abilities, and experience that is comparable to, or exceeds, typical paralegals or similar positions.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Reviews documents submitted for registration; ensuring compliance with legislation and the common law.**

- The registration process is generally regulated and should be completed within 48 hours of submission. The Paralegal, as a Deputy Registrar, may be required to conduct the final review and registration in the absence of the Registrar or Team Lead. This typically occurs when a supervisor is not present, or due to the Torrens principles or limitation periods, the paralegal may not have time to refer the matter to a supervisor.
- Ensures Paralegal Assistants enter data from submitted documents into electronic computer systems, including the Northwest Territories Land Titles System (NTLS).
- Examines documents to ensure they are acceptable for registration or filing and comply with legislation and applicable jurisprudence.
- May need to review registered plans of survey.
- Verifies fees and Daybook entries established under the *Land Titles Act*.
- Acts as a delegated decision maker to determine if submissions comply with the law and registry requirements, or not.
  - Returns documents unacceptable for submission with a detailed, written explanation of the deficiencies. The accuracy and sufficiency of the reasons can be grounds for an appeal and have the potential to expose the GNWT to legal liability.
  - Responds to any subsequent enquiries regarding deficiencies.
- Affixes Daybook information onto submitted documents, as necessary.
- Prepares, cancels or updates certificates of title, as applicable.
- Enters the particulars of documents in the General Register and Writ Book section of NTLS.
- Organizes all documentation for final review by the Team Lead.
- Verifies updates to the plan indices within NTLS, as required.
- Seals documents, and separates those documents which must be retained (usually the originals), from those which are returned to the submitter.
- Assists with the preparation of documents and certificates of title for scanning and assists with scanning, as required.
- Accuracy and quality of the review by the Paralegal is of utmost importance; delays or improper registration or return of documents by the Paralegal can significantly affect

business and commerce (e.g. businesses may not be able to operate, fail to obtain financing, or be faced with a claim of breach of contract) and may subject the GNWT to liability. To uphold the principles of the Torrens System and ensure 100% accuracy, all work is verified by a second person.

**2. The Paralegal explains, educates and provides training to clients.**

- The Paralegal works in a team and customer service environment. The Paralegal must be able to work well with the public; with the ability to explain the registry system to frustrated and upset customers (including lawyers or persons now facing legal or financial consequences) with a high degree of tact and diplomacy. In so doing, the Paralegal will need to be able to explain why submissions were incorrect with confidence and professionalism. Dissatisfied customers may raise the matter to a political level and this position is responsible for ensuring clients are given information and influenced in a positive way. Furthermore, the Paralegal provides educational and technical assistance to clients, including members of the public, law firms, government agencies and corporations.
- Provides information to the public, the legal profession, and various government departments in response to enquiries.
- Provides advice as to other sources of information or other GNWT or municipal offices that may solve the client's objective.
- Provides training, public education and information services to frequent users of the Land Titles Office, paralegals and land administrators regarding registration standards and office policy.
- Provides information to, trains, and mentors junior staff and Paralegal Assistants.

**3. The Paralegal assists with the administration of the Personal Property Registry.**

- Assists in the administration of the Personal Property Registry in responding to public enquiries.
- Provides search services to clients who do not use the self-service system, Atlantic Canada Online (ACOL).
- Reconciling daily and monthly activity and revenue reports.
- Compiles and mails statutory notices to secured parties after verifying the address in accordance with the *Personal Property Security Act*.

**4. The Paralegal administers and supports the development of electronic computer systems.**

- The Paralegal works in a complex electronic environment with unique registry computer and electronic systems. This requires the Paralegal to be capable of communicating with computer programmers to develop computer systems. These skills require the Paralegal to understand registration principles, but to also communicate these, combined with business practices, to IT staff. Inaccuracies or errors can expose the GNWT to liability.
- The Paralegal must be able to instruct or guide users (clients, the public, other paralegals) how to use computer applications. This requires the Paralegal to be able to

effectively and clearly communicate applications into plain language and to troubleshoot IT problems.

- Communicates with IT professionals to explain business practices and registry requirements for the contractor to build IT applications.
- Conducts IT and application testing, evaluation and development.
- Recommends improvements to existing computer applications or systems.
- Provides training on system capabilities and functions to the public.

#### **5. The Paralegal assists the Registrar with the administration of the Registry.**

- Regardless of work volume, staff vacancies, or leaves of absences, there must be sufficient staff to perform all functions during statutory business hours, to maintain the consistent flow of registrations. As such, teamwork is critical and the incumbent must have flexible or staggered lunch, breaks, and leaves of absence with the team to ensure business operations continue uninterrupted; such demands may be imposed with little or no notice.
- Drafts correspondence.
- Acts as the Paralegal Team Lead as required.
- Provides requested copies and certified copies of documents.
- Assists in the maintenance of Registry records.
- Conducts financial reconciliations and deposits of revenue as required.
- Maintains statistical information regarding the registry operations.
- Undertakes projects (for example: taking steps to identify problem titles and initiating remedial action; updating manuals; updating precedents; preparing materials for the website; updating records to reflect expired registrations).
- Completes all other tasks or projects assigned by the Registrar in the administration of the Registry.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

#### **Physical Demands**

Most of the incumbent's time is spent in a sitting position with frequent opportunity to move about, but will be required to lift heavy materials and supplies on a regular basis.

Data entry for extended period can lead to fatigue and errors.

#### **Environmental Conditions**

No unusual demands.

#### **Sensory Demands**

Requires extremely high attention to detail in reviewing complex and lengthy legal documents to ensure compliance with legal requirements with 100% accuracy.

The processing of documents will involve frequent interruptions on a daily basis.

Good listening and excellent communication and intuitive skills are required at all times.

## **Mental Demands**

Concentrated attention to detail/accuracy in the review and preparation of legal documents.

The incumbent will be regularly exposed to a moderate level of mental stress. Responding to public demands and dealing with difficult clients on a regular basis can be stressful. The incumbent will frequently encounter irate and unreasonable clients that do not accept the explanation of legislation or policies causing a moderate degree of mental stress.

The incumbent will face continuous pressure to complete registrations within tight timeframes. Responding to registration deadlines even in circumstances beyond the person's control, such as high volumes of submissions or staff shortages. The incumbent lacks control over work pace due to irregular workflow and frequent changes in the nature and subject matter often involving significant and abrupt change in focus.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Specialized knowledge of real estate law and Torrens principles.
- Seasoned knowledge of conveyancing processes.
- The Paralegal must have solid knowledge of computer systems to understand computer logic and concepts on a daily basis.
- Knowledge of the principles of legal surveying and survey plan interpretation.
- Critical level of human relations, interpersonal and communication skills to provide customer service in a professional and courteous manner, and work with and influence upset or frustrated customers.
- Good organizational and time management skills.
- Basic understanding of computer programming skills.
- Proven attention to detail and ability to review and analyze legal documents.
- Ability to communicate both orally and in writing with the public, legal profession and stakeholders with clarity and tact.
- Ability to work in a computerized office environment utilizing advanced word processing functions, database, and spreadsheet, including an ability to work with computer systems and applications.
- Ability to deal with unhappy clients with tact and diplomacy.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively in groups.
- Ability to translate registration matters into business processes and computer programming.
- Ability to recognize unique issues/situations and deal with them appropriately.
- It would be an asset if the Paralegal was bilingual, English and French.

## **Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

A college paralegal diploma, and 3 years' experience working as a paralegal and 1 year of experience using registry computer systems or related information technology. Equivalencies will be considered.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Position Security** (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

### **French language** (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☒ French preferred

### **Indigenous language:** To choose a language, click [here](#).

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred