Managing Attorney
Full-Time, At-Will
Location: In-Person (Traverse City), Hybrid
Shifts/Hours: Weekdays, 8a-5p+ (Flexible)
FLSA Classification: Exempt
Reports to: CEO and COO
Last Revised: August 2024

Managing Attorney

Job Summary

The Managing Attorney is the driving force that steers the legal team towards success. This role requires a dynamic leader with a strong legal background and proven management experience. The Managing Attorney is responsible for leading and directing the legal team consistent with the organization's mission, vision and values. This role manages and monitors key performance indicators (KPI's) across the team, provides expertise in addressing legal and client matters, elevates skills across the team, and ensures high-quality legal representation. The role is additionally responsible for the documentation and continuous improvement of legal processes. This role performs a reduced case load in contrast to non-managing attorney roles. The Managing Attorney is part of the management team and reports to the CEO.

The ideal candidate shares our commitment to revolutionizing family law through empowerment, truth, excellence, respect, collaboration, and results. You believe families can emerge stronger from transitions and that every client has untapped potential. You pursue clarity through honest communication, maintain the highest professional standards, and understand that meaningful collaboration enhances rather than compromises strong advocacy. You measure success not just by favorable outcomes, but by the positive transformation you create in clients' lives and the advancement of justice for future generations.

Essential Functions

Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these essential functions.

Legal Team Direction

- Provides direct supervision of 7-10 attorneys and the Case Manager(s).
- Attends weekly case reviews of each attorney/paralegal "pod"
- Communicates, coaches and trains on standards, expectations, use and deployment of available legal tools and resources within the firm, promoting training and efficient use of available tools, ethical use of available technology in consultation with the leadership team, and use consistent with firm policies and procedures.
- Conducts bi-weekly 1:1 meetings with each attorney and with Case Manager(s) to provide individualized guidance, support, and performance feedback.
- Ensures appropriate and balanced workloads, identifying opportunities to allocate work to the lowest cost role capable of performing the work to firm standards, to increase capacity, reduce bottlenecks, and generally improve productivity, profitability, and client value.
- Ensures the Master Client List (MCL) is maintained as a source of truth for the organization.
- Promotes an environment where team members feel empowered to contribute ideas.

- Recognizes and acknowledges contributions by legal team members, while providing performance accountability as necessary and in accordance with policies.

Department & Leadership Team Collaboration

- Collaborates with department heads as necessary.
- Attends leadership meetings as representative of the Legal Department as directed.
- Identifies and communicates areas for improvement and implement solutions to streamline workflows, improve templates, incorporate automations, and otherwise create efficiencies.
- Ensures the legal team is appropriately supported with legal resources, technology, and tools. In collaboration with the leadership team, assigns and oversees team members to investigate and make recommendations for additional tools to enhance organizational legal operations.

Resource for Legal and Client Solutions

- Provides exceptional client service by addressing inquiries, directly or indirectly, ensuring client education and understanding around client questions, case strategy, and resolving issues to ensure client satisfaction and inspire positive client reviews.
- Serves as subject matter expert for legal team, including for complex cases, unique legal issues, and for all client matters.

Continuous Education

- Develops in-house training resources to memorialize and enhance legal acumen.
- Evaluates and makes recommendations for attorney continuing education opportunities.
- Fosters a culture of continuous learning and skill development within the legal team and encourages collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- Identifies and provide opportunities for legal team members to share their talents, expertise and to develop leadership and management skills through professional publications, speaking engagements and other professional development.
- Oversees attorney participation in the ICLE Partnership Family Law Certificate program, and coordinates attorney attendance at industry events as appropriate.

Case Management

- Manages and supports exceptional case management practices across the firm, marked by timeliness, organization, adherence and maintenance of case file standards, naming nomenclature, strategic planning, discovery plan creation, utilization of marital balance sheets, fact development, case progress, creation and clarity of assigned tasks to designated roles, exemplary calendaring practices, and effective documentation management and client communication and education.
- Supports organization in maintaining 360-degree awareness when a client is not in alignment with fee agreement to avoid conflict and allow early identification of when additional communication, withdrawal, or modification of the scope of legal services are appropriate.
- Develop, implement, and continuously refine comprehensive legal processes and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for all aspects of legal service delivery, ensuring consistent excellence in client outcomes, enhanced client education and communication protocols, and streamlined workflows that optimize case resolution timelines and quality of results across all practice areas.

Compliance

- Coordinates across the organization (Sales, Billing) as necessary to transition cases as part of retention/offboarding efforts.
- Ensures accurate/timely recording of time, adherence to firm billing policies and procedures.
- Ensures adherence to all relevant legal and ethical standards. Avoids and navigates conflicts of interests, and manages/educates the organization on client confidentiality, client secrets, sensitive and/or protected information.
- Ensure all organizational legal policies and procedures are followed.
- Performs pre-bill audits to ensure consistency with policies and further ensures employee education to remediate future issues.
- Protects proprietary firm assets.

Professional Development and Human Resources Support

- Supports Human Resources in continual recruitment and hiring of top talent consistent with company strategic objectives. Assesses and appropriately communicates organizational capacity/need. Jointly assesses new candidates for culture fit, professional maturity, and alignment with mission, values, and strategic plans.
- Manages performance to provide feedback, support growth, manage the improvement process and support retention of the legal team talent.
- Makes recommendations for, and develops legal team members for promotion, and in consultation the leadership team, identifies, develops and make recommendations for leadership and/or career advancement.
- Identifies and makes recommendations to the leadership team for family law specializations or legal service offerings.

Client Centered Excellence and Communication of Value

- Promotes “client-first” approach, ensuring high-quality service.
- Ensures effective client communication, proactive client education and strategies for managing and exceeding client expectations.
- Ensures legal team members present a professional image in accordance with policy.

KPI Management and Accountability

- 80 hours/month billable hours or 960/year.
- Meets firm targets by managing KPI’s for each legal team role, setting clear expectations, and providing accountability in accordance with policy and with the support of Human Resources. Provides and receives feedback as necessary.
- Supports Billing & Collections efforts to avoid Accounts Receivable balances on cases.
- Reports regularly on legal team performance, including client satisfaction and other key metrics.

Company Culture

- Aligns the team with the firm’s mission, vision and values, addressing conflicts swiftly to maintain a cohesive and attractive workplace culture.
- Fosters a culture of mutual respect, and collaboration in pursuit of excellence and growth. Ensures team members “show up” for clients with confidence, wisdom, preparedness, and compassion.
- Adapts leadership style based on context and the needs of the team.
- Helps each legal team member identify and pursue their professional goals that are in alignment with firm goals and support their development and well-being.

Other Duties

- This position is expected to be flexible regarding tasks completed, and may assist with other general, legal, or administrative tasks as requested.

Supervisory Responsibilities

- Direct supervision of 7-10 attorneys.
- Direct supervision of Case Manager(s).
- Indirect supervision of paralegals, legal assistants.

Core Competencies

- **Leadership:** Ability to inspire, manage and lead a team, fostering a culture of excellence.
- **Strategic Thinking:** Ability to think critically and strategically about the firm's operations, identifying opportunities for growth and improvement.
- **Legal Expertise:** Extensive knowledge and experience in litigation and growing understanding of family law, with the ability to manage complex legal issues.
- **Communication:** Strong verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to convey complex legal concepts to clients and staff clearly.
- **Process Improvement:** Ability to identify inefficiencies in legal processes and implement effective solutions.

Education and Experience

- Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree from an accredited law school.
- Admission to the State Bar of Michigan and in good standing, no disciplinary action in any State.
- Minimum of 10 years litigation experience, or in a judicial or semi-judicial role, with demonstrated expertise in legal strategy, family law, rules of evidence, negotiation, case management, and litigation.
- Ability to establish strong client relationships and trust, leading to repeat business and referrals.
- Ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment and prioritize tasks effectively.
- Business acumen and fiscal management skills.
- Commitment to upholding ethical standards and maintaining client confidentiality.
- Commitment to WKEDS firm values.
- Participation with plan to complete Family Law Certificate Program through ICLE
- Proven leadership and management experience, including management of a legal team and overseeing performance evaluations and professional development.
- Proven record of successful case management and client satisfaction.
- Record of mentoring and developing junior attorneys. Experience providing feedback on performance and managing accountability against KPI's for individuals and a team.
- Strong communication, interpersonal and conflict resolution skills.
- Strong networking and relationship-building abilities.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to measure the effectiveness and success of various tasks and duties within an organization. Success indicators for this position may change at the discretion of the organization, but include but are not limited to:

- **Team Performance:** Maintains 90% of team members meeting/exceeding their individual KPIs

- **Individual Billable Hour Performance:** 60 hours/month average. This may be achieved through billable individual case work and collaboration/consultation on cases of other attorneys within the organization.
- **Client Satisfaction: 85% or higher via client surveys**
- **Process Excellence:** Measurable improvements in case management efficiency, client education, SOP implementation, and team productivity metrics

Work environment and physical demands

This role operates in a professional office environment. Employees will work indoors using standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, filing cabinets, and fax machines. The position is largely sedentary, involving tasks performed while sitting. Some filing activities are required. Specific physical requirements include:

- Close visual acuity for tasks like preparing and analyzing data, transcribing, viewing a computer screen, and extensive reading.
- Ability to operate standard office equipment and keyboards.
- Walking short distances and occasional driving for material delivery.
- Lifting and carrying small parcels and packages.
- Standing, walking, and sitting.
- Stooping, kneeling, bending, and crouching (lifting to 25 pounds).

Travel

- Some regional travel (10-20%) is required.

Affirmative Action/EEO statement

Wilson Kester is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

Other duties

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time.

All positions are expected to always adhere to all company policies and procedures.

Signatures

This job description has been approved by:

President: ____ Date: _________________

HR: ____ Date: _________________

Employee signature below indicates the employee's understanding of the requirements, essential functions, and duties of the position.

Employee____ Date___________________

