



Legal Counsel

Overview:

The Afghanistan War Commission was established by the Afghanistan War Commission Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-81, §1094) as an independent commission in the legislative branch. It is charged with conducting a thorough study of all matters relating to combat operations, reconstruction and security force assistance activities, intelligence activities, and diplomatic activities of the United States pertaining to Afghanistan during the period of June 1, 2001 to August 30, 2022 by examining key strategic, diplomatic, and operational decisions. The Commission is further charged with developing a series of lessons learned and recommendations for the way forward that will inform future decisions by Congress and policymakers throughout the United States Government. It will deliver its final report in August 2026.

Position Description:

The Legal Counsel will be a key member of the professional staff, reporting directly to the General Counsel. This position will provide high-level legal advice and strategic guidance on a variety of issues, including interagency coordination on the Commission's access to classified and other proprietary government materials, support to interviews, administrative matters, ethics, and personnel matters. The Legal Counsel will work closely with the Executive Director, General Counsel, Research Director, and senior leadership to navigate complex legal questions, including those pertaining to the accommodations process between the executive and legislative branches and the Commission's unique status as an independent body supported by the Senate and Department of Defense. The ideal candidate will have experience in national security law, interagency coordination, and legislative affairs and familiarity with the Federal Records Act and Presidential Records Act, with a proven track record of advising senior leadership on complex legal and policy matters.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Legal Guidance and Strategy

- Provide expert legal advice to the commissioners and senior professional staff on complex issues involving national security, interagency coordination, and interviews and document discovery practices.
- Work closely with the Interviews and Information Team to ensure interviews of current and former officials and other key individuals are conducted in accordance with recognized standards of conduct.



- Advise on the legal implications of the Commission's activities and help develop policies and procedures to ensure compliance with relevant statutes and regulations.
- 2. Interagency Coordination and Negotiation**
 - Serve as a primary point of contact with interagency partners, including within the White House, Department of Defense, Department of State, U.S. AID, the Intelligence Community, and the National Archives.
 - Lead efforts to establish and implement legal frameworks for accessing classified and proprietary government materials and interviewing personnel while addressing concerns related to security, classification, and privacy.
 - Work with agency legal teams to resolve legal challenges.
- 3. Personnel Management and Ethics Oversight**
 - Advise commissioners and professional staff on ethics issues, including conflict-of-interest concerns, compliance with Senate Ethics Rules, and other legal considerations.
 - Support the operations director on staff hiring, onboarding, and personnel management.
- 4. Legal Support for Research and Interviews**
 - Provide legal guidance on the Commission's research activities, ensuring all data collection, interviews, and documentation are conducted in compliance with legal requirements, including privacy and classification concerns.
 - Advise on the development and implementation of protocols for interviewing government officials, veterans, foreign partners, and other key stakeholders, ensuring interviews are fair, credible, and legally sound.
 - Ensure that the Commission's research and interviews align with legal standards while safeguarding sensitive information.

Skills and Qualifications:

- **Experience:** At least 4-7 years of professional legal experience, with a focus on coordination between the executive and legislative branches. Prior experience in the Department of Defense, Department of State, U.S AID, Intelligence Community, and/or an oversight committee or committee investigations processes is highly preferred. Familiarity with the Afghanistan War is helpful but not required.
- **Expertise:** Familiarity with interagency coordination, document discovery, interviews, and record-keeping.
- **Skills:** Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate complex legal issues clearly and persuasively to senior leadership.



Strong negotiation and problem-solving skills, with experience managing relationships across multiple levels of government.

- **Attributes:** Strong strategic thinking and analytical skills, with the ability to handle multiple competing priorities and navigate complex legal issues. A proactive, results-oriented approach to problem-solving, coupled with a deep commitment to legal and ethical integrity.
- **Security Clearance:** TS//SCI.
- **Law Degree:** A J.D. from an accredited law school and membership in good standing with a U.S. state bar association.
- **U.S. citizenship required.**

Compensation and Benefits

Open to direct hire, federal government detail, and assignment under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act.

GS 14-15 equivalent pay scale equivalent depending on years of service and relevant experience.

Employees are entitled to a full range of federal employee benefits. See <https://www.opm.gov> for details

Why Join Us:

The Legal Counsel will play a key role in shaping the legal framework and policies that underpin the Afghanistan War Commission's groundbreaking work. This is a unique opportunity to advise senior government officials in crafting a comprehensive, insightful account of America's longest war, all while contributing to a high-impact, mission-critical project. You will have the chance to work on complex, novel legal issues, engaging with top leaders in government.

The Afghanistan War Commission is an equal opportunity employer committed to creating a diverse and inclusive staff to execute its mandate. It complies with hiring and personnel requirements of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, including those pertaining to non-discrimination, veterans' employment and reemployment rights, and veterans' preference. Because employees must have or be able to obtain a security clearance as a condition of employment, U.S. citizenship is required. The Commission participates in E-Verify.



AFGHANISTAN
WAR COMMISSION



How to Apply: Submit a current CV and statement of interest through our website at <https://www.afghanistanwarcommission.org/jobs> or via email to jobs@awc.senate.gov

Note: This job description is intended to outline the general nature of the work and is not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required for the role.