The Legislative Analyst’s Office

The LAO is seeking applications for its fiscal and policy analyst (FPA) positions and summer internship program.

The office does the following three main types of work for the Legislature:

- Analyzes the Governor’s annual budget proposal, testifies at legislative hearings, and conducts legislative oversight throughout the year.
- Responds to requests from Members of the California Legislature on programs and finances.
- Produces independent, self-generated reports to assist the Legislature in addressing the major fiscal and policy issues facing California.

Each year the office hires six to eight FPAs and three to four graduate summer interns.

Fiscal and Policy Analyst. The FPAs are the office’s experts in a specific policy area. Each analyst has their own policy portfolio and is assigned to one of the four following sections: State and Local Finance; Education; Health and Human Services; or Corrections, Transportation, and Environment.

Summer Internships. The LAO operates a paid 12-week summer internship program that provides a rigorous analytical experience for individuals who (1) have completed the first year of a two-year graduate program that provides both a quantitative and policy analytical curriculum and (2) are interested in becoming a full-time FPA.

Examples of LAO’s recently published reports:

- Allocating Utility Wildfire Costs: Options and Issues for Consideration
- What Can Be Done to Improve Local Planning for Housing?
- Structuring the Budget: Reserves, Debt and Liabilities
- Improving Access to Dental Services for Individuals With Developmental Disabilities
- The California State Bar: Considerations for a Fee Increase
- Assessing California’s Climate Policies
- Evaluation of Cal Grant C Program

Applications for the FPA and internship positions are due December 20, 2019.
The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) provides nonpartisan fiscal and policy analysis to the California Legislature and has done so since 1941. The LAO (1) assists the Legislature in all aspects of the budget process, through its analytical and oversight activities; (2) responds to legislative requests for information and analysis of the state's budget and programs; and (3) conducts independent studies and produces self-generated reports on topics of importance to the state.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The fiscal and policy analyst's primary responsibility is to be the LAO's expert in the policy area to which he or she is assigned. These assignments fall into one of the following general areas: state finance; local government; health; human services; K-12 education; higher education; transportation; resources and environmental protection; or criminal justice. Toward this end, an analyst:

- Spends considerable time in the field learning first-hand how programs work in practice.
- Keeps up on the laws and available literature in the program area.
- Knows and stays in contact with legislative, administrative, and intergovernmental staff, as well as industry groups and nonprofit organizations in the assigned policy area.

The analyst uses this expertise to:

- Identify and analyze budget and policy issues and develop options and recommendations for the Legislature to address these issues. These analyses are contained in reports, legislative assignments, and initiative and ballot pamphlet write-ups.
- Testify before legislative committees on fiscal and policy issues.
- Serve as a fiscal and program resource to legislators whenever needed.

Because analysts are nonpartisan fiscal and policy staff, it is essential their work be objective, analytical, accurate, and thorough. In addition, for the analyst's work to be useful to the Legislature, it must be solution-oriented and performed in a timely manner.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must possess a master's degree in public policy, public or business administration, economics, or a related field that includes a curriculum of economics, statistics, public finance, and policy analysis. In addition, analysts must: (1) possess strong quantitative and analytical skills; (2) be able to communicate effectively through clear and concise writing and oral presentations;
(3) work well with others in a fast-paced and production-oriented environment;
(4) learn quickly, show initiative, and be willing to take on increasing levels of
responsibility; and (5) be proficient in Microsoft Excel and Word.

COMPENSATION

The entry-level salary for the fiscal and policy analyst position is approximately
$70,000 per year. The office will consider salaries that are above this amount,
depending on the candidate's qualifications and experience. Salaries for senior
fiscal and policy analysts (analysts who have demonstrated the ability to perform all
analytical tasks and produce all office products with a minimum amount of
supervision) begin at approximately $101,000 per year. Salaries for principal fiscal
and policy analysts range from $120,000 to $138,000 per year.

The LAO also provides a comprehensive package of health, vision, dental, and
retirement benefits.

In addition, the LAO provides vacation, sick leave, compensatory time off for
overtime above a specified level, and about 13 holidays per year.

APPOINTMENT STATUS

Permanent, full-time

PROPOSED STARTING DATE

August 2020 (flexible)

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Application deadline: December 20, 2019

Applicants should submit a resume, cover letter, and three references (name,
relationship and phone numbers only) by the deadline. All requested information
must be submitted for your application to be considered.

Please email your application packet to: lao.employment@lao.ca.gov

For further information regarding application procedures, you may contact Sarah
Kleinberg, administrative officer, at sarah.kleinberg@lao.ca.gov. You may also visit
www.lao.ca.gov for additional information.