

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date

2026-02-24

2. Department

California Earthquake Authority (CEA)

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Legal and Compliance

4. CEA Position Title

General Counsel

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose. (2-3 sentences)

Under the general direction of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the CEA, the General Counsel (GC) serves on the CEA executive management team and is responsible for all aspects drafting and implementing policy and providing sound legal advice. This position oversees the delivery of legal services and advise to the CEA Governing Board, CEA Advisory Panel, and California Catastrophe Response Council required for the operation, administration, and other related legal functions of the earthquake insurance and Wildfire Fund programs. This position is essential to CEA's core mission and purpose of administering and managing the operation of two multi-billion dollar insurance programs – one for residential earthquake insurance, and a second program for wildfires caused by utility companies.

6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

7. Relationship with Department Director (Select one)

- Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(Explain):

8. Organizational Level (Select one)

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

The General Counsel (GC) is the head of CEA legal operations and reports directly to and advises the Chief Executive Officer. In addition, the GC maintains legal advisory responsibilities to three separate public bodies: CEA Governing Board, CEA Advisory Panel, and California Catastrophe Response Council.

Through effective, accurate, and efficient delivery required for the prudent operation of CEA, the GC provides legal advice and policy direction to the executive leadership and management teams on the operation of residential earthquake insurance business, as well as legal obligations required as the Administrator of the California Wildfire Fund (CWF).

In addition, the GC supervises, directs, and oversees the operations and activities of all CEA legal and compliance services, including CEA-employed attorneys, paralegals, and outside law firms retained for highly specialized legal services, as well as analytical and management staff in Enterprise Compliance Management, Procurement Program and Department Project Management, and Public Body Governance.

The General Counsel will:

- Act as lead subject matter expert on the legal obligations with regard to CEA's role as Administrator to the CWF
- Provide advice and policy direction, implementation, revision, and interpretation regarding internal and external legal issues, including, employment law, privacy, legislative and regulatory proposals, and the results of analysis, research, and negotiations related to activities in the Legal Department and CEA
- Responsible for oversight and management of the delivery of legal services required for CEA functions and supporting policy, including finance, operations (e.g., insurance policy drafting, policy administration, claims adjusting, reinsurance and risk transfer administration, CWF administration), CEA non-insurance program activities (including earthquake loss mitigation), marketing, and public and policyholder outreach and education
- Advise members of public bodies on legal matters, including litigation, contracting, the issuance of revenue bonds and entry into capital markets contracts, and reinsurance and risk-transfer contracting in the global reinsurance markets (acquiring coverages of approximately \$10 billion per year with associated reinsurance premiums of approximately \$500 million per year)
- Provide legal advice and policy direction on the proper interpretation and application of CWF enabling legislation, insurance coverage documentation for covered investor-owned utility companies (IOUs), the promulgation and maintenance of Wildfire Claims Administration Procedures, monitoring of IOU Catastrophic Wildfire Proceedings before the CPUC, coordination and legal oversight of the collection of non-bypassable charges by the Department of Water Resources for the benefit of CWF, and legislative policy and reporting requirements
- Oversee CEA counsel advice on areas including insurance law (e.g., insurance regulation, insurance contracting, insurance claims), government and regulatory law, finance (e.g., government finance and capital markets transactions), intellectual property, employment law, employee benefits matters, federal tax law, and litigation
- Provide direction to enterprise-wide compliance risk management, compliance and ethics awareness, and complex compliance program and policy development and analysis
- Direct the development of policy regarding all legal issues within CEA
- Ensure appropriate attention to and enforcement of labor contracts pertaining to CEA employees and consistent enforcement of CEA policies and procedures
- Provide legal oversight into the development, implementation, and tracking of all legislative bills affecting CEA
- Work with internal and external stakeholders on bill analysis and development
- Provide sound legal expertise, research, and advice on legislative matters, liaise with the Senate and Assembly legal experts on legislative matters that pertain to CEA and CWF
- Oversee the legal protections of mandatory obligated protected personal data
- Develop, implement, revise, and interpret privacy policies
- Manage and oversee privacy requests, create and implement privacy training plans for the department
- Provide legal consultation and advice on data breach notifications and investigations

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The GC is a participating member of the CEA executive team and a direct advisor to all executive staff members. As such, the GC provides policy oversight, interpretation, implementation, and legal advice at the highest level within CEA. The GC plays an integral role to support the mission of the CEA and provides executive level direction and mitigates risk and on a variety of critical departmental functions, including:

Legal Affairs - Advises all CEA departments on legal affairs and policy direction, implementation, and interpretation, such as employment, personnel, budget, claims handling, competitive procurements, service/vendor contracts, etc., and the legal department provides legal advice and legal opinions on all aspects of these matters and is the primary drafter of a majority of legal agreements pertaining to the CEA.

Policy and Compliance - Maintains oversight and provides direction on various agency policy administration and compliance matters, including compliance risk management, mitigation, procurement, and policy development and analysis.

Regulatory Matters - Advises on legislative and regulatory proposals, legislative bill tracking, legislative bill drafting, including the proper interpretation and application of legislation, as well as government and state regulatory law pertaining to the law of insurance, contracts, intellectual property, privacy, employment law/benefits, and taxation.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

CEA is a not-for-profit insurance company established by the California legislature in 1995-1996. CEA is the largest residential earthquake insurer in the country and one of the largest in the world. In addition to the insurance function of financing repair and rebuilding should a catastrophic earthquake occur in California, CEA also educates and financially helps residents strengthen their homes to reduce the impact and cost of earthquake losses.

Since its inception in 1996, CEA has grown to cover more than 80% of the residential earthquake insurance market which includes the additional private insurers that have come on board as CEA participants. CEA has experienced almost explosive growth since 2016. Today, CEA has 24 participating insurers and covers more than 1.1 million policies throughout California, with more than \$18 billion in claim-paying capacity and more than \$850 million in annual premium revenue. CEA is privately funded and publicly managed, its business purpose is comparable to that of a private-sector residential property insurance company and requires oversight on a legal basis by the GC.

With the passing of AB1054, in addition to the legal and policy advise responsibilities required for residential earthquake insurance business, the GC acts as the lead subject matter expert on the legal obligations with regard to CEA's role as Administrator of the California Wildfire Fund (CWF). This requires a working knowledge of CWF legislation in order to properly interpret the application, insurance coverage documentation of investor-owned companies, Wildfire Claims Administration Procedures, and associated legislative policy and reporting requirements. In 2025, AB 254 was passed, increasing the scope of the CWF. This bill is heavily visible and has received significant publicity which requires the GC to closely monitor and provide enterprise-wide legal advice.

Additionally, over several years and with expanded compliance requirements, the compliance staff has increased and has been deemed the Compliance and Legal Operations unit. The Compliance and Legal Operations unit serves as CEA's Equal Employment Opportunity office, Disability Advisory Committee Coordinator, and oversees functional areas including Enterprise Compliance Management, Procurement Program, Legal Department Project Management, and Public Body Governance. The GC maintains oversight and directs operations of the expanded unit and all enterprise-wide compliance matters.

Additional responsibilities of the GC will now include legal privacy oversight. In the past, legal privacy matters were entirely managed by an outside privacy legal firm. To mitigate risk and have clear oversight of privacy matters, legal privacy oversight will now be managed in house and CEA will consult when necessary with outside firms. Duties will include providing expert level legal leadership and oversight into all aspects of CEA's Privacy Program by providing enterprise-wide oversight; developing, implementing, revising, and interpreting privacy policies; working with the Chief Information Security Officer, outside Privacy Legal Counsel, and CEA's InfoSec Unit to manage all aspects of data protection and regulatory compliance and safeguard confidential and sensitive personal information; advising executive leadership team, internal and external stakeholders, and program areas on privacy-related issues; overseeing the legal aspects of CEA's privacy incident response, including cross-functional coordination, regulatory notifications, containment, remediation, and post-incident reviews; ensuring all CEA staff are provided with privacy training, develops, implements and revises privacy training to ensure emerging threats are addressed; advising on and supporting secure handling of personal information, mitigating compliance risks, and ensuring continuous improvement of privacy practices across the organization; development of scope for outside Privacy Counsel and defining clear roles delegated duties with outside counsel; overseeing and conducting privacy investigations and consult with privacy subject matter experts on privacy matters.

The GC will maintain oversight of legislative affairs that affect CEA and CWF. Duties include development, tracking, and revisions to legislative policies related to enacted, pending, and proposed legislative mandates and proposals; oversee the development and implementation of strategic policy, procedural, and operational initiatives; provide legal advice and counsel to the CEO, Assistant Chief Counsel, and the Legislative Specialist; conduct legal research and prepare, review, and analyze legal briefs, service agreements, licensing agreements, amendments, renewals, correspondence, and memorandums; oversee legal counsel, paralegal, and legislative specialist in determining and implementing policies related to legal, legislative, and procedural matters; evaluate and propose policy amendments based on the immediate and long-term operational, legal, and fiscal impacts to CEA; coordinate with all CEA departments on legal matters, provide legal consultation and provide legal advice; flag legal issues requiring GC, CEO, or board review and escalation; oversee the tracking and development of senate and assembly bills, amendments, and legislative proposals; work with internal and external stakeholders, lobbyists, Senate and Assembly legal staff in the creation, revising, and tracking of new bills; provide legal expertise and oversight to legislative staff and stakeholders. These duties were previously handled by a singular employee: a Legislative Director. The prior incumbent retired December 2025, and the decision was made to mitigate risk of missing bills, legislation, laws and regulations that may arise by having the legal team track and research now legislative actions.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

The GC directs the operations and activities of all CEA legal matters, is responsible for oversight and management of the delivery of legal services required for all CEA functions and supporting policy, and provides strategic legal advisory support to the CEO, CEA's Governing Board, California Catastrophe Response Council, and executive management team. Additionally, the GC is consulted on or provides policy direction on various CEA issues ranging from finance and claims to negotiating contracts to employee benefits.

The GC position oversees and provides direction on all aspects of the CEA's comprehensive compliance program. The functional areas of the compliance program, of which the GC provides policy and program consultation and advise, include Enterprise Compliance Management, Procurement Program, Legal Department Project Management, and Public Body Governance, as well as the Equal Employment Opportunity office and the Disability Advisory Committee, and encompasses compliance risk management, compliance and ethics awareness, and associated complex program and policy development and analysis.

CEA is subject to and is the promulgator of regulatory law, primarily government and state regulatory law that pertains to the law of insurance. The GC provides advice and direction on regulatory matters related to contract, insurance law, finance, intellectual property, federal tax law, and employment law, as well as departmental impact of legislative and regulatory proposals.

The GC position plays a vital part in understanding and executing CEA's role as Administrator of the CWF to ensure the fund is implemented and managed appropriately. This includes advice on the proper interpretation and application of CWF enabling legislation, insurance coverage documentation, maintenance of Wildfire Claims Administration Procedures, and associated policy and reporting requirements. Additionally, the GC is instrumental in implementing and interpretation of AB 254 enacted in 2025 increasing the paying capacity and oversight of the CWF. AB 254 has a direct impact to all California Homeowners and offers a layer of protection in the event of a wildfire; which highlights the importance to sound policy governance.

The GC oversees the formulation, development, and implementation of policies and decision-making authority in executing CEA legal privacy matters. The GC recommends improvement to new and existing privacy policies and practices, when needed. CEA is the largest earthquake insurer in California, and has direct contact with 21 private insurers. Homeowner and contractor information contains personal identifiable information. It is vital that privacy and privacy policies and governance is sustained at the highest level. The policy impact affects Californians statewide.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?

As part of the executive team, the GC has the decision-making authority in executing Legal and Compliance strategy of CEA's overall mission, goals, objectives, organizational plan, and strategic direction. The GC recommends improvements to new and existing policies and practices, when needed and is responsible for policy development and implementation in the following functions and programs.

The GC serves as the policy advisor to provide extensive policy and program consultation and advice to the CEO, CEA's Governing Board, California Catastrophe Response Council, executive staff, and senior leadership regarding sensitive, complex and critical legal matters, legal consultation, legal advice, legal research, and legal strategy.

The GC has direct oversight of the Legal and Compliance operations and is the the primary point of contact for department-wide Legal and Compliance matters and strategy to assist internal and external stakeholders in achieving desired legal goals. In addition, the Legal and Compliance Department is responsible for aligning and monitoring CEA's policy and procedural compliance, as well as managing enterprise-wide legal matter intake which will provide value and advance the strategic direction of CEA as provided by the executive management team.

The GC position reports directly to the CEO and serves as a member of the executive team. As such, the GC has executive level decision-making authority on all the legal and policy aspects related to CEA operations and activities as noted above.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

The GC is responsible for formulating, developing, and implementing of policies, procedures, and decision-making authority in executing Legal and Compliance strategy of CEA's overall mission, objectives, organizational plan, and strategic direction. The GC recommends improvements to new and existing policies and practices when needed. The GC is the final reviewer and approver of all existing and updated policies drafted by reporting staff. Additionally, the GC supplies high level interpretation of current policies.

The GC identifies and develops new policies, revises existing policies as new and emerging laws and best practices occur, and enforces enterprise-wide policies related to Legal matters, Legal services, Privacy, procurement, and oversight while ensuring alignment with CEA's legal strategic goals. For example, the GC develops and implements the enterprise procurement management policy to regulate how procurement request are facilitated. The GC also develops and executes privacy strategies and structures required to protect and mitigate the risks to CEA data, intellectual property (IP), and assets.