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The State of New Hampshire
Insurance Department
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 14
Concord, NH 03301

David J. Bettencourt
Commissioner

September 22, 2023

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and The Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

In accordance with RSA 94:6, the Insurance Department respectfully requests to place Roni Karnis at Step 6 for the position of General Counsel (9U429), unclassified salary grade GG, earning $116,031.00 annually, effective upon the first day of the first pay period following Governor and Council approval. Funding is 100% agency income.

EXPLANATION

The Insurance Department's General Counsel position requires a specialized skill set for managing, supervising, planning, and implementing the activities, operations, and goals of the Legal Division. The Legal Division consists of three sub-units, Legal Counseling, Enforcement, and Fraud, and consists of 13 employees, including 6 attorneys. General Counsel coordinates the work of the Legal Division in addition to other units within the Department to provide legal counsel and support to the Commissioner, in consultation with the Department of Justice as required, on a range of complex and consequential insurance regulatory matters.

Ms. Karnis earned her Juris Doctorate from New England Law and has been practicing in New Hampshire for 24 years. Ms. Karnis has experience in the private practice of law, as well as litigation and regulatory experience in the public sector where Ms. Karnis worked with local, county and statement governments. Ms. Karnis' current position is Life, Annuity and Ancillary Health Legal Counsel, where she has excelled in her work and has been assisting in many aspects of the general counsel role since early July when the position became vacant.

The Insurance Department is seeking approval from Governor and Council to compensate Ms. Karnis' unclassified position at the annual salary of $116,031.00 with a starting date of October 6, 2023. The source of funds is 100% agency income.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Bettencourt
Insurance Commissioner

Roni M. Karnis, Esquire

[redacted]

Admitted in New Hampshire

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

State of New Hampshire, Dept. of Insurance — Dec. 2018 - present
Life, Annuity and Ancillary Health Legal Counsel

- Provide legal guidance to all department divisions, including Market Conduct, Financial Examinations, Compliance, Consumer Services and Licensing regarding life insurance, annuities, PFML, disability, Medicare supplemental, Tricare supplemental, long-term care, and all non-major medical health products (individual and group)
- Department representative on State team implementing the voluntary Granite State Paid Family Medical Leave Program, authored State's first PFML insurance rules and serve on the Paid Family and Medical Leave Advisory Board
- Serve as legal counsel on special project teams with other department staff to plan and execute initiatives as determined by the Legislature or the Department
- Responsible for achieving long-range Department regulatory objects by planning short-term and long-term organizational goals and determining appropriate legislative and regulatory responses to changing market conditions and emerging regulatory issues, including drafting, coordinating and monitoring Department-requested legislation and administrative rules, representing the Department before the General Court and JLCAR, and participating in task force committees of the NAIC
- Legal counsel to the Commissioner regarding financially impaired CCRCs
- Serve as hearing officer at Department administrative hearings when appointed

BAE Systems, Inc. — March 2018 – Dec. 2018
Subcontract Administrator Principal

- Perform all aspects of subcontract administration pursuant to FAR/DFAR projects, including drafting RFPs, negotiating contract terms and conditions, and management of contract performance and compliance

State of New Hampshire, Dept. of Safety — Dec. 2016 – March 2018
Circuit Court Prosecutor

- Implemented a full-time prosecution office for Troop E and part-time office for Troop F and Marine Patrol for all northern NH counties, including implementing court training for law enforcement
- Lead counsel in all phases of misdemeanor cases through trial and sentencing, as well as felony probable cause hearings

Belknap County Attorney's Office — July 2011 – Dec. 2016
Laconia, NH

- Lead counsel on a wide range of felony cases including Sale of Controlled Drug – Death Resulting, Negligent Homicide, Armed Robbery, Second Degree Assault, and Elder Abuse/Financial Exploitation
- Draft indictments and conduct presentations to grand jury
- Conduct all phases of case preparation including expert retention, motions, and depositions
- Conduct evidentiary hearings, jury trials and sentencing hearings
- Assist in law enforcement training
- Mentor new attorneys and supervise staff
- Provide 24-hour on call legal advice to law enforcement

Law Office of Roni M. Karnis — Aug. 2010 – May 2011
Ashland, NH

- General practice

State of New Hampshire, Dept. of Safety — July 2003 – May 2010
Circuit Court prosecutor

- Lead counsel prosecuting misdemeanor and motor vehicle offenses
- Monitor changes in laws and assist in the development of new policy and procedure
- Assist in law enforcement training

Law Office of Roni M. Karnis — May 2002 – July 2003
Methuen, MA

- General practice concentrating in criminal appellate work

Rockingham County Attorney's Office — Jan. 2001 – May 2002
Assistant County Attorney

- Lead counsel prosecuting misdemeanor and felony cases
- Conduct all phases of case preparation through trial and sentencing

FAMM Steel, Inc. — Feb. 2000 – Dec. 2000
In House Counsel

- Negotiate and draft contracts and subcontracts
- Contract administration
- Liaison with outside trial counsel on litigation matters

Horizon Management Group, LLC. — June 1997 – Aug. 1998
Boston, MA

- Law clerk - research reinsurance/contract issues under U.S., U.K. and Canada law

United States Attorney's Office — Jan. 1998 – April 1998
Boston, MA

- Post-litigation department internship - legal research and writing

McDonough & O'Shaughnessy, PA — Jan. 1988 – Jan. 2000
Manchester, NH

- Insurance defense legal assistant, law clerk and contract attorney positions
- Case management
- Conduct all phases of written discovery including interrogatories and requests for production of documents and schedule depositions
- Draft final pretrial statements, pleadings and reports to insurance carriers
- Prepare jury instructions and final settlement releases

EDUCATION

New England School of Law – Juris Doctor, Boston, MA
Notre Dame College – Bachelor of Arts in Paralegal Studies, Manchester, NH

ASSOCIATIONS

Paid Family and Medical Leave Advisory Board, Secretary — 2022 – present
Town of [redacted], ZBA — 2013 – 2020