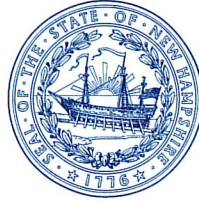


**ATTORNEY GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

101- 7/29/26

1 GRANITE PLACE SOUTH
CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03301

JOHN M. FORMELLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL



JAMES T. BOFFETTI
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

July 10, 2026

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Your Excellency and Members of the Council:

REQUESTED ACTION

That approval be and hereby is given to the Attorney General to appoint Patricia L. Benner as an Attorney to Position #9U635 (Appropriation #02-20-20-200510-26200000-013-500132) at a salary level of \$102,000, effective upon Governor and Executive Council approval, or August 7, 2026, whichever is later. 100% General Funds.

EXPLANATION

Ms. Benner, an Amherst resident, earned her Bachelor of Science in Paralegal Studies, *cum laude*, from Rivier College (now Rivier University) in 1993, with a minor in Philosophy. In 1997, she earned her Juris Doctor from the Franklin Pierce Law Center (now UNH Law). During that time, she served as a legal intern at Hillsborough County Attorney's Office. She began her legal career at Hillsborough County Attorney's Office, working as a paralegal until a position opened for an Assistant County Attorney, where she prosecuted felony and misdemeanor criminal cases from indictment through trial or negotiated resolution. In 2003, Ms. Benner opened her own office, Law Office of Patricia L. Benner, PLLC, where she managed a private law practice representing clients in court proceedings, administrative matters, and family-related legal issues. Since 2023, Ms. Benner has been a Hearings Officer/Legislative Coordinator at the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food, where she serves as the agency's presiding officer for administrative proceedings and provides support for legislative and regulatory initiatives. Considering Ms. Benner's experience, I am requesting that she be appointed as an Attorney with a salary of \$102,000. She will be assigned to the Civil Law Bureau's Elections Law Unit. Her resume is attached.

RSA 21-M:3 and RSA 94:1-a(I)(c) provide that the designation of positions, salary levels, and salary increases for attorneys at the Department of Justice shall be determined by the

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
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Attorney General, subject to approval of the Governor and Council, within appropriations made to the Department of Justice.

I am very pleased to offer Ms. Benner's appointment as an Attorney at the above-referenced salary for your approval and respectfully urge your favorable consideration. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,



John M. Formella
Attorney General

#5627533

PATRICIA L. BENNER, ESQ.

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Attorney with over twenty years of legal experience in government service and private practice. Extensive background in administrative adjudication, criminal prosecution, and litigation. Experienced in presiding over hearings, issuing written decisions, conducting regulatory rulemaking, and advocating in trial courts. Recognized for sound legal judgment, strong analytical abilities, and the ability to communicate effectively with government officials, stakeholders, and members of the public.

AREAS OF LEGAL EXPERTISE

Administrative Hearings & Adjudication
Administrative Rulemaking & Regulatory Analysis
Trial Litigation & Courtroom Advocacy
Legal Research and Persuasive Writing

Negotiation & Dispute Resolution
Statutory and Policy Interpretation
Stakeholder and Legislative Communication
Case Management and Legal Operations

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

HEARINGS OFFICER/LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR

New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food — Concord, NH
2023 – Present

Serve as the agency's presiding officer for administrative proceedings and support legislative and regulatory initiatives.

Key Responsibilities & Contributions:

- Preside over administrative hearings and pre-hearing proceedings in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Issue written decisions and findings based on evidentiary records and applicable law.
- Facilitate negotiations and settlements between parties in contested administrative matters.
- Conduct legal research and statutory analysis supporting agency rulemaking and policy development.
- Draft and guide administrative rulemaking across diverse regulatory subject areas.
- Communicate with legislators, agency officials, industry stakeholders, and members of the public regarding regulatory matters.
- Implemented workflow procedures improving efficiency in hearing and rulemaking administration.

ATTORNEY / OWNER

Law Office of Patricia L. Benner, PLLC — Amherst, NH
2003 – 2016

Managed a private law practice representing clients in court proceedings, administrative matters, and family-related legal issues.

Key Responsibilities & Contributions:

- Represented clients in district and superior courts and administrative proceedings.
- Served as Guardian ad Litem for juvenile victims of crime, advocating for their rights during criminal proceedings.
- Represented children in Children in Need of Services (CHINS) cases.
- Advocated for parents involved with the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF).
- Drafted estate planning documents including wills and powers of attorney.
- Managed all aspects of firm operations including client relations, billing, scheduling, and case administration.

ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY

Hillsborough County Attorney's Office — Nashua, NH
1998 – 2003

Prosecuted criminal matters on behalf of the State of New Hampshire in Superior Court.

Key Responsibilities & Contributions:

- Prosecuted felony and misdemeanor criminal cases from indictment through trial or negotiated resolution.
- Conducted jury trials and evidentiary hearings in Superior Court.
- Drafted motions, objections, and memoranda of law supporting prosecution strategy.
- Worked closely with victims and witnesses, including juvenile victims, preparing them for testimony and court proceedings.
- Collaborated with law enforcement and victim advocacy organizations.

PARALEGAL

Hillsborough County Attorney's Office — Manchester, NH
1997 – 1998

- Conducted legal research and drafted memoranda of law and pleadings.
- Assisted prosecutors in trial preparation and witness interviews.
- Supervised interns.

EDUCATION

JURIS DOCTORATE

Franklin Pierce Law Center (now UNH Law)— Concord, NH
May 1997

- Teaching Assistant, Evidence
- Legal Intern, Hillsborough County Attorney's Office

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE, PARALEGAL STUDIES (Cum Laude)

Rivier College (now Rivier University) — Nashua, NH
May 1993

Minor: Philosophy

HONORS & ACTIVITIES

Kappa Gamma Pi National Catholic College Graduate Honor Society

Student Government Member

President, Commuter Committee

Model United Nations Participant

Teaching Assistant, Logic/Philosophy Department

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

New Hampshire Bar Association

Massachusetts Bar Association

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Committee Chair — Boy Scout Troop (2017 – 2022)

Treasurer — Boy Scout Troop (2015 – 2017)

Member — Amherst Historical Society Development Committee (2013 – Present)

Board Member / Co-Chair — Preschool in the Village (2008 – 2012)

Secretary — Jasper Valley Swim and Tennis Club (2017 – 2021)