CALIFORNIA BUSINESS LAW

What Is a Fractional General Counsel?

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As businesses grow, so do their legal needs. However, not every company is ready to hire a full-time, in-house attorney. A fractional general counsel offers an alternative approach, providing ongoing legal support on a part-time or as-needed basis.

Defining Fractional General Counsel

A fractional general counsel is an experienced attorney who serves as a company's primary legal advisor without being a full-time employee. This role typically involves handling a wide range of legal matters, including contract review, risk management, compliance, and strategic guidance.

How the Model Works

Rather than hiring a full-time general counsel, a business engages a lawyer for a set number of hours or on a recurring basis. This allows the company to access high-level legal expertise while maintaining flexibility in cost and scope.

Benefits for Growing Businesses

The fractional model is particularly valuable for startups and small to mid-sized companies that require consistent legal support but may not have the resources for a full-time hire. It provides continuity, familiarity with the business, and proactive legal oversight.

Scope of Responsibilities

A fractional general counsel often assists with contract negotiations, internal policies, employment matters, and coordination with outside counsel when specialized expertise is needed. This integrated approach helps businesses address legal issues before they escalate.

Final Thoughts

A fractional general counsel can serve as a strategic partner, helping businesses navigate legal challenges efficiently and effectively. For many companies, it offers a practical balance between cost and comprehensive legal support.

About the Author

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