

BENEFITS SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of responsible technical, and office administrative work to administer various benefits programs; provides consulting services to District employees related to all aspects of benefits programs and activities.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Director, Human Resources Operations. Exercises no supervision of staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a class in the Human Resources Division responsible for performing the full range of technical work in benefits administration, in addition to performing a variety of record keeping, administrative, and technical support activities. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. Successful performance of the work requires the frequent use of tact, discretion, and independent judgment, knowledge of departmental and District activities, and extensive staff, public, and organizational contact. This class is distinguished from the Human Resources Specialist by providing support specifically related to benefits administration.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

1. Administers the District's multi-tiered employee benefits programs, including plans such as retirement, medical, dental, vision, life, short- and long-term disability, a flexible spending program, long term care program, tax shelter accounts, credit union programs, and Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) requirements; acts as liaison to various third-party benefits administrators and health carriers; serves as a resource to all District employees regarding benefit issues and questions.
2. Processes medical, dental, vision, and life insurances bills; processes, reviews, and reconciles deduction reports and monitors accounts for accuracy; prepares reports for signature; coordinates processing and mailing of payments to administrators.
3. Prepares and distributes employee benefits statements; tracks and processes changes.
4. Researches changes in benefit program design and contract provisions; updates new insurance plan rates.
5. Responds to employee and retiree questions and complaints; interfaces with third-party administrators to resolve claims appeals and provides guidance in policy interpretation and plan documents.
6. Schedules and conducts new employee orientations; informs new employees of benefit programs, policies, and related enrollment information.
7. Processes employee benefits changes, including enrollment, terminations, retirements, and other changes; maintains employee benefits information in District and administrator databases; ensures accuracy and confidentiality of data.
8. Coordinates benefits deductions with payroll, including Family Medical Leave Act (FLMA), leave of absence, and other standard and special deductions.
9. Processes COBRA paperwork, including notifications, payments, and enrollee lists; ensures compliance with regulations.
10. Coordinates the open enrollment process, including development and distribution of written informational materials and conducting open enrollment meetings with employees.
11. Develops and coordinates special workshops and related events pertaining to benefits programs.

12. Participates in special benefits administration projects and programs and prepares annual and special reports related to assigned functions and programs; coordinates and integrates program services and activities with other agencies and District departments.
13. Interprets, applies, explains, and ensures compliance with Federal, State, and local laws and regulations concerning benefits programs.
14. Provides general administrative support to the benefits administration function, including preparing correspondence, memoranda, and reports, performing data entry, and maintaining schedules and records.
15. Attends and participates in professional group meetings and various District committees; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of benefits administration.
16. Organizes and maintains various administrative, confidential, reference, and follow-up files; purges files as required.
17. Operates standard office equipment, including job-related computer hardware and software applications, facsimile equipment, and multi-line telephones.
18. Learns and applies emerging technologies and, as necessary, to perform duties in an efficient, organized, and timely manner.
19. Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

1. Basic principles and practices of benefits administration in a public agency setting.
2. Policies and procedures related to benefits administration.
3. Methods, techniques, and practices of data collection, data entry, and basic report writing.
4. Business letter writing and standard writing practices for correspondence.
5. Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
6. Business arithmetic and basic financial and statistical techniques.
7. Record keeping principles and procedures.
8. Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work, including word processing, database, and spreadsheet software.
9. English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
10. Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, students, and District staff, including individuals of various ages, disabilities, socio-economic and ethnic groups.

Skills & Abilities-to:

1. Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices of benefits administration.
2. Review benefits documents for completeness and accuracy.
3. Review and reconcile employee benefit records.
4. Perform detailed benefits administration office support work accurately and in a timely manner.
5. Maintain confidentiality of sensitive personal information of employees, former employees, and other matters affecting employee relations.
6. Respond to and effectively prioritize multiple phone calls and other requests for service.
7. Compose correspondence and reports independently or from brief instructions.
8. Make accurate arithmetic and statistical computations.
9. Enter and retrieve data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy to perform assigned work.
10. Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record keeping, and tracking systems.

11. Understand and follow oral and written instructions.
12. Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
13. Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
14. Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
15. Understand scope of authority in making independent decisions.
16. Review situations accurately and determine appropriate course of action using judgment according to established policies and procedures.
17. Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Equivalent to completion of the twelfth (12th) grade; supplemental coursework in human resources management, business or public administration, or a related field is highly desirable; and two (2) years of technical or benefits administration support experience in a public agency setting.

Licenses and Certifications:

- The incumbent may periodically be required to travel to a variety of locations. If required to operate a vehicle in the position, employees must demonstrate possession of a valid California Driver's License

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle to visit various District and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Incumbents in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds with the use of proper equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Incumbents work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.