

CLASS SPECIFICATION

Benefit Specialist

FLSA Status: Covered
Union Representation: Nonrepresented

GENERAL PURPOSE

Under general supervision, performs a variety of responsible professional, technical and analytical activities in support of the City's employee benefit programs in assigned areas of functional responsibility; and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Benefit Specialist incumbents perform professional assignments in one or more benefit program areas. Duties are performed with a significant degree of independence under general supervision. Incumbents are expected to carry out their responsibilities with initiative and creativity, exercising sound professional judgement and problem-solving skills.

Benefit Specialist is distinguished from Benefit Analyst in that incumbents in the latter class perform more difficult work requiring broader professional knowledge gained through continuing professional development and experience.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Any one position in this class may not perform all the duties listed below, nor do the listed examples of duties include all similar and related duties that may be assigned to this class.

1. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with management and employees to promote understanding and appreciation of benefit programs. Maintain effective team relationships with human resource staff and managers with respect to overlapping issues.
2. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with multiple benefit plan vendors. Problem solves and clarifies plan provisions with vendor representatives. Identifies problematic procedures and recommends solutions.
3. Analyzes and problem-solves, and interprets complex benefit issues including interpretation of federal and state laws and regulations with respect to COBRA, State statute required retiree continuation, HIPAA, Internal Revenue Code sections 125, 129, 457, 79, FMLA, ADA, ADEA, Medicare, IRC 457, PERS plan provisions, and internal City procedures with employees, managers, vendors, labor representatives, human resource staff and managers and other public and private sector employers.

4. Independently and on request, identify and report to Benefit Administrator emerging trends and issues and recommend strategies to proactively confront and resolve issues.
5. Plan and create detailed written reports supported with graphic and spreadsheet analysis of data, comparisons and projections of cost and plan design trends.
6. Interprets collective bargaining provisions as they relate to employee benefits. Acts as resource to City Attorney in matters related to area of responsibility.
7. Insure timely analysis, determination, administration and communication of eligibility events, family status changes and statutorily required notifications, including COBRA compliance. Researches appropriate federal and state laws and City rules. Provides determination of decisions verbally and in writing to employees and management.
8. Analyze, determine and coordinate new employee eligibility and enrollment and COBRA and retiree eligibility and enrollment.
9. Ensure integrity of plan provisions through analysis and maintenance of multiple Benefit database.
10. Conducts benefit orientations and other employee benefit education presentations to discreet represented and non-represented groups with variable benefit plans and options.
11. Reconcile and pay billings for Wellness/Fitness program, COBRA and Retiree plans, department publications, conferences, and travel. Reconciles Flexible Spending Account billings to include mid-year status changes. Monitors and updates department budget, reporting status monthly to Benefit Manager. Tracks expenditures and resources by accounting period using budget spreadsheet.
12. Plans and coordinates printing projects, monitors progress. Coordinates print shop fulfillment of benefit forms and materials to Citywide Timekeepers.
13. Provides administrative support to Manager, Benefits and Benefit Administrator. Attends LMBC meetings and prepares detailed minutes for distribution to Committee.
14. Writes and updates procedure manual for areas of responsibility.

OTHER DUTIES

1. Performs a variety of special research and analysis projects.
2. Represents the benefit department at various meetings, committees and activities.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

1. Principles, practices and techniques of employee benefit analysis and administration.
2. Federal, state and local laws, regulations and court decisions applicable to the administration of employee benefit programs and practices.
3. Principles and practices of public administration, including maintenance of public records.
4. Research methods and data analysis techniques.
5. Principles and practices of effective business communication.
6. City human resources policies and labor contract provisions.
7. General accounting principles including reconciliation, posting and tracking of payments.

Ability to:

1. Gather relevant data, analyze problems, evaluate alternatives and make appropriate decisions and recommendations.
2. Understand, interpret, explain and apply City benefit and human resource rules, regulations, policies and procedures and applicable local, state and federal legislation and regulations.
3. Exercise independent judgement and initiative within established guidelines.
4. Present recommendations clearly and logically.
5. Represent the City effectively in dealings with employees and employee organizations as representative on a variety of benefit and human resources issues.
6. Effectively operate personal computer equipment and software including word processing, spreadsheet and data base programs, Powerpoint and Access, IBIS and Beneflex.
7. Communicate effectively orally and in writing.
8. Prepare clear, concise, accurate and persuasive reports, correspondence and other written materials.
9. Maintain confidential and sensitive information.

10. Exercise tact and diplomacy in dealing with sensitive, complex and confidential benefit and human resource issues and employee situations.
11. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with bureau and City managers and supervisors, employees, employee and community organizations and others encountered in the course of work.

Training and Experience:

A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined above is graduation from a four-year college or university with a major in business administration, accounting, human resources, psychology or a closely related field; and at least two years of responsible employee benefit experience; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:

A valid state driver's license and the ability to maintain insurability under the City's Vehicle Insurance Policy.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS

Persons with disabilities may be able to perform the essential duties of this class with reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation will be evaluated on an individual basis and depend, in part, on the specific requirements for the job, the limitations related to disability and the ability of the hiring bureau to accommodate the limitation.

Class History:

Adopted: 07-01-02

Class created as a result of Nonrepresented Classification & Compensation Study, 2000-2002. This class is composed of positions from the following class(es):
0610 HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST. Adopted:08-19-75 (Personnel Analyst I) Revised: 02-25-91, 07-01-92, 05-12-94 , 05-06-99, 04-26-02 .

Revised: 10-06-04 FLSA Status changed to Covered

June 2009 - Change Job Class number from 7292 to 30000538, due to system change.