

Job Class Specification

Title:	Benefits Specialist
Job Code:	193625
Bargaining Unit(s)/Grade:	Non Represented, Grade 9
FLSA Status:	Exempt
Safety Sensitive:	No
Competency Model:	Individual Contributor
Career Family:	Human Resources

Summary

Leads special and technical activities for the administration of and compliance with Metropolitan Council benefits plans, policies, contracts, bargaining unit agreements, and federal/state regulations and laws.

Essential Responsibilities*

In addition to regular attendance, the following responsibilities are typical of the duties performed by incumbents in this job class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential duties of the position.

- Demonstrates understanding and applies knowledge of Council benefit plans; vendor contracts; Council policies and procedures; labor agreements; federal/state laws, regulations and statutes; and ensures appropriate coordination among each.
 - Coordinates daily benefits administration activities. Assists Benefits Assistants in interpreting benefit program details for the effective delivery of benefits services. Instructs Benefits Assistants on plan changes, new program implementations and other departments that affect service delivery.
 - Works with benefits and Agency staff, and third-party resources; troubleshoots and coordinates resolution of benefits plan/policy, procedure and compliance issues.
 - Assures compliance with internal and external contracts, plans, policies/procedures and governmental laws, regulations, and statutes.
 - Recommends benefit program changes and provides analysis for labor negotiations.
 - Coordinates the implementation of Council benefit programs and benefit procedures, processes, forms, practices, plan administration within the benefits area. Coordinates and provides work direction on the open enrollment process.
 - Conducts discrimination testing and IRS 5500 reporting.

- Demonstrates understanding and applies expertise on PeopleSoft HRIS for its effective and efficient administration of Council benefit programs. Leads benefits section's HRIS activities.
 - Maintains PeopleSoft benefits administration tables and setups. Designs Benefits Administration System (BAS) procedures/processes and directs Benefits Assistants in the proper use of BAS activity. Advises benefits staff on benefits system processing methodology.
 - Works with Benefits Assistants to identify systems needs and resolves system-processing problems. Coordinates trouble-shooting and problem resolution with benefits and payroll staff and HRIS Manager. Leads planning, testing and implementation of benefits system changes.
 - Coordinates benefits reporting needs, writes queries and requests more complex reports.
 - Establishes and instructs Benefits Assistants on audit procedures of ongoing maintenance of employee benefits data. Monitors audits to ensure database integrity.

- Applies expertise in benefits administration and HRIS to support the Benefits Manager in the effective oversight of the Council's benefit programs.
 - Participates in the establishment of long-range objectives of the Council benefits programs.

- Analyzes and recommends plan design changes that support the Council's labor strategy.
- Analyzes cost of alternative management benefits proposals and counter proposals as well as union proposals.
- Leads and administers annual projects such as regulatory compliance, benefit communications, actuarial valuation/data collection, implementation of advanced PeopleSoft features, and other projects as assigned.
- Intervenes on behalf of Benefits Manager as needed.
- Demonstrates effective team membership and collaboration with the Benefits Manager and staff, human resources staff, and labor relations, diversity and Metropolitan Council colleagues.
- Work direction/lead work responsibilities:
- Other duties assigned or apparent.

Qualifications

Education	Bachelor's degree in HR or related field.
Experience	Four years of progressively responsible experience in benefits administration and two years' experience in financial analysis of benefits. A combination of education and experience may be considered.
License Requirements	None.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrated knowledge of laws and regulations affecting benefits and HR administration. ● Effective verbal and written communication skills. ● Excellent research, analytical and statistical skills. ● Excellent strategic, communication and organizational skills. ● Demonstrated ability to make decisions and understanding the impact to the organization and its liability, policies and procedures. ● Ability to interact with and provide work direction to staff.
Computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrated personal computer proficiency including spreadsheet and word processing. ● Two (2) years experience with PeopleSoft (or comparable HRIS management system)
Language	Level 4. Ability to read, analyze and interpret professional journals, technical procedures and government regulations. Ability to write reports, business correspondence and procedure manuals. Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of customers or clients.
Math	Level 4. Ability to interpret and apply mathematics and statistical methods and procedures gained through professional educational training.
Human Relations	Level 1. Requires the skill to provide basic client services to the public and other agencies within the organization. Requires tact, courtesy and cooperation in dealings with others where the primary purpose is the exchange of information. Promotes an equitable, positive and respectful work environment that values cultural and diversity among all employees.

Work Environment

Work is performed in a standard office setting. Some positions may require travel between primary work site to other sites.

Physical Requirements

Regularly required to sit for long periods, stand/walk occasionally, speak, hear normal conversation and telephone ring tones, operate a computer and other office equipment, reach with hands/arms frequently

below chest height and occasionally overhead, must occasionally lift/carry/push/pull up to 10 pounds, must have adequate close vision for reading and computer work.

* The job responsibilities listed are typical of the positions included in the job classification; however, not all duties are necessarily performed by each specific position.

Revision History: 4-06