



BENEFITS SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of responsible paraprofessional, technical, and office administrative work in support of administering various benefits programs; provides consulting services to District employees related to all aspects of benefits programs and activities; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Benefits Manager. Exercises no supervision of staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is an experienced-level specialist classification in the Human Resources Division responsible for performing the full range of paraprofessional 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 classification is distinguished from the Benefits Technician in that the latter provides initial contact within the benefits office and provides benefits support to retirees. This classification is further distinguished from the Benefits Systems Analyst in that the latter performs a variety of highly complex administrative, professional, and analytical work in support of benefits administration and programs, and provides specialized and complex assistance and support to the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and Equal Opportunity for benefits negotiations.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Administers the District's multi-tiered employee benefits programs, including plans such as retirement, medical, dental, vision, a direct-pay program, long-term care program, commuter benefits, pet insurance, and Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) benefits; acts as liaison to various third-party benefits administrators and health carriers; conducts benefits reconciliation for eligible members' variance reimbursement; and serves as a resource to all District employees regarding benefit issues and questions.
- Processes medical, dental, vision, and life insurances bills; processes, reviews, and reconciles deduction reports and other financial reports and monitors accounts for accuracy; prepares reports for signature; and coordinates processing and mailing of payments to administrators.
- Researches and resolves discrepancies with District payroll, third-party vendors, and/or documentation (such as payroll deductions, accounts receivable collections, unsuccessful electronic funds transfer (EFT) transactions, money returns to the District, etc.); and ensures accuracy and adherence to procedures prior to processing.
- Prepares and distributes employee benefits statements and tracks and processes changes.

- Researches changes in benefit program design and contract provisions; updates new insurance plan rates.
- 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.
- Schedules and conducts new employee orientations; informs new employees of benefit programs, policies, and related enrollment information; activates new hire benefits.
- Assists in the administration of the workers' compensation program; tracks and reviews workers' compensation claims to ensure timely reporting and to ensure employee and management compliance with state and District policies and procedures; conducts intake interview to determine the cause of injury; coordinates with payroll to determine lost wages.
- 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.
- Coordinates benefits deductions with payroll, including Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), leave of absence, and other standard and special deductions.
- Processes COBRA paperwork, including notifications, payments, and enrollee lists.
- Coordinates the open enrollment process, including development and distribution of written informational materials and conducting open enrollment meetings with employees; facilitates the set-up of employee benefit selections; ensures that eligibility criteria is met and appropriate enrollment in benefits has been completed.
- Develops and coordinates special workshops and related events pertaining to benefits programs.
- 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.
- Interprets, applies, explains, and ensures compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations concerning benefits programs.
- Provides general administrative support to the benefits administration function, including preparing correspondence, memoranda, and reports, performing data entry, and maintaining schedules and records.
- Receives and screens visitors and telephone calls, providing a high level of customer service to both external and internal customers; provides information to District staff, other organizations, and the public, requiring the use of judgment and the interpretation of policies, rules, procedures, and ordinances.
- Organizes and maintains various administrative, confidential, reference, and follow-up files; purges files as required.
- Provides administrative support to various human resources programs, including recruitment, selection, classification, and compensation.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles, practices, policies, and procedures of benefits administration in a public agency setting.
- Methods, techniques, and practices of data collection, data entry, and report writing.
- Business letter writing and standard writing practices for correspondence.

- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Business arithmetic and basic financial and statistical techniques.
- Record keeping principles and procedures.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work, including word processing, database, and spreadsheet software.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, students, and District staff, including individuals of diverse academic, socio-economic, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, disability, and sexual orientation.

Ability to:

- Demonstrate understanding of, sensitivity to, and respect for the diverse academic, socio-economic, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, disability, and sexual orientation of community college students, faculty and staff.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices of benefits administration.
- Independently administer the District's multi-tiered employee benefits programs.
- Review, process, and reconcile benefits records, billing invoices, and related financial reports and documents for completeness and accuracy.
- Perform detailed benefits administration work accurately and in a timely manner.
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive personal information of employees, former employees, and other matters affecting employee relations.
- Respond to and effectively prioritize multiple phone calls and other requests for service.
- Compose correspondence and reports independently or from brief instructions.
- Make accurate arithmetic and statistical computations.
- Enter and retrieve data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy to perform assigned work.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.
- Understand and follow oral and written instructions.
- 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.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and legal guidelines in politically sensitive situations.
- 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 an Associate's degree from an accredited college or university in human resources management, business or public administration, or a related field; and two (2) years of technical or paraprofessional benefits administration support experience in a public agency setting.

Licenses and Certifications:

None.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; 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 or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions 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. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances.

Salary Grade: C1-54

FLSA: Non-Exempt

EEO Code: H-30

Board Approved: April 2021