

PAYROLL SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a wide variety of technical and administrative account support duties in support of the preparation and processing of payroll; serves as a liaison regarding payroll activities with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (Agency) staff; performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Controller and/or Finance Manager. Exercises no supervision of staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a journey-level class responsible for performing the full range of payroll processing duties, in addition to performing a wide variety of record-keeping, reconciliation, and reporting activities. Positions at this level work independently, exercise judgment and initiative, 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. This class is distinguished from other accounting support classifications by the focus on and specialization in payroll processing. This class is further distinguished from the Accountant I in that the latter is a professional level requiring extensive experience in accounting and finance.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the rights to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Receives, reviews, verifies, and processes time/attendance files to prepare payroll for all Agency employees; audits such documents for completeness, accuracy, and compliance with rules and regulations; prepares and balances payroll reports and records.
- Processes, calculates, and maintains records of a variety of payroll actions, including, but not limited to, new-hire set-up, overtime hours, salary adjustments, incentive and/or premium pay, retroactive pay, benefits withholdings, wage garnishments, withholding changes, and final paychecks based on appropriate provisions; maintains employee records for voluntary and non-voluntary deductions; processes manual checks, voided checks, and payroll reversals as needed.
- Generates, reviews, analyzes, checks, and maintains various monthly, quarterly, and annual payroll reports; communicates necessary general ledger adjustments or corrections to Finance staff.
- Reviews and processes employee travel reimbursement requests in accordance with federal and Agency guidelines.
- Prepares confidential reports for management and for staff planning and/or labor negotiations relating to salaries, severance costs, time and attendance and accrual balances.
- Tracks and monitors accrual balances to ensure they remain within the accrual caps and assists with the projection of total compensation cost for budget preparations and/or other needs
- Interprets, applies, explains, and ensures compliance with provisions of collective bargaining contracts and personnel rules as they apply to payroll.
- Applies and ensures compliance with applicable tax laws and rulings with regard to the employee benefits program as well as earnings.
- Researches, analyzes, and resolves technical and/or payroll related problems or questions; provides payroll information, explains procedures, and answers questions pertaining to payroll.
- Maintains a variety of files and records related to the Agency's payroll system and general accounting techniques and procedures; reconciles transactions and data as directed; records changes and resolves differences.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience:

An associate degree with coursework in accounting, finance, or a related field; and three (3) years of experience processing payroll.

Licenses and Certifications:

Certified Payroll Specialist licensure preferred.

Knowledge of:

- Terminology and practices of payroll processing and record-keeping.
- Business arithmetic and basic financial and statistical techniques.
- Principles and practices of research, data collection, and report preparation.
- Payroll reporting and payment requirements of various state and federal agencies and benefit providers.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility, as well as the Agency's employee association memorandum of understanding and employment contracts and agreements.
- Modern office practices and procedures, including the use of standard office equipment and computer applications.
- English usage, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and Agency staff.

Ability to:

- Perform detailed payroll processing work accurately and in a timely manner.
- Review payroll and other financial documents for completeness and accuracy.
- Respond to and effectively prioritize multiple phone calls and other requests for service.
- Work closely with staff to maintain a high level of integrity and confidentiality when dealing with sensitive and complex payroll issues.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations, and accounting and departmental policies and procedures.
- Understand the organization and operation of the Agency and of outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities.
- Make accurate mathematical, financial, 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.
- 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, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

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 in work areas 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances, duties of this class may be performed in an environment with exposure to various odors/fragrances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.