

County of Humboldt Job Specification
SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST
Classification 0518



DEFINITION

Under direction, performs the most difficult and complex professional work of staff involved in the inspection and enforcement of an assigned environmental health program; program areas include, but are not limited to, consumer protection, emergency response, drinking water sanitation, solid waste disposal, wastewater disposal, land use and vector control; positions may direct the work of lower level staff and/or serve in a technical expert capacity in a specific program area; interprets and enforces federal, state, and local statutes as they pertain to environmental management programs; promotes public health through inspection, permitting and enforcement; assists with planning and implementing new or specialized programs; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives direction from assigned supervisory and management employees. Some positions in this classification exercise technical and functional direction over, and provide training to trainee and journey-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the advanced-level classification in the Environment Health Specialist series responsible for performing the most complex work assigned to the series. Incumbents regularly work on tasks which are varied and complex, requiring considerable discretion and independent judgment. Positions in the classification rely on experience and judgment to apply laws and regulations to ensure program compliance. Assignments are given with general guidelines and incumbents are responsible for proposing objectives, timelines and methods to complete assignments. Work is typically reviewed upon completion for soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements.

This class is distinguished from the Supervising Environmental Health Specialist in that the latter is the full supervisory classification with responsibilities for the supervision and evaluation of assigned staff.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignment of different positions.

- Performs complex and specialized regulation and enforcement of health and safety laws, rules, and regulations; interprets the more specialized regulations, rules, and policies related to the assigned program area.
- Provides lead direction and training to support staff performing environmental health inspection and enforcement duties; organizes and assigns work; sets priorities and follows up to ensure coordination and completion of assigned work; instructs staff in work procedures.

- Serves in a technical expert capacity within an assigned program area including, but not limited to, reviewing and commenting on environmental documents for conformance with codes and regulations; providing guidance on permitting and regulations for land development projects; providing oversight and direction to the non-standard septic system program; and coordinating division operations with external organizations including law enforcement or oversight agencies.
- Reviews referrals from planning, building and business license applications for conformance with environmental codes and regulations; coordinates referrals and/or projects with other units within the Environmental Health Division.
- Provides guidance to contractors, developers and the general public on wells and wastewater disposal permitting and regulatory compliance.
- Reviews all complaints completed by inspectors for completeness, error or omission; reviews routine and complaint inspections that result in critical violations and/or reinspection; based on this review, provides feedback and guidance to staff; updates completed complaint status in the automated data management system.
- Serves as the primary intake person for rabies related complaints; assesses each call for human or domesticated animal exposure, or potential exposure, to rabies; gathers information necessary for testing; refers to communicable disease nurse or animal control officer; quarantines domesticated animals; transports carcasses and testing materials from home and vet locations to the laboratory; assesses lab results and implements proper quarantine protocols or determines whether revaccination is sufficient; provides guidance and training to animal control agencies, veterinarians, medical staff and other local agencies as needed.
- Performs plan review and approval of food facilities, body art facilities, commercial swimming pool facilities, septic systems, and water wells.
- Assists management in the development and implementation of policies, procedures, codes and regulations.
- Conducts investigations and inspections on the most complex complaints for consumer protection, hazardous materials, drinking water sanitation, septic systems, land use and vector control; ensures compliance with regulations; issues citations for violations of public health and environmental laws and regulations.
- Attends and participates in meetings and committees, both internally and externally, as assigned.
- Passes along critical information to Supervisor regarding staff needs for training, equipment, support or other.
- Responds to inquiries from dissatisfied members of the community regarding complaint investigations, fees, and/or inspections.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge and ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles of providing functional direction and training.
- Principles and practices of environmental sanitation, including water supply, sewage and solid waste disposal, and vector control.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to environmental health programs.
- Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)'s burden of proof for civil criminal and administrative cases as it relates to evidence provided by the division.
- Investigative techniques.
- California Penal Code as related to public nuisances.
- Roles and jurisdiction of the Environmental Health Division and other County departments or external agencies.
- Principles and practices of physical, biological, and social sciences as they relate to public health and environmental quality control.
- Microbiological principles of foodborne illnesses.
- Rabies law and virology as it relates to human and animal exposure/interactions to reduce the likelihood of human illness.
- Principles and practices of plan review and permit processing.
- Public health implications of sewage discharge and disposal.
- Proper design and construction of a diverse range of systems including septic, groundwater, and wastewater treatment, and optimal conditions for site suitability.
- Principles and practices of sanitary food processing, and handling.
- Principles and techniques of sampling and analysis of varied specimens.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Provide staff leadership and work direction.
- Train staff in work procedures.
- Conduct complex inspections and investigations.
- Review the work and reports of assigned staff for accuracy, completeness and quality.
- Serve in technical expert capacity for assigned program area.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to enforcing environmental health regulations and guidelines.
- Identify potential sources of foodborne illnesses using microbiology principles.
- Analyze, interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local policies, procedures, laws, regulations, codes, and departmental policies.

- Simultaneously conduct multiple inspections and investigations, and accurately document findings and maintain appropriate records.
- Prepare clear, concise, and accurate reports, correspondence, data, and other written material for a variety of audiences.
- Perform mathematical computations and statistical analysis.
- Educate the public in matters of effective sanitary measures and best management practices.
- Act quickly and calmly in emergency situations.
- Evaluate consequences and need for immediate action, based on field observations, professional recommendations and laboratory results.
- Effectively represent the department and the County in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Minimum Qualifications:

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 a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in biological or physical sciences, environmental health science, or a related field.

and

Two (2) years of experience in the inspection and enforcement of public health and environmental laws, 18 months of which must be at a level equivalent to the County's class of Environmental Health Specialist II.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Must possess a valid US driver's license upon date of application. Must obtain California driver's license following hire date per California DMV regulations.
- Possession of a registration by the State of California as a Registered Environmental Health Specialist.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

When assigned to an office environment:

- Mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; ability to stand and walk between work areas may be required; occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen.
- Hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone.
- Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment.

When assigned to field inspection:

- Mobility to work in changing site conditions. to sit, stand, and walk on level, uneven, or slippery surfaces; to reach, twist, turn, kneel, and bend, to climb and descend ladders; and to operate a motor vehicle and visit various County sites; ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects averaging a weight of 40 pounds, or heavier weights, in all cases with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff; frequent walking in operational areas to identify problems or hazards, with exposure to hazardous materials in some site locations.
- Strength, stamina, and mobility to perform light to medium physical work.
- Vision to inspect site conditions and work in progress.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:

- Office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances.
- Employees also work in the field and are exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, vibration, confining workspace, chemicals, mechanical and/or electrical hazards, and hazardous physical substances and fumes.
- Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Some departments may require pre-employment screening measures before an offer of employment can be made (i.e. background screening, physical examination, etc.).