

County of Humboldt Job Specification
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST I/II
Classification 0535A/B



DEFINITION

Under general supervision (I) or direction (II), performs professional work involved in the inspection and enforcement of an assigned environmental health program area. Program areas include, but are not limited to, consumer protection, hazardous materials, emergency response, drinking water sanitation, solid waste disposal, wastewater disposal, land use and vector control; interprets, implements, and enforces federal, state, and local codes as they pertain to environmental health programs; provides education, technical consultations and assistance; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision (Environmental Health Specialist I or “EHS Trainee”) or direction (Environmental Health Specialist II) from program leaders or assigned supervisory and management personnel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Environment Health Specialist I: This is the entry-level, non-registered classification in the professional Environment Health Specialist series as described by California Health & Safety Code (HSC) section 106615(d), as an “Environmental health specialist trainee”. Within the first three years of employment, in California as a trainee, an EHS I must complete the basic training and educational requirements outlined in the California Department of Public Health evaluation letter and pass the REHS exam in accordance with HSC section 106625. In addition, under close supervision, incumbents learn and perform routine environmental inspection and enforcement duties. While working toward a State of California Registration as an Environmental Health Specialist, and as experience is gained, assignments become more varied, complex, and difficult; close supervision and frequent review of work lessen as an incumbent demonstrates skill to perform the work independently. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the II level, but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise.

Environmental Health Specialist II: This is the journey-level registered classification in the professional Environment Health Specialist series. Positions at this level are required to possess a Registered Environmental Health Specialist certification issued by the State of California and are fully competent to perform the full range of environmental inspection and enforcement duties, working independently, and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of, and expected to work within, the bounds of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit.

This class is distinguished from the Senior Environmental Health Specialist in that the latter is the program lead which performs the most complex and specialized inspection and enforcement duties. At the Senior level, incumbents provide technical direction, programmatic enhancements and training to trainee and journey -level support staff.

Positions in the Environmental Health Specialist class series are flexibly staffed and positions at the II-level are normally filled by advancement from the I-level, after gaining the knowledge, skill, and experience which meet the qualifications for and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work of the higher-level classification; progression to level II of the series requires that incumbents successfully complete the examination for, and obtain status as, a Registered Environmental Health Specialist. Advancement to the II level must be completed within five years of employment as a trainee.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

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

Some duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities may be performed in a learning capacity for entry- level (I Level) positions.

- Educates the public on and ensures enforcement of environmental health safety laws, rules, and regulations; interprets specialized environmental health regulations, rules, and policies related to an assigned program area.
- Inspects retail food establishments, as defined by State statute for compliance to applicable health codes; instructs food serving workers in the proper handling of food; investigates reported cases of foodborne illness.
- Inspects organized camps, adult and juvenile correctional facilities, and body art facilities for compliance with public health laws; documents violations of public health and environmental regulations and pursues compliance through education and enforcement strategies.
- Conducts inspections of proposed and existing on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS); issues permits for OWTS and completes final construction and operational inspections such systems.
- Issues permits for the installation, modification and closure of underground storage tanks; ensures that State guidelines are followed; identifies areas where unauthorized releases have occurred; documents site conditions.
- Reviews information and makes recommendations regarding potable water supply requirements in relation to land division projects and residential development in the County.
- Performs inspections of small water systems; visually inspects for conformance with applicable codes and regulations; takes water samples and interprets laboratory results; communicates lab results and explains disinfection requirements if necessary.
- Inspects public swimming pools and spas for conformance with codes and regulations; takes and interprets water samples; inspects construction detail and proper use and maintenance of filters and chemicals.
- Investigates animal bite cases and recommends medical follow-up when needed; collaborates with medical health professionals, participates in rabies and other clinics to educate the public on protection from diseases transmitted by animals.
- Conducts inspections and investigations related to public health communicable disease

investigations, included but not limited to, rabies, foodborne illness, and West Nile virus.

- Collects environmental samples for laboratory evaluation and assessment of existing contamination in accordance with best practices or quality assurance plans; and, interprets results.
- Performs plan review and approval of food facilities, body art facilities, commercial swimming pool and spa facilities, OWTS, and water wells.
- Prepares comprehensive reports related to inspections, investigations, and studies completed in the assigned program area.
- Provides general information to the regulated community and public regarding department policies, procedures, and regulations; receives and responds to inquiries, requests for assistance, concerns, and complaints from the public regarding division activities and programs.
- Compiles data for and prepares a variety of records and reports related to environmental health investigations, inspections, studies, and projects.
- Participates in community education and public information efforts.
- Maintains files, databases, and records related to documented violations and enforcement investigations; prepares a variety of written reports, memoranda, and correspondence.
- Performs related duties as assigned.
- Inspects, permits, investigates and enforces upon hazardous materials facilities for conformance with regulations and statute.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

QUALIFICATIONS

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge and ability required.

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of environmental sanitation, including water supply, wastewater and solid waste disposal, sanitation, and vector control.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to environmental health programs.
- California Penal Code as related to public nuisances.
- Principles and practices of sanitary food, processing, and handling.
- Principles and techniques of sampling and analysis of varied specimens.
- Principles and practices of physical, biological, and social sciences as they relate to public health and environmental quality control.
- Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)'s burden of proof for civil criminal and administrative cases as it relates to evidence provided by the division.
- Research practices.
- Investigative techniques and principles of evidence.
- Proper use and operation of field-testing equipment and materials used in environmental health inspections, investigations and warrants.
- 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:

- Conduct thorough routine and special inspections and investigations.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to enforcing environmental health regulations and guidelines.
- Identify unsanitary conditions, isolate causes, and take appropriate action to ensure compliance.
- Simultaneously conduct multiple inspections and investigations, and accurately document findings and maintain appropriate records.
- Respond to inquiries, complaints, and requests for service in a fair, tactful, and timely manner.
- Follow up, as needed, to assure that compliance has been met.
- Collect and interpret field and test data accurately.
- Prepare clear, concise, and accurate reports, correspondence, and other written material.
- Review construction specifications and blueprints to ensure health and safety compliance.
- Perform mathematical computations and statistical analysis.
- Educate the public in matters of effective sanitary measures.
- Act quickly and calmly in emergency situations.
- Maintain accurate files and records.
- 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.
- 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.
- Report up on program activities to Supervisor or Director, as needed, especially on critical, political or time sensitive issues.

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:

Level I: Equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in environmental health, sanitation, or a related field and letter confirming acceptance to work as an Environmental Health Specialist Trainee from the State of California, Department of Public Health.

Level II: Registration as an Environmental Health Specialist with the State of California.

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.

and

- Level I: possession of a letter confirming acceptance by the California Department of Public Health to work as an Environmental Health Specialist Trainee.
- Level II: 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; 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 and move quickly through a site inspection; to operate a motor vehicle and visit various County sites; frequently walk in operational areas to identify problems or hazards, with exposure to hazardous materials in some site locations; to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects averaging a weight of 50 pounds, or heavier weights, in all cases with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff.
- Vision to inspect site conditions, violations, problems and work in progress.
- Strength, stamina, and mobility to perform light to medium physical work; to sit, stand, and walk on level, uneven, or slippery surfaces; to reach, twist, turn, kneel, and bend, to climb and descend ladders.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:

- Employees work in an 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 including rain, wind, snow, 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.).