

INCOME MAINTENANCE INVESTIGATOR II

Employees in this class are responsible for working with considerable independence in investigating fraud or alleged fraud cases in the income maintenance program of a County Department of Social Services. Work at this level requires reviewing clients' case files and making decisions as to the appropriate action to take in resolving the case. Employees determine if errors exist and, if so, the cause of the errors. Employees initially evaluate case referrals to determine if the referral is valid and whether a more in-depth review is required. Where the cause of the error indicates potential client fraud, the worker is responsible for investigating the case and determining the appropriate course of action required to resolve the case. Work also involves working with clients to settle cases out of court, representing the agency in negotiating out of court settlements, and developing and working with the prosecutor in presenting the case in court. This class can be distinguished from the lower level investigators by the amount of independence in the decision-making process and by the employees' substantial involvement in the administrative hearing and judicial process. Employees normally report to an Income Maintenance Supervisor, Income Maintenance Investigator Supervisor or the agency director.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Work involves the reconstruction of case files and the analyses of these files against current income maintenance regulations, rules and procedures, as well as those that were in effect at the time of the alleged error or fraud. Where no valid error is detected or where the discrepancy was caused by an agency error the case is returned to the work unit for appropriate action. Where the cause of the error indicates a potential for client fraud, the employees are responsible for investigating the case to include interviewing the client, clients' employers, income maintenance caseworker referring the case and any other related sources of information. Work requires employees to independently research the case and decide on a course of action either in dismissing the case, negotiating with the client for repayment or presenting the case in an administrative hearing or to the district attorney for prosecution. In some agencies the investigator is required to have all legal and statutory documentation assembled, prepared and ready for presentation to the court by the district attorney. Employees may also be required to monitor clients' repayment of funds and revise or renegotiate payment plans as necessary.

Guidelines - Employees refer to the current and previous Food Stamp, AFDC, Medicaid, and bounty Special Assistance Manuals in performing all functions required to complete the investigative process. Employees also must be familiar with legal precedents and statutory regulations governing the administration of justice in income maintenance fraud cases. Employees utilize agency procedural guides as well as correspondence and memoranda from State regulatory agencies in implementing and interpreting policy directives.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Work involves direct contact with client and direct or indirect contact with the clients' family or representative, and collateral witnesses in order to gather and verify any information necessary to determine if an agency error or a fraudulent act has occurred. Employee has extensive contact with the judicial system before and during the prosecutorial phases of a fraud case. The prosecutor considers the employee to be the primary agency representative in the prosecution of any fraud cases assigned to the employees' caseload.

Consequence of Action - Employees' evaluation and subsequent decisions on a course of action to

take in pursuing clients accused of fraudulent activities can result in recoupment of lost funds for the agency or in punitive sanctions being taken against the client. Employees function with limited or no supervisory oversight in pursuing a course of action in resolving fraud cases assigned to his/her caseload.

Review - Work is reviewed periodically by a higher level supervisor or the agency director through a limited random review of processed cases. Work is reviewed primarily to ensure that agency administrative procedures are being followed.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject Matter - Employees provide information to suspected clients, agency management, and judicial representatives based upon information obtained during the course of the investigative process. This information includes pertinent income maintenance policies and regulations, agency policies regarding recoupment of lost funds and any collateral information obtained from witnesses during the investigative process. Sensitive information generated as a result of the work of income maintenance investigations has the potential for subjecting the employee to controversial situations.

Purpose - Work with clients and witnesses includes gathering information through the interview process for the purpose of determining if a fraudulent act has occurred. Work with income maintenance staff is for the purposes of establishing the validity of the alleged fraud and for clarification of any supporting documentation. Employees have extensive contact with the judicial system in the preparation and processing of fraud cases through the court system.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Nature of Working Conditions - Employees are periodically subject to working with agitated clients and heavy workloads.

Nature and Potential of Personal Hazards - Clients may at times be verbally abusive due to their extreme situations or their emotional problem, but generally physical harm is unlikely on an ongoing basis.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Thorough knowledge of manuals, rules, and procedures used in determining eligibility. Thorough knowledge of investigative procedures and techniques. Thorough knowledge of rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the judicial system. Good mathematical reasoning and computational skills. Considerable knowledge of agency's organizational rules, policies, and procedures. Ability to recognize, collect, and evaluate evidence to support actions. Ability to communicate effectively with applicants, community agencies, law enforcement agencies, and judiciary personnel to obtain or present pertinent data, and to negotiate agreement and/or cooperation. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with other employees, the general public, and the judicial system. Ability to present information orally or in written form.

Minimum Training and Experience Requirements - An Associate Degree in Human Services Technology, Social Services Associate, Paralegal Technology, Criminal Justice, Business Administration, Secretarial Science or closely related curriculum and two years of experience as an Income Maintenance Caseworker or Investigator; or, graduation from high school and three years of experience as an Income Maintenance Caseworker or Income Maintenance Investigator; or graduation from high school and two years of investigative experience in credit, legal, or law enforcement work plus eighteen months of experience as an Income Maintenance Caseworker or Income Maintenance Investigator; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.