

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

This is professional environmental health work in the promotion of public health through education, surveillance, consultation, inspection, and enforcement of state, local, and federal environmental health laws, and regulations. Employees may have responsibilities in a variety of different environmental health program areas, or with the majority of time spent in a single program area with other public health responsibilities. Employees typically consult with Environmental Health Program Specialists, Environmental Health Program Coordinators, or Environmental Health Supervisors on more complex issues.

DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope- Employees are involved with educating the public on environmental health matters, inspecting, providing advice on the correction of environmental health problems, and enforcing state, local, and federal laws relating to public health in several distinct environmental health programs.

Subject Matter Complexity- Work requires a comprehensive knowledge of state, local, and federal environmental health laws, and regulations, as well as procedures utilized in enforcing these laws and regulations. Work requires a general knowledge of a variety of material and physical sciences as a basis for enforcement, education, and consultation roles.

Standards - Procedures, policies, statutes, and rules are available and applicable in most areas of program activity.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instruction- Employees often function independently of supervision. Instructions are usually general in nature except in circumstances involving the most complex or controversial issues where a public health threat is increased and where the probability of legal action exists. Employee is expected to stay up-to-date on current procedures, policies, statutes, and rules through continuing education and contact with the Environmental Health Section of the North Carolina Division of Public Health.

Nature of Review- Work is subject to review by state and local personnel to ensure that procedures, policies, statutes, and rules are being followed.

Scope of Decisions- Decisions have a direct effect on the health of individuals or groups of people. Decisions have financial impact on businesses, property owners, and contractors.

Consequences of Decisions- Improper actions and decisions could lead to the development of adverse public health conditions which could result in illness, injury, or death.. Decisions made could cause financial loss to property owners, businesses, contractors, and similar entities. In addition, failure to properly interpret and enforce the laws and rules could result in state, local, or personal liability.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts- Employee has frequent contacts with local and state officials, contractors, developers, attorneys, realtors, surveyors, the public, property owners, owners, and managers of a variety of businesses and institutions, and local interest groups.

Nature and Purpose- Employees explain, interpret, justify, and enforce statutes and rules. The ability to communicate, both verbally and in writing effectively is critical. The ability to explain, interpret, and justify various laws and rules, as well as the ability to educate and defend decisions based on these laws, rules, and science, is necessary.

OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions- Work may be performed both inside and outside. Employees may have contact with antagonistic or uncooperative members of the public, and decisions rendered in some cases can result in considerable emotional stress.

Hazards- Employees may be exposed to emotional stress, insects, animals, moving machinery, hot grease, sharp objects, inclement weather, slippery floors, traffic, communicable diseases, or other environmental hazards.

RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities- Thorough knowledge of environmental health procedures, policies, statutes, and rules, as well as job-specific program areas. Considerable knowledge of public health law, microbiology, biology, chemistry, food science, epidemiology, soil science, and basic engineering technology as applied to environmental health practices. Working knowledge of the responsibilities of other agencies involved in environmental health work. Working knowledge of the interrelationship between socio-economic factors and environmental health concerns. Working knowledge of inspection methods and investigation techniques as applied in environmental health. Ability to analyze and comprehend a wide variety of technical and administrative regulations, records, and reports. Ability to exercise sound judgement and deal tactfully with a wide range of public contacts while enforcing public health laws and regulations. Ability to educate business and property owners and the consuming public in matters related to protecting and promoting public health. Ability to present formal environmental health training programs. Ability to develop and express ideas and opinions concisely, comprehensively, and clearly in oral and written form. Ability to independently plan and schedule work activities. Ability to apply environmental health standards, guidelines, statutes, rules, knowledge, and techniques in the investigation of environmental health problems.

Minimum Education and Experience-

Graduation from an accredited baccalaureate or postgraduate degree program with a minimum of 30 semester hours or its equivalent in the physical or biological sciences and two years of experience in the field of environmental health practice; or a graduation from a baccalaureate or postgraduate degree program that is accredited by the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) and a minimum of one year of experience in the field of environmental health practice.

License or Certification Required –

Must be eligible to meet the requirements for registration or license as an Environmental Health Specialist as outlined in Article 4, Chapter 90A of the NC General Statutes.

Administering the Trainee Appointment- Appointee must be eligible for registration and apply for registration as an Environmental Health Specialist Intern within 60 days of employment. Employee may remain registered as a Environmental Health Specialist Intern until registration as an Environmental Health Specialist or up to three years, whichever comes first.

Special Note: This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to identify essential functions per ADA.

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