

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM SPECIALIST

This is advanced 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 function as either an advanced specialist in a specific program or as a program coordinator for a small, usually specialized section in an environmental health department or in a combination of these two roles. Employees in advanced specialist roles spend the majority of time in the specialty area and function both within and outside of the health department as a consultant to other environmental health specialists and to local officials, business concerns, contractors, and developers on the more complex issues which arise. Employees in program coordinator roles spend the majority of time in direct service activities in addition to performing in a limited supervisory capacity.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Employees perform the full range of tasks associated with their specialty areas.

Intricacy - Employees analyze the more complex problems and issues in their program area, and develop and recommend alternate courses of action to other environmental health specialists, various groups, and businesses.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires broad and in-depth understanding and knowledge of the laws, rules, procedures, professional standards, technology, methodology, and concepts in assigned program area, as well as a complete understanding of the methodologies and concepts of the total environmental health field. Work requires a general knowledge of a variety of natural and physical sciences as a basis for enforcement, consultation, and educational roles.

Guidelines - Since the more complex problems are referred to employees in this class for resolution, standards, guidelines, and rules are more likely to be inapplicable or incomplete.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Instructions are usually general in nature and are related to program objectives, progress, and unusual problems. Employees independently plan short-term schedules. Employees in advanced specialist roles may not have access to technical instruction and advice within the department. Employees in program coordinator roles assign work and may plan the schedules of subordinate staff.

Nature of Review - Work receives some limited technical review that is typically accomplished after the work is completed. Administrative review is generally for the purpose of coordinating programs and ensuring that administrative policies and procedures 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 business and property owners or contractors as individuals or as a group.

Consequence of Decisions - Improper actions and decisions could result in the development of unhealthy environmental conditions which could cause poisoning or the spread of communicable diseases. Decisions made during inspections could cause financial loss to businessmen through disruption of their operations. Decisions regarding waste disposal could cause financial loss to homeowners or developers through the delay or curtailment of construction. Since the most

complex, controversial, or potentially environmentally devastating problems are referred to employees in this class for resolution, the effects of decisions on the public health or individual or group finances would be substantial.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Depending upon specialty or program areas, employees have frequent contacts with local and State officials, contractors, developers, the general public, property owners and managers of a variety of businesses, institutions, and local interest groups.

Nature and Purpose - Employees explain, interpret, justify, and obtain compliance with various laws, regulations, and standards. Education, persuasion, and defending controversial and/or unpopular decisions are activities typically identified in both advanced specialist and program coordinator roles.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Working conditions are typical of those encountered in most indoor/outdoor activities with the additional considerations of exposure to inclement weather, difficult terrain, or filth. Employees may have contact with antagonistic and/or uncooperative members of the general public, and decisions rendered in some cases result in considerable emotional stress.

Hazards - Employees may be exposed to moving machinery, hot grease, or communicable diseases which may result in some lost time.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of environmental health laws, rules, and procedures, as well as complete understanding of the concepts of public health law. Considerable knowledge of microbiology, biology, chemistry, food science, epidemiology, soil science, entomology, and basic engineering technology as applied to environmental health practices. General knowledge of the responsibilities of other agencies relating to environmental health and community resources. General knowledge of the interrelationship between socio-economic factors and environmental health concerns. Considerable knowledge of the design of on-site waste water treatment systems, protection of water supplies, food sanitation, food borne diseases, communicable diseases, vector control, solid waste management, and institutional sanitation. Extensive knowledge in area of specialty. Ability to analyze and comprehend a wide variety of technical and administrative regulations, records, and reports. Ability to exercise sound judgment and deal tactfully with a wide range of public contacts while enforcing public health laws and regulations. Ability to motivate and 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 and perform assignments. Ability to apply environmental health knowledges and techniques in the investigation of environmental health problems. Ability to coordinate work in a specialized program area. Ability to plan and implement education programs. Ability to work with others in solving the more complex environmental problems.

Minimum Training and Experience Requirements - Two years of experience at the Environmental Health Specialist level in a health department.

Necessary Special Qualifications - Registered as a Sanitarian by the N.C. State Board of Sanitarian Examiners.