



June 2008

PURCHASING ASSISTANT

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of advanced administrative duties in support of the purchasing function, including assisting with the City-wide purchasing of materials, supplies, equipment, and services while ensuring that practices, procedures, and documentation are compliant with Federal, State, and local laws, codes, and regulations; serves as passport acceptance agent and processes passport applications; provides general office and administrative support, including document preparation, file maintenance, and data entry; provides information and assistance to City staff and the public; and performs other duties as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Financial Operations Manager. May provide functional and technical direction to assigned administrative support staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is an experienced administrative class within the City purchasing function responsible for performing a variety of purchasing office support duties, including assisting with the City-wide purchasing of materials, supplies, equipment, and services, as well as processing passport applications. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. Successful performance of the work requires the frequent use of tact, discretion, and independent judgment, knowledge of departmental and City activities, and extensive staff, public, and organizational contact. This class is distinguished from other administrative classes in that it requires specialized knowledge and skills pertaining to the City's purchasing function, in addition to standard office support duties.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Provides administrative support to the Financial Operations Manager by performing duties of an advanced, complex, and technical nature; acts as liaison between the Financial Operations Division and other divisions and departments within the City.
- Assists with coordination of the City-wide purchasing and procurement of materials, supplies, office furniture, equipment, and services; evaluates validity of purchase requisitions; verifies account numbers used for budget levels; logs new surplus goods, equipment, and furniture into the appropriate software program.
- Generates purchase order numbers for requisitions and contracts and enters them into the appropriate software system; processes necessary City and vendor documents; researches and resolves

discrepancies; maintains a database of City contracts; coordinates the year-end purchase order/contract close and/or roll-over in support of the following fiscal year's budget.

- Acts as a liaison between the central purchasing function and departmental office supply orders.
- Categorizes and coordinates the collection of surplus goods and equipment and initiates disposal as necessary.
- Maintains inventory of fixed assets; ensures proper capitalization of fixed asset purchases in compliance with City policies and procedures.
- Administers and maintains the City's purchasing card program; receives new requests and processes new users; monitors all purchasing card transactions for proper allocation of funds; reconciles transactions at month-end, resolves discrepancies, and prepares corresponding journal entries; prepares training materials and training for staff on the purchasing card program; maintains files and documents related to the program; performs random monthly program audits.
- Maintains, records, audits, and replenishes petty cash boxes for various departments and submits appropriate records and reports to the department director.
- Administers and maintains signature authority levels for the City.
- Serves as passport acceptance agent; explains passport application process and requirements to customers; sets up appointments; takes photos; receives, reviews, processes, logs, and mails passport applications and passports.
- Responds to internal and external customer inquiries, requests, and complaints; researches solution alternatives and resolves issues or refers to the supervisor.
- Operates standard office equipment, including job-related computer hardware and software applications, facsimile equipment, and multi-line telephones.
- Serves as back-up for utility billing and accounts payable staff on a relief bases.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic principles and practices of the purchasing function in a public agency setting.
- Policies and procedures related to City-wide purchasing of materials, supplies, equipment, and services.
- Methods, techniques, and practices of data collection and basic report writing.
- Business letter writing and standard writing practices for correspondence and reports.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, codes, and regulations.
- Record keeping principles and procedures.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment.
- Computer applications related to work, including word processing and spreadsheet software.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service to public and City staff, in person and over the telephone.

Ability to:

- Apply and explain policies, procedures, and practices of purchasing processes.
- Review purchasing-related documents for completeness and accuracy.
- Maintain accurate and confidential purchasing records.
- Perform detailed purchasing support work accurately and in a timely manner.
- Respond to and effectively prioritize multiple phone calls and other requests for service.
- Compose correspondence and reports independently or from brief instructions.
- Enter and retrieve data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy to perform assigned work.

- Understand and follow oral and written instructions.
- Make accurate arithmetic, financial, and statistical computations.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
- Comprehend and use English effectively including producing all forms of communication in a clear, concise, and understandable manner to intended audiences.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and harmonious working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

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 the completion of the twelfth (12th) grade and five (5) years of varied administrative support experience preferably involving purchasing programs and services.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of a valid driver's license with a satisfactory driving record.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various City sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to 25 pounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees occasionally have to work in a warehouse environment when retrieving or storing files and records. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.