

CLASS SPECIFICATION

Housing Specialist
Code Number: _____

GENERAL PURPOSE

Under general supervision, independently performs complex and highly responsible, specialized functions in the administration of Commission rental assistance, public housing and affordable housing programs; and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Housing Specialist is an advanced specialized class in the rental assistance and property management job family. Incumbents independently perform a variety of complex and highly responsible, specialized functions associated with the administration of rental assistance, public housing and affordable housing programs, including such duties as auditing case files for accurate, consistent application of program policies, procedures and regulations; conducting administrative reviews and investigating cases of suspected program violation or fraud; adjudicating claims between tenants and landlords for unit property damages; enforcing regulations applicable to affordable housing developments and administering relocation assistance services. Assigned duties require a thorough understanding of Commission, local, state and federal policies, procedures, regulations and law and entail a professional level of analysis and sound, independent decision making.

Housing Specialist is distinguished from Senior Housing Assistant by the incumbents' responsibilities for carrying out specialized technical duties that require a more thorough knowledge of Commission programs and applicable policy, procedure, regulation and law. Housing Specialists are accountable for applying this knowledge with sound, professional judgment in settings of significant visibility and/or impact.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to this position.

Conducts comprehensive audits of rental assistance client case files to ensure eligibility determinations, rental assistance calculations, case management activities and documentation are accurate, complete and in accordance with Commission policies and procedures and all applicable funding source rules and regulations; refers individual problem cases to Housing Supervisors for resolution; analyzes results and develops management reports and recommendations regarding improvements in procedures, control processes and employee training programs.

Conducts administrative reviews regarding the denial of client eligibility for rental assistance and public housing programs; reviews data presented, evaluates applicable rules and regulations and makes determinations of client eligibility for program assistance; reviews client intake files for accuracy and completeness and approves processing.

Performs adjudication of claims for unit property damages filed by landlords in accordance with provisions of Section 8 leases and contracts; evaluates documentation submitted and schedules move out inspections to verify reported damage; estimates normal “wear-and-tear” and determines typical repair costs; requests additional information and explanation of repair costs from landlords; conducts claims adjudication meetings with tenants and landlords; calculates reasonable and allowable damages; issues final determination notifications to tenants and landlords; establishes tenant pay-back accounts in the on-line system.

Conducts technical and procedural training programs for new employees and refresher training programs for rental assistance and public housing staff, including training on program regulations, policies and procedures, forms and document processing procedures, the Commission’s on-line worksheet system, interviewing techniques, prioritization of work and other procedures and skills applicable to competent performance by rental assistance and public housing technical staff; monitors and assesses progress of new employees during training; determines areas of training difficulty and provides additional training and coaching support; provides additional and/or remedial training assistance to new employees with performance difficulties following initial training; develops and revises training curricula and materials to incorporate new and revised funding source regulatory and procedural requirements and new and modified Commission policies and practices; evaluates data on section staff productivity and performance quality to identify technical or procedural issues regarding which additional or refresher training should be given.

Receives referrals of alleged program fraud or abuse from other Commission staff, fraud hotline calls, representatives of other governmental agencies or the public and determines whether an investigation will be conducted, based on the nature and verifiability of allegations and credibility of sources; conducts investigations to determine whether violation of program rules and regulations has occurred; conducts case conferences; establishes formal repayment agreements in restitution for minor infractions or in extenuating circumstances; issues *Notices of Intended Action* to terminate program participation in accordance with established policies and procedures; when clients request a hearing, prepares hearing packets, including a narrative report describing the alleged violation and supporting evidence with comprehensive documentation of the client’s history and all facts developed through investigation; represents the Commission in hearings conducted by independent hearing officers, presenting the Commission’s case and questioning witnesses; takes follow up action as required following issuance of the hearing officer’s decision, including mailing termination notices and suppressing payments to property owners; responds to contacts from clients, property owners, informants, representatives of other governmental agencies, legal counsel for clients, SDHC staff and others; documents procedural errors and other problems in case files and returns them to Housing Supervisors for follow up action.

Monitors and evaluates detailed records for affordable housing projects to verify that property owners are properly following all applicable policies and procedures in determining tenant eligibility and rental amounts; conducts annual and quarterly project recertification processes; ensures that property owners are meeting requirements for numbers of participants; informs and trains owners of

program requirements and necessary documentation; conducts audits and on-site inspections to resolve discrepancies; conducts investigations of alleged program violations and issues notices to correct problems; reviews rent registers and verifies compliance with *Fair Market Rent* requirements and housing program guidelines to enforce rent restriction and affordability levels; conducts Housing Quality Standard (HQS) inspections and informs property owners of required improvements.

Administers and monitors the Commission's Tenant Assistance and Relocation Program; conducts preliminary assessments and develops tenant relocation budgets in connection with federally-assisted housing rehabilitation projects; initiates and enforces required tenant notification processes; trains developers and property owners on relocation program requirements; conducts tenant eligibility interviews and calculates relocation assistance payments; conducts rent surveys and inspects units to ensure comparability and rent reasonableness; negotiates lease agreements on behalf of clients; prepares check requests for the payment of relocation assistance; tracks the expenditure of funds for projects against relocation budgets; coordinates and directs tenant relocation activities, including conducting HQS inspections of new client units, to meet detailed regulatory and procedural requirements; receives and evaluates appeals to program determinations and issues findings and decisions; subject to management approval, issues *Notices of Violations* of program and regulatory requirements.

OTHER DUTIES

Maintains and documents files regarding all actions taken; prepares statistical, status and productivity reports as required.

Coordinates the conduct of public housing program case hearings regarding possible lease violations, unauthorized persons in units, criminal activity and similar matters; reviews packets prior to hearings to ensure completeness, full documentation and references to applicable lease/occupancy policy provisions; coordinates the scheduling of hearings.

Assists in performing administrative duties in connection with the HOME program, including projecting program expenditures and preparation of the program budget, monitoring expenditures and determining new client numbers to meet targeted program expenditures.

Conducts quality control reviews and maintains quality control logs and data; identifies Program Integrity issues and follows through to ensure referral and/or other prompt, appropriate action.

Serves as a technical resource for section staff, answering questions and providing advice on interpreting and applying applicable regulations, policies and procedures.

Assists in the analysis, development and implementation of policies and procedures applicable to area of assigned responsibility.

Acts for a Housing Supervisor in his/her absence.

Refers suspected cases of child or elder abuse to relevant agencies for appropriate action.

Performs special assignments as requested.

DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

Commission administrative regulations, policies and procedures and applicable law and regulation governing operations of the Commission's rental assistance, public housing and affordable programs; client eligibility determination and recertification procedures, including data elements, uses and operations of the Commission's on-line systems; accepted case management practices and procedures; HQS standards and inspection methods and techniques; basic construction and maintenance processes, materials and labor costs; dispute resolution and mediation techniques; principles, practices and techniques in conducting investigations and documenting findings for use in administrative proceedings; procedures, practices and terminology used in the conduct of administrative hearings; basic administrative analysis and research methods and techniques; customer relations principles and practices; interviewing methods and procedures, particularly as they apply to the collection of sensitive personal and financial information; principles, practices and procedures governing maintenance of public records and processing of financial transactions; principles and practices of sound business communications.

Ability to:

Operate a computer, computer terminal and other standard office equipment; understand, interpret, explain and apply detailed and complex regulations, policies and procedures governing the administration of rental assistance, public housing and affordable housing programs; organize work, set priorities and exercise sound independent judgment with established guidelines and policies; gather data, analyze information and reach sound conclusions and decisions in accordance with established policies, procedures and legal/regulatory requirements; communicate clearly and effectively, orally and in writing; prepare clear, concise and comprehensive reports, studies and other written materials; handle client and property owner interactions with courtesy, tact and sensitivity to the issues involved and defuse situations that become highly emotional and volatile; deal effectively with a highly diverse client group, culturally and ethnically; represent the Commission effectively in conducting administrative reviews and in administrative hearings and similar proceedings; negotiate the settlement of damage claims on behalf of the Commission; design and conduct effective technical and procedural training sessions; establish and maintain effective and courteous working relationships with supervisors, clients, property owners, hearing officers, representatives of other governmental agencies, employees, the public and others encountered in the course of work.

Training and Experience:

A typical way of obtaining the knowledges, skills and abilities outlined above is graduation from a four year college or university with major course work in public or business administration, planning, social work or a closely related field; and at least two years of progressively responsible experience in the administration of housing programs, at least at the level of Senior Housing Assistant; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:

A valid California driver's license is required for certain assignments.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS

The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by employees to successfully perform the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Physical Demands

While performing the duties of this class, employees are regularly required to sit; talk or hear, both in person and by telephone; and use hands repetitively to operate, finger, handle or feel computers and office equipment; and reach with hands and arms. Employees are frequently required to stand and walk and lift up to ten pounds; and occasionally lift from 11 to 25 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus.

Mental Demands

While performing the duties of this class, employees are regularly required to use written and oral communication skills; read, interpret and analyze data and information; use math and mathematical reasoning; analyze and solve problems; learn and apply new information; perform highly detailed work on multiple, concurrent tasks with frequent interruptions; work under stringent deadlines and interact with supervisors, clients, property owners, hearing officers, co-workers, the public and others encountered in the course of work, many of whom may be upset, dissatisfied and/or abusive.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Employees work under typical office conditions, and the noise level is usually quiet.