

Jurisdictional Class: Competitive
Adopted: January 1, 2009
Revised: June 25, 2010

PRINCIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH SANITARIAN

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This position involves responsibility for the planning, coordinating, supervising, and reviewing the work of other sanitarians involved in the investigation and inspection of the non-engineering aspects of environmental health control and enforcing the provisions of Public Health Law, and local and State Sanitary Codes, and New York State Codes, Rules and Regulations relating to environmental health, sanitation, and safety. These provisions incorporate by reference many other technical standards, such as those of the National Fire Protection Association, the National Plumbing Code, etc. Principal sanitarians apply the principles of natural and social sciences for the detection, evaluation, control, and management of those factors in the environment that influence the public's health. An employee in this class has frequent, direct contact with and instruct facility operators/owners/managers, local health officials, and facility staff. Incumbents deal directly with facility administrators, health care personnel, all levels of governmental agencies, professional groups, community/civic organizations, and the general public. The work is performed independently with the minimal supervision of the Director of Environmental Health with wide leeway allowed for the exercise of independent judgment in carrying out the details of the work in accordance with established policies and procedures. An employee in this class also assists the Director in the development of policies and procedures and manages the Environmental Health Unit in the absence of the Director. Supervision is exercised over Public Health Sanitarians, Senior Public Health Sanitarians, and subordinate personnel. The incumbent does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative only)

- Plans, directs, supervises, reviews, provides technical guidance and assistance, rules and regulation interpretation, and consultation for staff in the performance of their duties;
- Responds to inquiries and provides information and technical assistance regarding policy, rules, and regulation interpretation to facilities, government units, business or civic organizations, and executive staff;
- Orients and trains staff and evaluates work performance;
- Obtains correction of violations through informal or formal enforcement process, reviews case reports and initiates enforcement action, participates in/testifies at hearings, and makes recommendations to facilities as necessary;
- Reviews and makes recommendations on requests for waivers of requirements for construction or physical environment;
- Assists the Director in the development of environmental standards, policies, rules, regulations, and procedures, in facility and engineering reviews, and in enforcement implementation;
- Makes recommendations for and assists Director in program development and program revisions/improvements;
- Manages the Environmental Health Unit in the absence of the Director;
- Plans and directs environmental health goals and programs including, but not limited to: evaluating program effectiveness and progress; ensuring adherence to policies/criteria; maintaining reporting system to make data available for program planning and evaluation, and interpreting and summarizing data and making recommendations for its use; and providing staff with information required for inspections, follow up regarding uncorrected deficiencies and follow up regarding local units reporting abnormally low levels of violations;
- Directs or conducts on-site inspections to observe effects of regulations which are a hardship upon facilities and prepares recommendations for regulation policy revisions;

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- Responds to communicable disease outbreaks, fire and disaster emergencies, and food borne illness complaints and assigns staff to investigate/monitor physical and environmental effects of the above emergencies;
- Recommends and develops Sanitary Code provisions;
- Studies present and proposed local regulations to determine conformity with the Public Health Law, the Sanitary Code, and existing federal regulations, and prepares recommendations for revisions to local codes not in conformity;
- Prepares interpretations of provisions or of regulations and directives to achieve uniform application by all local sanitarians/inspectors, and evaluates local programs to secure uniformity in interpretation and enforcement of regulations/directives;
- Participates in leadership activities including mentoring, assessing training needs, developing ongoing training programs, designing orientation for new staff, and working with facility in mentoring students' field and educational experiences;
- Conducts or participates in training in regard to technical matters and departmental policies and procedures;
- Leads teams addressing work improvement projects;
- Reviews local/district/county plans submitted with applications for State aid, ensures appropriate utilization of state/federal funds, and reviews quarterly reports to assess progress;
- Participates in training for Incident Command System, emergency response and drills, and responds to emergencies as part of the department's public health response requirements and will be a member of the Public Health Response Team;
- Trains facility operators and facility and local health personnel to respond to public health emergencies;
- Assists in preparation of news releases and other public relations materials regarding environmental health programs;
- Prepares and/or reviews a variety of related records and reports of program status;
- Identifies, establishes, and maintains communication systems with key public health community partners to enhance and assist in implementation of environmental health programs;
- Monitors and analyzes environmental performance indicators for trends, effect, and progress with specific populations and programs, and recommends changes as needed;
- Mobilizes the community to develop partnerships and alliances to address high-priority community health needs.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES & PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of public health and environmental health principles, practices, and techniques, including sanitation laws, regulations, and modern inspection methods;
- Thorough knowledge of applicable provisions of the Public Health Law, local and State Sanitary Code, and other applicable standards related to environmental public health;
- Thorough knowledge of departmental policies and procedures;
- Thorough knowledge of general principles of biology, microbiology, bacteriology, chemistry, and general science;
- Thorough knowledge of the application of the chemical and biological sciences to environmental sanitation;
- Ability to apply scientific principles to environmental health programs;
- Ability to gather and analyze data from observations, interviews, records, and reports;
- Ability to adequately assess the impact of various situations on environmental health, identify problem areas and/or the populations affected, and suggest solutions/remediation;
- Ability to maintain and develop good public relations;

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Ability to plan, direct, supervise, and review the work of others;

Ability to train subordinates;

Ability to develop and adapt approaches to situations and be aware of impact on program development, and implements policy that takes into account diversities and cultural differences;

Ability to understand and interpret oral and written material and present ideas clearly and effectively both orally and in writing;

Sound judgment.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Either:

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelors Degree including thirty (30) semester credit hours in the *natural sciences, of which not more than twelve (12) credit hours may be in the **applied sciences and five (5) years of experience as a Senior Public Health Sanitarian deemed satisfactory by the local commissioner of health or public health director; or

(b) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with an Associate's Degree with a minimum of fifteen (15) semester credit hours in *natural sciences of which not more than six (6) credit hours may be in the **applied sciences and five (5) years of experience as a Senior Public Health Sanitarian deemed satisfactory by the local commissioner of health or public health director; or

(c) Satisfactory completion of sixty (60) semester credit hours of academic education at regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a minimum of fifteen (15) credit hours in *natural sciences of which not more than six (6) credit hours may be in the **applied sciences and five (5) years of experience as a Senior Public Health Sanitarian deemed satisfactory by the local commissioner of health or public health director.

*Natural science shall mean a science such as biology, chemistry, or physics that deals with the objects, phenomena, or laws of nature and the physical world. It shall include all physical and biological sciences.

**Applied science shall mean science based courses in environmental technology, sanitation technology, medical technology, public health, infection control, or food science.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Assignments made to employees of this class require reasonable access to transportation to meet field work requirements in the ordinary course of business in a timely and efficient manner.

Qualifications are regulated by Part 11 of the State Sanitary Code (10 NYCRR).