

ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, coordinates and oversees utility billing and customer service functions; researches and conducts investigations into the more complex or non-routine customer service billing and account issues; serves as administrator for the utility billing system; plans, coordinates, and implements water conservation and public outreach programs; develops reports in compliance with federal, state, and local requirements; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Administrative Services Manager. May provide technical and functional direction and training to assigned staff as needed.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is an advanced journey-level, specialist classification within administrative services responsible for performing a wide range of billing, systems administration, and reporting duties and/or developing and implementing the District's water conservation program and activities, as well as researching, responding to, and resolving complex customer account and billing issues. The work requires application and interpretation of policies, procedures, and regulations and involves frequent contact with the public. Employees at this level are required to be fully trained in all procedures related to the assigned area(s) of responsibility, working with a high degree of independent judgment, tact, and initiative. Employees research, select, and apply the most appropriate methods to accomplish assigned tasks and handle problems and deviations in work assignments in accordance with established policies and procedures. Completed work is usually evaluated for soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements and the methods used in arriving at the end results are not usually reviewed in detail. This class is distinguished from the Administrative Services Manager in that the latter has management responsibility for all administrative services functions and programs.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB 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.

When assigned to Utility Billing/Customer Service

- Generates monthly billing by receiving and importing meter reads, reviewing and calculating monthly bills, making adjustments as necessary, creating and sending billing file for printing, and sending out electronic bills.
- Analyzes utility bills by investigating customer usage, researching historical consumption, identifying usage patterns, recommending water use efficiency measures, determining if field investigation is required and scheduling field appointments, and recommending account adjustments.

- Interprets policies and procedures and explains service fees, rates, and procedures to customers; may waive fees under appropriate circumstances and with supervisory approval.
- Prepares utility bills and notices, including final bills, past due notices, 48-hour shut-off warning notices, and shut-offs.
- Receives, processes, and uploads customer automatic payments; receives and processes payments received in-person or via mail; creates bank deposits and uploads deposits to the District's bank account; maintains and balances petty cash box.
- Processes requests for new or cancelled accounts, meter changes, and related utility billing activities as required.
- Serves as billing system administrator by maintaining and auditing data; creating and maintaining reports; establishing internal controls and procedures; researching, monitoring, and implementing updates and enhancements; troubleshooting basic system issues; coordinating the resolution of system problems with outside vendors; and training staff on process and system changes.
- Participates in the evaluation, development, and documentation of utility billing workflow, policies, and procedures; recommends changes for improvement and efficiency; implements changes upon approval.
- Generates utility billing and water consumption reports; collects and checks data; researches assigned topics to provide a wide range of information and assistance relating to District billing activities; prepares and assembles reports, manuals, articles, announcements, and other informational materials.

When assigned to Water Use Efficiency

- Plans, promotes, and implements water conservation, water education, and public outreach initiatives and campaigns; evaluates program effectiveness and makes recommendations, and presentations for the development and implementation of new and/or modified services; coordinates content for Annual Water Conservation Report and District newsletter; updates water conservation website.
- Assists in the preparation and administration of specific program budgets; submits program budget recommendations; forecasts additional funds needed for specific staffing, equipment, materials, and supplies.
- Delivers water conservation initiatives for District customers, including but not limited to landscape audits, rebate programs, school education programs, and community events; develops and writes water conservation and water education materials.
- Conducts research and analysis related to water use, supply, and demand; receives, completes, and submits surveys from Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, State Water Resources Control Board, and the Department of Water Resources; compiles, prepares, and submits reports to various regulatory agencies.
- Represents the District on water conservation issues at the local and regional level; attends and participates in conservation meetings, and serves on committees established by other agencies such as BAWSCA and California Urban Water Conservation Council.
- Develops and maintains positive working relationships to coordinate program development and implementation with local and state agencies, regulators, community groups, industry professionals, and other stakeholders.
- Updates the District's Urban Water Management Plan and related reports.

All Assignments

- Responds and provides information to customer inquiries and complaints in person or by telephone; represents the District to callers and visitors in a professional and customer friendly manner.
- Prepares regulatory and staff reports by researching and analyzing data and interpreting results; prepares recommendations for management and/or Board review and action.
- Maintains accurate and detailed records, verifies accuracy of information, researches discrepancies, and records information.
- Verifies and reviews forms and reports for completeness and conformance with established regulations and procedures; applies District policies and procedures in determining completeness of applications, records, and files.
- Prepares, copies, collates, and distributes monthly Board packets and a variety of documents; ensures proper filing of copies in District files; attends Board meetings; takes and prepares meeting minutes; distributes minutes upon approval.
- Screens calls, visitors, and incoming mail; assists the public at front counter and directs to appropriate locations and/or staff; responds to complaints and requests for information; assists in interpreting and applying regulations, policies, procedures, systems, rules, and precedents in response to inquiries and complaints from the public; directs callers to appropriate District staff as necessary.
- Composes, types, formats, and proofreads a wide variety of reports, letters, documents, and correspondence; checks drafts for punctuation, spelling, and grammar; suggests corrections.
- Maintains, updates, and retrieves information from District record systems and specialized databases.
- Monitors and orders office and other related supplies; prepares, processes, and tracks purchase requisitions for services and materials; receives vendor invoices; prepares request for payment for supervisor approval.
- Monitors changes in laws, regulations, and technology that may affect assigned areas of responsibility; recommends modifications to assigned programs and District policies, procedures, and ordinances; implements changes as required.
- Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of utility billing, customer service, water conservation, and related programs as they relate to the area of assignment.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

When assigned to Utility Billing/Customer Service

- Practices and procedures related to accounting for receipts and the maintenance of customer accounts.
- Principles and practices of utility billing database management and reporting.
- Terminology and practices of financial and account document processing and recordkeeping, including accounts payable and utility billing.

When assigned to Water Use Efficiency

- Practices, theories, methods, and techniques used in the administration and evaluation of water conservation and public outreach programs.

- Principles, methods, and techniques used in the distribution of information to targeted audiences.

All Assignments

- Principles and practices of data collection, analysis, identifying trends and patterns, and recommendation development.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, and ordinances, and District policies and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Business arithmetic and basic statistical techniques.
- Basic business letter writing and the standard format for reports and correspondence.
- Recordkeeping principles and procedures.
- Research and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
- Recent and ongoing developments, current literature, and sources of information related to assigned programs, projects, and services.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and District staff.

Ability to:

When assigned to Utility Billing/Customer Service

- Perform detailed utility billing and customer service support work accurately and in a timely manner.
- Balance cash receipts and maintain accurate financial records.

When assigned to Water Use Efficiency

- Plan and implement water conservation, public outreach, and related programs, projects, and activities in an independent and cooperative manner.

All Assignments

- Deal tactfully with the public and others in providing information, answering questions, and providing customer service, even under difficult or stressful conditions.
- Research, analyze, interpret, summarize, and present information and data in an effective manner.
- Respond to and effectively prioritize multiple phone calls and other requests or interruptions.
- Make accurate arithmetic, financial, and statistical computations.
- Enter and retrieve data from a computer with sufficient speed and accuracy to perform assigned work.
- Effectively represent the District in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various businesses, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.
- Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods, procedures, and techniques.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, procedures, and other written materials.
- Establish and maintain a variety of manual and computerized files and recordkeeping.
- Make sound, independent decisions within established policy and procedural guidelines.

- 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 programs.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and procedural guidelines.
- Understand, and adhere to established District standards, policies, and procedures.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the 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 an associate's degree from an accredited college or two (2) years of college-level coursework in accounting, environmental studies, water resources, communication, public administration, business administration, or a related field, and five (5) years of increasingly responsible experience in providing utility billing and/or customer service. Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in finance, accounting, business or public administration, or related field is desirable.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment.

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 to visit various District and meeting 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 and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer 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 35 pounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to potentially hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing District policies and procedures.