



JULY 2009
FLSA: EXEMPT

PURCHASING AGENT

DEFINITION

Under general direction, performs professional purchasing and procurement work, including purchasing a variety of materials, services, supplies, and equipment according to District purchasing policies and practices and requisition specifications; interviews suppliers, obtains prices, quotes, product information, and technical data; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from the Director of Fiscal Services. Exercises general supervision over assigned staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a supervisory-level class responsible for managing the District's purchasing function. Incumbents perform the full range of departmental purchasing and procurement activities and programs. Responsibilities require the use of tact, discretion, and independent judgment. Successful performance of the work requires thorough knowledge of governmental procurement practices and procedures, purchasing, and formal and informal bid processes. This class is distinguished from the Director of Fiscal Affairs in that the latter has full management authority in planning, organizing, and directing the full scope of professional fiscal and accounting operations within the department.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL 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.

- Plans, manages, and oversees the daily operations and activities of the purchasing function.
- Participates in the development and implementation of goals, objectives, policies, and priorities for the assigned function; recommends within departmental policy, appropriate service and staffing levels; recommends and administers policies and procedures.
- Participates in the development, administration, and oversight of assigned budgets.
- Monitors activities of the assigned function; recommends improvements and modifications and prepares various reports on operations and activities.
- Plans, organizes, assigns, supervises, and reviews the work of technical and/or office support staff; trains staff in work procedures; provides policy guidance and interpretation to staff; evaluates employee performance and works with employees to correct deficiencies; recommends and implements disciplinary procedures; assists in selection and promotion.
- Manages, directs, organizes, and participates in all activities related to the District's purchasing function, including the purchasing of materials, equipment, and services.
- Procures supplies, materials, services, and equipment for the operation of the District, ensuring that all procurement policies, applicable purchasing practices and standards, and bid processes are met.

- Makes recommendations for modifications in procurement policies and ordinances as appropriate.
- Reviews, examines, and processes requisitions, purchase orders, and other related documents to ensure compliance with established purchasing procedures and to confirm funding availability.
- Provides information and guidance to District departments regarding their purchasing needs, specifications for services, supplies, and equipment.
- Prepares financial analyses and cost comparisons to determine the cost-effectiveness of acquiring equipment and services for the District.
- Obtains quotes for stock and special order items; researches availability, quality, and price of equipment, services, and supplies.
- Evaluates product usage trends; forecasts District needs and projects costs; evaluates available products and services from various sources; and develops procurement solutions.
- Coordinates procurements with District departments to meet needs within available budgets.
- Completes, reviews, and/or approves all procurement documentation.
- Compiles specifications for bidding purposes; obtains formal and informal bids; reviews and analyzes bids; makes recommendations regarding bid awards; maintains related files; conducts public bid openings and pre-bid conferences, as appropriate.
- Identifies and establishes a list of possible vendors/contractors located within the service area of the District; maintains good working relationships with vendors/contractors; resolves discrepancies and disputes; develops and administers vendor/contractor agreements; negotiates terms and conditions of contracts; maintains related files and databases.
- Consults with vendors/contractors concerning marketing trends that may affect commodity pricing.
- Receives and responds to inquiries from other employees and vendors regarding procurement policies and procedures; may provide ongoing technical support, instruction, and assistance with the District's electronic purchasing system as needed.
- Prepares and distributes purchasing reports to the Board of Trustees.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of employee supervision, including work planning, assignment, review and evaluation, and the training of staff in work procedures.
- Modern principles, practices, and methods of public and governmental purchasing and procurement programs and processes and their application to municipal operations.
- General principles and practices of data processing related to purchasing and municipal operations.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to municipal purchasing operations.
- Principles and practices of business organization and public administration.
- Practices and techniques of automated financial document processing and record-keeping.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and computer applications related to work, including word processing and spreadsheet software.
- Principles and practices of data collection and report preparation.
- English usage, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, students, and District staff, including individuals of various ages, various socio-economic and ethnic groups.

Ability to:

- Assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.

- Supervise, select, train, motivate, and evaluate the work of staff.
- Research and utilize data and information to achieve cost effective results.
- Negotiate contracts, agreements, and/or pricing schedules for services, supplies, and equipment.
- Advise and explain purchasing policies, procedures, and standards.
- Maintain accurate financial records and reports for informational, auditing, and operational use.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.
- Review and verify the accuracy of data.
- Prepare basic budgetary and financial analyses.
- Make accurate arithmetic, financial, and statistical computations.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.
- Understand and carry out a variety of complex instructions in a responsible and independent manner.
- 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.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and legal guidelines in politically sensitive situations.
- 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 graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in accounting, finance, business or public administration, or a related field and five (5) years of increasingly responsible professional experience in material, supply, equipment procurement and controls, preferably in a college or public agency setting, including one (1) year of supervisory experience. Additional years of related experience can be substituted for the required experience on a year-for-year basis up to a maximum of two (2) years.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing in 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 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 may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.