

New York State Department of Civil Service
Division of Classification & Compensation

Tentative Classification Standard

Occ. Code 1436114

Human Resources Specialist 1 (Benefits), Grade 18	1436114
Human Resources Specialist 2 (Benefits), Grade 23	1436204
Human Resources Specialist 4 (Benefits), M-2	1436524
Manager (Benefits), M-4	1438650
Assistant Director Employee Benefits, M-5	1406650
Director Employee Benefits, M-7	1401600

Brief Description of Class Series

Positions in this series manage the Employee Benefits Division and develop, implement, evaluate, and monitor the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) and other benefit programs. Specifically, Human Resources Specialists (Benefits) plan, coordinate, and manage various employee benefits, such as health, dental, vision, life insurance, workers' compensation, income protection, and disability benefits. Incumbents establish and apply eligibility requirements; arrange and communicate to enrollees the details of each benefit; and negotiate contracts and amendments.

These positions are only classified at the Department of Civil Service, Employee Benefits Division (EBD).

Distinguishing Characteristics

Human Resources Specialist 1 (Benefits): full performance level; responds to phone and written inquiries on various benefits; manages contracts with insurance companies and other vendors engaged in providing services for one or more aspects of an employee benefit; and may supervise entry level professionals and administrative support employees. Work assignments at this level usually entail standard procedures, processes, and guidelines and issues for which substantial reference material and precedent are available.

Human Resources Specialist 2 (Benefits): first supervisory level; under the general direction of a Human Resources Specialist 4 (Benefits), is responsible for resolving complex or high-profile problems; operates with relative independence in planning, organizing, conducting, and coordinating human resources activities; and typically supervises Human Resources Specialists 1 (Benefits) and support staff engaged in benefits administration.

Human Resources Specialist 4 (Benefits): second supervisory level; oversees a small unit or team led by Human Resources Specialists 2 (Benefits); coordinates activities among staff, vendors, and consultants; and is generally responsible for the development, enhancement, and monitoring of EBD's programs and systems.

Manager (Benefits): managerial level; under general direction from Assistant Director Employee Benefits, the incumbents have broad oversight responsibility for the Vendor Management Unit, Policy and Strategic Planning Unit, or the Program Administration Unit.

Assistant Director Employee Benefits: one position class; under general direction from Director Employee Benefits, has broad oversight responsibility for administering NYSHIP and other benefit programs provided to NYS employee/retirees and their dependents.

Director Employee Benefits: one position class; under general direction from Executive Deputy Commissioner, the incumbent serves as the executive manager; and oversees the Employee Benefits Division.

Related Classes

Human Resources Specialist is a generalist series and incumbents perform various human resources activities, such as classification, recruitment, placement and provision of employee services, in an agency.

Human Resources Specialists in Attendance & Leave, Benefits, Classification & Compensation, Municipal Assistance, and Testing parenthetics in the Department of Civil Service, provide services to municipalities and State agencies in administering merit system activities and employee benefits activities.

Human Resources Specialist (Labor Relations) administers the employee and labor relations activities for a State agency.

Illustrative Tasks

Human Resources Specialist 1 (Benefits)

Manages contracts with insurance companies and other vendors engaged in providing services for one or more aspect of an employee benefit.

Assists in testing the programming of New York Benefits Eligibility and Accounting System (NYBEAS) and provide suggestions and/or feedback to ITS.

Documents NYBEAS changes, updates procedures accordingly, and communicates system changes to Health Benefits Administrators via memos and system announcements.

Participates in teams engaged in determining policy and preparing documents explaining benefits.

Makes presentations to enrollees and interested groups regarding benefits and assists in marketing the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP).

Provides guidance, instruction, assistance, and information on NYSHIP to vendors, client agencies, and enrollees verbally and in written form.

Determines enrollment and eligibility for NYSHIP benefits using all related programs, such as NYBEAS, FileNet, NYSTEP, and PayServ.

Participates in the review of various NYSHIP enrollee communications, publications and audit reviews.

Answers inquiries from NYSHIP enrollees and agency Health Benefits Administrators.

Prepares and presents informational and/or training materials to staff, client agencies, and/or enrollees, as needed.

Creates an incident summary in the Oracle application for each incoming and outgoing call; and follows up on open incidents to ensure each case is resolved in a timely manner.

Maintains spreadsheets containing statistical reporting of own and/or unit's workload.

Monitors contractor performance, identifies contractor deficiencies, and develops appropriate recommendations for resolution.

Assists in the development of Requests for Proposals (RFP), Invitation for Bids (IFB) and the development of contracts between the State and vendors.

May supervise lower-level staff.

Human Resources Specialist 2 (Benefits)

May perform all the duties of a Human Resources Specialist 1 (Benefits).

Be responsible for resolving complex or high-profile problems that are referred to the Division from the Commissioner of Civil Service, the Governor's Office, the Office of Employee Relations, labor union representatives, and others.

Reviews Oracle incidents, live and recorded calls, outgoing member correspondence, and NYBEAS transactions processed by staff.

Assists in the development of training education materials, training plans, and training evaluation documents.

Works on system development, process enhancement, and performance monitoring.

Drafts and recommends effective enrollee communications, via telephone and/or in printed format.

Provides assistance on all substantive aspects of the design, testing, and implementation of NYBEAS enhancements or program changes.

Assists in developing, negotiating, and amending contracts (Letter of Agreement) between the State, Program, and ancillary contractors.

Reviews and prepares an evaluation on audit and contractor utilization, and financial and performance reports.

Works with contractors to implement measures to correct deficiencies identified in audits and performance reports.

Serves as representative at meetings with the auditors and the contractor.

Investigates the circumstances surrounding the complaint, reviewing all available systems, and contacting the contractor or appropriate subcontractor.

Determines the merits of the complaint and discusses with the Contract Manager or Assistant Director, as appropriate.

Prepares a written or verbal response to the complainant when required or provides information to the referring source so that they can respond.

Typically performs the full range of supervisory responsibilities over Human Resources Specialists 1 (Benefits).

Human Resources Specialist 4 (Benefits)

May perform all the duties of a Human Resources Specialist 2 (Benefits).

Be responsible for the development, enhancement, and monitoring of EBD's programs and systems, including, but not limited to, the telephone system, Oracle Service Cloud, FileNet, and NYBEAS.

Represents the Division on all substantive aspects of the design, testing, and implementation of all systems.

Prepares and provides management reporting on all aspects of EBD functions and systems.

Prepares and approves Vendor Responsibility contracts; and reviews and negotiates Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) plans/waivers.

Develops and implements new programs and administrative aspects of the contracts between the contractor and the State.

Works with the Office of Employee Relations and the Division of the Budget to establish new employee benefits programs.

Works with ITS staff, and other Department and agency staff to identify issues and propose solutions where guidance does not exist. This may include system enhancements including, but not limited to, testing of the systems and ensuring updates are in compliance with NYSHIP rules and Civil Service Law and Regulations.

Attends meetings and represents the Division's position on issues, as appropriate.

Performs the full range of supervisory responsibilities over Human Resources Specialists 2 (Benefits).

Manager (Benefits)

Manages day-to-day operations of assigned sections in the Division including legislative analysis, and policy and program administration and development.

Manages all section activities and staff, directing and coordinating the flow of work.

Oversees the compilation of periodic reports.

Assists the Assistant Director in developing and carrying out policy.

Represents the Division and Department at meetings, conferences, seminars, and other events related to the Department's activities.

Major functional units include the Vendor Management Unit, the Policy and Strategic Planning Unit, and the Program Administration Unit.

Within the Vendor Management Unit and Policy and Strategic Planning Unit:

- Reviews contractual performance of NYSHIP vendors.

- Works with NYSHIP vendors, the Division of Budget, and Office of Employee Relations on health insurance collective bargaining proposals.
- Monitors the adequacy of the Empire Plan Medical, Hospital, and Mental Health and Substance abuse provider networks.
- Manages the Empire Plan's prescription drug formulary.
- Reviews and drafts technical specifications for competitive procurements for NYSHIP.
- Ensures NYSHIP complies the Affordable Care Act, and all other state and federal laws and regulations.
- Examines NYSHIP's role in the statewide and nationwide health insurance market.
- Onboards new local governments, school districts, and public authorities who are interested in becoming a NYSHIP participating employer.
- Examines health insurance topics and identifies opportunities to create efficiencies in NYSHIP and other programs.

Within the Program Administration Unit, which administers various benefit programs including health insurance, paid family leave, dental insurance, vision benefits, life insurance, and other programs:

- Ensures staff are appropriately managing calls and correspondence received.
- Ensures various programs and software are delivering needed functionality to support calls and correspondence received.
- Sets performance goals related to calls, correspondence, and other aspects of customer service, and developing strategies to meet these goals.

Assistant Director Employee Benefits

Serves as Deputy Director of the Employee Benefits Division.

Handles Division administrative tasks such as budget, travel, and physical plant.

Manages and maintains an organizational structure that will most efficiently accomplish the essential functions and meet the key responsibilities of each unit.

Selects and assigns staff in such a way as to implement the approved organization and achieve the desired level of productivity, quality, and improvement of program design and delivery.

Manages, trains, and motivates subordinates to improve services and increase the value of the Division's administration of Employee Benefits.

Collaborates with the Director and other senior managers in the development and articulation of program policy and a strategic plan for the Division.

Ensures compliance with Federal and State Regulations.

Collaborates with NYSHIP vendors, the Division of Budget, and Office of Employee Relations on health insurance collective bargaining proposals. Focuses on emerging healthcare trends.

Holds NYSHIP vendors accountable to performance guarantees and agreed processes per their contracts.

Director Employee Benefits

Serves as the executive manager for various non-pension benefit plans available to State and local government employees. These include health, dental, vision, life, disability, paid family leave, long term care and workers' compensation benefits.

Provides leadership and direction to staff in the Employee Benefits Division, and managerial oversight for policy development and strategic direction for NYSHIP.

Develops and implements policies related internal controls, budget development, succession planning and staff development.

Ensures compliance with legislative, regulatory, and contractual requirements of the collective bargaining agreements between the State and unions representing State employees.

Develops strategic initiatives intended to reduce program costs, increase quality, and improve the administration of the various programs for which the Division is responsible.

Develops and analyzes legislative proposals related to employee benefits, including Civil Service, Health, and Insurance law.

Provides policy advice to the executive team within the Department of Civil Service as well as other State executives.

Presents testimony on benefits issues before the legislature.

Directs procurement, negotiation, administration, and monitoring of insurance and other contracts to provide the benefits available under the various plans.

Develops premium requirements and financial management of the plans.

Oversees enrollment, billing, accounting, and authorization of premium payments.

Ensures that activities related to collection of the Medicare Part D retiree drug subsidy are completed in a timely and accurate manner.

Directs the marketing of NYSHIP to local governments.

Provides technical assistance in the administration of NYSHIP to participating local governments and public authorities.

Participates in collective bargaining.

Coordinates Department's participation in health and benefits related interagency initiatives.

Minimum Qualifications

Human Resources Specialist 1 (Benefits)

Open Competitive: Four years of experience* planning, coordinating, and managing various employee benefits (such as health, dental, vision, and life insurance; and workers' compensation, income protection, and disability benefits); establishing and applying eligibility requirements; and arranging and communicating to enrollees the details of each benefit.

Human Resources Specialist 2 (Benefits)

Promotion: One year of permanent service as a Human Resources Specialist 1 (Benefits).

Human Resources Specialist 4 (Benefits)

Promotion: One year of permanent service as a Human Resources Specialist 2 (Benefits).

Manager (Benefits)

Promotion: Two years of permanent service as a Human Resources Specialist 4 (Benefits).

Assistant Director Employee Benefits

Promotion: One year of permanent service as a Manager (Benefits).

Director Employee Benefits

Promotion: One year of permanent service as an Assistant Director Employee Benefits.

*Substitutions: Associate degree may substitute for two years of specialized experience; bachelor's degree may substitute for four years of specialized experience; master's degree may substitute for five years of specialized experience; J.D. may substitute for six years of specialized experience.

Note: Classification Standards illustrate the nature, extent, and scope of duties and responsibilities of the classes they describe. Standards cannot and do not include all the work that might be appropriately performed by a class. The minimum qualifications above are those required for appointment at the time the Classification Standard was written. Please contact the Division of Staffing Services for current information on minimum requirements for appointment or examination.

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