

New York State Department of Civil Service
DIVISION OF CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION

Classification Standard

Occ. Code 2340100

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 1, Grade 14	2340100
Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 2, Grade 18	2340200
Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 3, Grade 23	2340300
Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 4, Grade 27	2340400
Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 5, Grade 31	2340500

Brief Description of Class Series

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialists perform a variety of activities associated with receiving complaints and inquiries about regulated and competitive energy, telecommunications, cable television and private water service providers as well as distributed energy resource suppliers, energy brokers and consultants; obtaining information to investigate complaints and answer inquiries; resolving consumer complaints through established procedures; recording, collecting and analyzing complaint data; preparing reports; and supporting the operations of the intake and consumer complaint management systems.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialists are classified only in the Department of Public Service.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 1: entry level; performs a variety of tasks associated with receiving complaints and inquiries about regulated and competitive energy, telecommunications, cable television and water service providers as well as distributed energy resource suppliers and energy brokers and consultants; analyzes information in a consumer complaint case; issues initial decisions and directives; supports the operations of the intake and consumer complaint management system.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 2: first supervisory level; performs more complex tasks associated with receiving, analyzing and resolving and responding to complaints and inquiries about regulated and competitive energy, telecommunications, cable television and water service as well as distributed energy resource suppliers and energy brokers and consultants; conducts and resolves informal hearings and reviews; prepares determinations of shared meter complaints; analyzes consumer complaint data; monitors the performance and supports the operations of the intake and consumer complaint management systems; and supervises lower-level staff in the performance of their assignments.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 3: second supervisory level; researches and summarizes generic issues and recommends actions; supervises and directs the activities of the Call Center, Analysis Unit; conducts and resolves informal hearings and reviews between consumers and service providers concerning more complex issues; prepares determinations on shared meter complaints as well as determinations on appeals, and rehearing petitions for Public Service Commission action, manages the operation of the intake and consumer complaint management systems.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 4: managerial level: manages Office of Consumer Services program areas including: Call Center, Analysis, Informal Hearing, and Appeals Units and related skill groups; investigates, identifies trends, researches and proposes actions responsive to complaints received; monitors enforcement of Public Service Law, Rules and Regulations under 16NYCRR, service provider tariffs, and Public Service Commission policies and orders; and directs the technical and analytical functions and operations of the intake and consumer complaint management systems.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 5: managerial level: directs and coordinates the activities of several program areas or skill groups; develops policies and programs, and process improvements to promote the timely intake, analysis, and resolution of complaints and the enforcement of applicable laws, rules, regulations, and Public Service Commission orders; directs the overall operations of systems supporting the continuing function of the office.

Related Classes

Utility Consumer Program Specialists perform a variety of activities associated with implementation of enforcement procedures, certification processes, reporting and analysis; development and implementation of Department policies; facilitation of dispute resolution and economic development initiatives; advocating for and communicating with end users on matters of utility or competitively provided energy, telecommunications and water services.

Illustrative Duties

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 1

- Intakes consumer complaints and inquiries about their service provider through multiple channels to initiate a complaint investigation or to respond to requests for information.
- Enters consumer complaints and inquiries into a consumer complaint management system.

- Interviews customers calling on the Statewide Emergency Hotline regarding the initiation of termination of residential electric and/or gas service in accordance with Part 11 of 16 NYCRR;
- Reviews and analyzes company records.
- Reviews department policies, programs and the consumer complaint management system on a regular basis in order to respond to consumers
- Issues initial decisions and directives to service providers and notifies consumers about the resolution of their complaint or response to their inquiry.
- Prepares summaries and reports of complaint data for review by higher level staff.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 2

- Supervises the Specialists 1 in the investigation and resolution of customer complaints and responding to customer inquiries.
- Analyzes and resolves more complex complaints about energy, telecommunications, cable television and water service providers as well as distributed energy resource suppliers and energy brokers and consultants.
- Interviews customers calling on the Statewide Emergency Hotline regarding the initiation of termination of residential electric and/or gas service in accordance with Part 11 of 16 NYCRR.
- Prepares reports and analyzes data related to consumer complaints and staff workload.
- Monitors the performance and supports the operation of the intake and consumer complaint management system, provides information and support to staff and recommendations for system improvements.
- Advocates for customers at informal hearings.
- Conducts or directs a service provider to conduct a premise inspection or meter test to determine the accuracy of billing or determine the adequacy of service in accordance with Public Service Law.
- Performs pre-hearing reviews, conducts informal hearings and reviews, negotiates settlements, and issues hearing and review decisions.

- Prepares determinations of shared meter complaints
- Assists higher level staff preparing office procedures, monitoring the quality of utility service and measuring consumer satisfaction with the complaint handling process.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 3

- Manages the operation of the intake and consumer complaint management systems.
- Develops procedures and prepares staffing schedules for Helpline and Hotline coverage.
- Performs tasks associated with the assessment of customer service policies, practices and procedures in accordance with Public Service Law, 16 NYCRR, Public Service Commission orders and service provider tariffs.
- Develops and maintains office procedures and manuals which describe process and methods used for receiving, responding to, and closing customer inquiries and complaints; and prepares periodic customer satisfaction surveys, analyzes survey results and prepares reports describing the results.
- Performs and directs tasks related to the review, analysis, research and resolution of the more complex billing, rate and service-related complaints about energy, telecommunications, cable television and water service providers as well as distributed energy resource suppliers and energy brokers and consultants.
- Performs pre-hearing reviews, conducts informal hearings and reviews negotiates settlements, and drafts and issues hearing and review decisions.
- Prepares and issues determinations of shared meter complaints in accordance with Section 52 of the Public Service Law
- Prepares consumer appeal determinations and or rehearing petitions in accordance with Section 3.7 16 NYCRR and Section 22 of the Public Service Law.
- Assists public officials and representatives of consumer organizations with sensitive and more generic issues and, if necessary, prepares appropriate responses signed by the Chairman, a Commissioner, Director or other appropriate executive staff; assigns and oversees the performance of inspections pertaining to a customer's premises and equipment.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 4

- Supervises, directs and coordinates program area or a specific skill group.
- Supervises tasks associated with the review and assessment of customer service policies, practices and procedures for consistency with the requirements of Public Service Law, 16 NYCRR, service provider tariffs and Public Service Commission orders;
- Conducts informal hearings and reviews of more complex cases; negotiates settlements, and issues hearing and review decisions.
- Supervises the performance of tasks associated with preparing recommended determinations on appeals from informal hearing or review decisions in accordance with Section 12.14 16 NYCRR, recommended determinations for the Commission Designee in shared meter cases in accordance with 16 NYCRR Part 12 and Section 52 of the Public Service Law, and recommended determinations for the Commission on rehearing petitions concerning appeal determinations by the Commission on shared meter Designee determinations pursuant to Section 3.7 16 NYCRR and Section 22 of the Public Service Law.
- Manages the operation of the intake and consumer complaint management systems.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 5

- Directs and manages one or more program areas and/or skills groups, which includes the supervision of professional staff.
- Reviews and evaluates unit operations and procedures and ensures uniform application of policies and procedures across unit lines.
- Reviews staffing needs and recommends appropriate staffing in each of the program areas.
- Reviews and evaluates the operations of the various program areas and assists in developing policies and procedures necessary for the effective and efficient resolution of customer inquiries and complaints.
- Assists the Chief and Director in the formulation and implementation of Office and Public Service Commission policies involving customer service and customer operations.
- Assumes full responsibility for the supervision of all program areas and office operations in the absence of the Chief.

- Directs the overall operations of information systems supporting the continuing function of the office.

Minimum Qualifications

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 1

Open-Competitive: Two years of qualifying experience* and satisfactory completion of a one-year traineeship.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 2

Promotion: One year of service as a Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 1.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 3

Promotion: One year of service as a Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 2.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 4

Promotion: One year of service as Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 3.

Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 5

Promotion: One year of service as Utility Consumer Assistance Specialist 4.

*Qualifying experience: experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Investigating customer inquiries and complaints as a customer service representative or responding to customer inquiries in a call center environment;
- Developing public awareness or consumer education programs including, but not limited to, presentations to consumers, consumer advocates, government regulators, or industry groups;
- Conducting investigations involving energy, telecommunications, water, cable television service, or other regulated industries;
- Analyzing, organizing, presenting, and/or researching information or data related to energy, telecommunications, water, or cable television service or other regulated industries;
- Designing survey instruments to measure and track customer satisfaction or analyzing and/or preparing reports on results of such surveys;
- Conducting inspections or tests of energy or water meters or telecommunications devices; or
- Analyzing customer education programs and/or customer service performance.

Substitutions: 30 semester credit hours of college level study may substitute for one year of experience; 60 semester credit hours of college level study may substitute for two years of experience.

Note: Classification Standards illustrate the nature, extent and scope of the 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 are those which were required for appointment at the time the Classification standard was written. Please contact the Division of Staffing Services for current information on minimum qualification requirements for appointment or examination.

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