

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

**Occ. Code 0403500**

**Principal Accountant, Grade 27**

Brief Description of Class

Principal Accountants oversee an accounting program in a specialized field or department. These positions plan and manage financial reporting, accounting, collection and reconciliation for an agency; manage the preparation of financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) mandated by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB); and oversee accounting for taxes, refunds, miscellaneous revenues, and receivables of the State. These positions require an advanced knowledge of accounting theory and technique, and a high degree of ability to devise and adapt accounting systems and methods to meet varying conditions. Incumbents direct or assist in the direction of accounting operations and oversee a staff of professional accountants and/or auditors.

Distinguishing Characteristics

*Principal Accountant:* oversees multiple units led by Supervising Accountants or Associate Accountants.

Related Class

Auditors 3 plan, direct, and monitor comprehensive audits, examinations, and appraisals of accounting records and financial affairs, of public, for profit, and non-profit organizations and businesses to ensure that accounts are maintained in compliance with governing laws, rules, regulations and contracts. Auditors determine the ability of the organization to conduct its programs efficiently and effectively; and evaluate internal controls and practices.

Illustrative Tasks

*Principal Accountant*

May perform all the duties and functions of lower-level Accountants.

Plans, directs, and oversees audits for compliance with governmental rules and

regulations.

Evaluates accounting procedures, operations, and internal controls. Recommends changes to procedures and accounting systems.

Oversees and conducts analysis and evaluation of financial, cost, and accounting statements, reports, and transactions. Makes determinations on difficult accounting and financial problems.

Oversees the design, development, and implementation of procedures involving accounting and reporting requirements.

Reviews and analyzes applicable legislative changes, makes recommendations concerning the impact on existing accounting systems, and proposes solutions to accommodate changes.

Supervises staff in an accounting operation.

- Assigns and schedules work and reviews work for accuracy and completeness.
- Provides technical assistance on accounting problems and answers questions from staff ensuring that all operating objectives of the program area are being met.
- Develops functional procedures and reporting guidelines, including reconciliation procedures between transactions.
- Oversees the day-to-day operation of multiple units that includes activities such as receiving, recording and depositing cash; the preparation of financial statements; the disbursement of funds; the maintenance of accounting records; analyzing and evaluating financial statements and preparing reports based on analyses; and the preparation of statistical statements and reports.
- Performs the full range of administrative supervisory activities such as preparing performance evaluations, and evaluating candidates for appointment and promotion.

### Minimum Qualifications

#### *Principal Accountant*

Promotion: one year of service as either a Supervising Accountant or Associate Accountant.

**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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