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

Classification Standard

Occ. Code 8126100

Human Rights Specialist 1, Grade 19 8126100
Human Rights Specialist 2, Grade 22 8126200
Human Rights Specialist 3, Grade 25 8126300

Brief Description of Class Series

Positions in this series perform a variety of activities involved in carrying out anti-discrimination programs and equal opportunity programs in the areas of employment, housing, credit, places of public accommodations, and non-sectarian educational institutions. They also train and educate the public on the New York State Human Rights Law, the remedies it provides, and the activities of the Division of Human Rights. These positions exist only in the New York State Division of Human Rights.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Human Rights Specialist 1: full performance level; under direction of a Human Rights Specialist 2, investigates complaints of discrimination; attempts conciliation; and educates the public on the Human Rights Law and the agency's services.

Human Rights Specialist 2: first supervisory level; supervises a staff of Human Rights Specialists 1; investigates complex and sensitive cases.

Human Rights Specialist 3: second supervisory level; acts as assistant to an Assistant Commissioner acting as regional manager; directs and plans anti-discrimination programs and equal opportunity programs in the areas of employment, housing, credit, places of public accommodations, and non-sectarian educational institutions; develops, implements, and manages the investigative activities in specialized areas of civil rights for the New York State Division of Human Rights; and supervises a team of Human Rights Specialists 2. These positions are established in the non-competitive jurisdictional class.

Related Classes

Hearing Officers (Division of Human Rights) conduct formal public hearings in cases involving the perceived violation of civil rights when the Agency finds probable cause.

Equal Opportunity Specialists (Compliance) investigate and oversee the investigation of complaints of workplace discrimination filed with regard to the State workforce in Executive Branch agencies, departments, and certain public authorities. Incumbents work closely with human resources professionals, employee relations professionals, and counsel in State agencies, departments, and certain public authorities

Illustrative Duties

Human Rights Specialist 1

Investigates complaints of discrimination:

- Informs complainants, respondents, and witnesses of their rights and responsibilities under the Human Rights Law.

- Develops investigative plans, conducts investigations, prepares investigative reports, and makes recommendations on final determinations of cases.

- Interviews complainants, prepares formal complaints for notarization and signature, and serves complaints.

- Determines strategy, tactics, and applicable case law with relevant supervisors.

- Contacts complainants, respondents, witnesses, and other parties to obtain facts to support or refute allegations and conducts two party conferences and/or makes site visits.

- Examines employment records, directories, credit ratings, correspondence, and other documentation relevant to investigations, and maintains documentation of the process in the Case Tracking System (CTS).

- Analyzes information gathered by investigation and prepares comprehensive reports of findings and recommendations.

Attempts conciliation by engaging parties of a complaint in mediation or conciliation.

Performs public outreach activities:

- Responds to requests for assistance from NYS Human Rights Advisory Councils, local human rights agencies, community groups, and potential respondents.

- Develops internship programs and supervises interns.

- Promotes community relations among diverse groups of individuals, including working with advisory councils, local outreach agencies, and other groups to provide technical assistance or training on the Human Rights Law, and addresses community groups, organizations, and workshops to foster positive community relationships.

Human Rights Specialist 2

Performs all the duties of Human Rights Specialists 1.

Supervises a staff of Human Rights Specialists 1 engaged in carrying out anti-discrimination and equal opportunity programs in the areas of employment, housing, credit, places of public accommodations, and non-sectarian educational institutions.

Researches and acts as a resource on the New York State Human Rights Law and its application.

Receives cases from the Human Rights Specialist 3 or Assistant Commissioner and determines strategy, tactics and appropriate case law to be utilized in the investigation of complaint at the time of assignment along with Human Rights Specialist 1.

Reviews case files for completeness, accuracy, and probative value.

Processes recommended determinations based on the content of the file to the Human Rights Specialist 3 or higher-level manager.

Monitors the case tracking system to ensure that investigative standards are being met and develops corrective action plans for case processing problems that surface.

Investigates more difficult and sensitive cases and attempts to assist parties in reaching acceptable solutions to such complaints.

Drafts comprehensive reports on investigative findings, including recommendations for disposition of cases.

Conducts outreach and other educational activities, as requested by higher-level staff: gives speeches, conducts workshops, and makes public appearances to foster better understanding of agency services; coordinates the distribution of appropriate outreach materials, and distributes and collects Requests for Literature.

Performs the full range of supervisory duties, including performance evaluations, employee selection, and time and attendance; and develops and delivers training for staff or Division employees.

Human Rights Specialist 3:

Performs all duties of a Human Rights Specialist 2.

Develops and implements investigation of individual claims of discrimination or suspected systematic forms of discrimination.

- Identifies any research, witnesses, or documentary evidence needed.
- Sets deadlines to secure and evaluate evidence and complete the investigation.
- For individual cases, reviews case files and issues a determination based on the findings of the investigation as to whether probable cause exists to believe that unlawful discrimination has occurred.
- For systematic cases, reviews the evidence gathered and make a report to the Commissioner or his/her designee as to what action, if any, should be taken on the findings.

Acts as assistant to Assistant Commissioner acting as regional manager.

- Establishes budgets for the investigative activities.
- Drafts or oversees the development of investigative reports, and ensures quality, completeness, and accuracy in such reports.
- Develops and conducts outreach efforts to relevant communities and/or constituency groups to educate such communities and groups on the New York State Human Rights Law and the Division.
- Ensures that operations and staff are in full compliance with all laws, policies, procedures, and standards, including requirements for the Division's Case Management System.

<u>Minimum Qualifications</u>

Human Rights Specialist 1

Open Competitive: six years of experience* in any combination of the following areas: field investigation or law enforcement investigation and the preparation of detailed narrative reports; planning, developing, implementing or enforcing a human rights, civil rights or housing and community development program; conducting discrimination or labor relations investigations; or litigation.

Substitution: an 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; Ph.D. may substitute for seven years of specialized experience.

Human Rights Specialist 2

Promotion: one year of permanent service as a Human Rights Specialist 1.

Human Rights Specialist 3

Promotion: one year of permanent service as a Human Rights Specialist 2.

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 of the work that might appropriately be performed by a class. The minimum qualifications above 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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