



BENEFITS SPECIALIST

Department: Multiple
Job Class #: 144000
Pay Range: Professional 05

FLSA: Non-Exempt
Represented: No

Classification descriptions are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in this class and are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

GENERAL FUNCTION: This is specialized technical work for Pierce County in the areas of employee health insurance and/or leaves administration. An employee in this classification is responsible for administering benefits programs which include medical, dental, life and disability insurance, retirement, IRS Section 125 and 457 plans, and/or administering various leave programs and policies.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

Health Insurance Benefits Specialist

- Serve as the subject matter expert on benefits to ensure employee understanding, accurate recordkeeping, and compliance with all applicable laws.
- Facilitate understanding of the coordination of employee benefits including reviewing, screening, and determining benefit eligibility and enroll employees and family members in appropriate benefit programs.
- Monitor employee events and update eligibility in Workday accordingly.
- Analyze and resolve complex issues and/or technical problems involving policies and procedures, rules and regulations, federal, state and local laws, and benefit carrier contracts and agreements with respect to benefit programs.
- Oversee training and events pertaining to the County's employee benefits and wellness programs.
- Coordinate annual open enrollment process, organize, prepare materials and conduct new employee orientation.
- Implement wellness and programs and projects designed to achieve County strategies on time and within budget.
- Stay apprised of laws and internal policies that potentially impact the County's benefits programs and advise accordingly.
- Develop and implement communications pertaining to employee benefits.
- Prepare, organize and maintain various reports, records, and files related to benefit programs.
- Coordinate annual VEBA process.
- Act as Secretary for LEOFF1 Board.
- Maintain Benefits web page on County Intranet site.

Leaves Benefits Specialist

- Interpret and administer leave programs and policies in accordance with federal and state employment laws (FMLA, ADA, USERRA, WA FLA, Pregnancy Discrimination Act, etc.) and Pierce County Administrative Guidelines, Shared Leave, Catastrophic Leave and other leave programs.
- Serve as the subject matter expert for Countywide leave programs in alignment and under the general direction and guidance of HR Leadership.
- Recommend approval/denial of leave requests based on relevant medical information, military orders or other criteria. Prepare leave notifications and recommendations for the Director of Human Resources or designee.
- Coordinate, organize and maintain medical information ensuring that FMLA, HIPAA and Employee Privacy guidelines are closely monitored and executed.

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- Coordinate all administrative aspects of leave to include tracking hours used/taken and work closely with Department HR Partners, Timekeepers and Payroll to ensure that pay for County employees on leave is accurate and correct.
- Work closely with County employees to ensure that all relevant completed medical documentation is submitted for timely review. Maintain appropriate contact with County employees on leave and coordinate return to work.
- Assist the EEO/ADA Specialist with compliance and reasonable accommodation requests, and other related duties.

All Benefit Specialists

- Make presentations, and prepare and present materials to employees, supervisors and managers.
- Assist, advise and train other employees in areas of expertise.
- Proficiency in the use of office equipment.
- Provide information to state and federal benefit agencies as needed.
- Effectively persuade, inform, educate, train, solicit information, motivate and direct a wide variety of individuals or groups.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with County officials, employees and the general public.
- Maintain regular, predictable and punctual attendance during regularly scheduled work hours at assigned worksite.
- Meet travel requirements of the position.
- Perform the physical requirements of the position; work within the established working conditions of the position.
- Work a flexible schedule, which may include evenings, weekends, holidays and overtime.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Perform other job functions as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED: Incumbent works independently and receives general supervision when assigned new or advanced tasks. Work is reviewed periodically by an administrative superior for accuracy and conformance to established policies and procedures and quality of service provided. This position does not supervise other employees but may provide direction to and/or train others.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment characteristics described herein are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the position. The Benefits Specialist typically works in an office environment on a daily basis. Incumbents may be required to work at a desk or other work station for prolonged periods; constant attention to detail is required. Ability to concentrate with frequent interruptions and general office noise is required.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: The physical demands described herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions. Physical activities required are finger dexterity necessary to operate equipment used in the position, talking, seeing and hearing.

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Walking, sitting, bending/stooping, pushing/pulling and minimal unassisted lifting associated with the job duties is required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of:

- Employee benefits programs and procedures.
- Federal, state and local laws, ordinances and other legislative actions pertaining to personnel management, medical records, and benefit and leave administration.
- Personnel management practices, procedures and laws relating to COBRA, Family and Medical Leave, USERRA, HIPAA and ADA
- Principles, methods and techniques of appropriate record keeping.
- County leave policies.

Skill in:

- The use of personal computers and various software.
- Problem solving, time management and priority setting.

Ability to:

- Articulate and describe issues and make recommendations to upper management.
- Interpret, apply and explain benefit policies and procedures, applicable laws and regulations to employees and employee family members, supervisors, and others.
- Maintain confidentiality and discretion.
- Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action.
- Develop, prepare, facilitate and conduct oral presentations.
- Keep and maintain accurate and detailed records.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with the general public, department officials, employees, benefits carrier representatives, and others.
- Use and operate a personal computer at an acceptable level of proficiency as required for the position.
- Utilize technology for business purposes.
- Understand and follow written and verbal instructions.
- Work effectively and productively with others.
- Communicate effectively verbally and in writing to audiences of various social, cultural, ethnic, educational and economic backgrounds.
- Effectively coordinate, perform and complete multiple duties and assignments concurrently and in a timely manner.
- Meet the travel requirements of the position, if any.
- Physically perform the essential job functions of the classification.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY: Bachelor's Degree human resource management, public or business administration or closely related field and one year of experience in benefits and/or leave administration OR any equivalent combination of experience and education is required.

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SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AND/OR QUALIFICATIONS: A valid Washington State driver's license or the ability to otherwise meet the travel requirements of the position is required. Must be able to successfully pass a Pierce County Background investigation prior to employment.