

0501,Financial Specialist,GS-13

Based on PD Tracking Number 0002171

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Department of the Interior Standardized Position Descriptions for Bureau Headquarters Level Positions.

Introduction

The incumbent of this position serves as a senior Financial Specialist, utilizing a vast knowledge of accounting and financial management principles and procedures in completing complex assignments.

Major Duties

Performs a variety of top level bureau functions, such as:

- participating in decision-making sessions with top bureau management officials, and advises program managers on regulatory requirements, financial policies, the interpretation of data, and the importance of accounting data to program operations and improvements;
- planning developing, and coordinating financial management improvements necessary to comply with OMB directives and legislation; e.g., the CFO Act, the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act, and the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA);
- coordinating the resolution of accounting system problems arising from factors such as changes in legislation, the needs of program managers, Departmental emphasis, and standardization among Interior bureaus;
- providing interpretive guidance to other accounting and financial management staff and functional representatives;
- preparing organization comments on GAO, OMB, and Treasury proposals;
- preparing policies, procedures, and guidelines on administrative accounting functions for use by program staff and technical personnel;
- devising new methods and criteria to identify trends and patterns, modifying systems to accept new kinds of data, and preparing a variety of regular and special purpose reports;
- planning analyzing, and determining programmatic financial relationships;
- developing organizational accounting and financial policy that may cover the full realm of accounting and financial activities, and the requirements of laws and regulations; developing policy and guidelines for program users;
- providing authoritative policy interpretations and functional recommendations in the implementation of new legislative and regulatory requirements;
- developing systems and procedures for bureauwide implementation of laws, standards,

regulations, and policies;

advising management on changes to function/program workflow practices or procedures, better internal controls, redesign of reports or faster consolidation of data, and how to reduce costs or improve operations;

preparing, or overseeing the preparation of, the bureaus annual financial statements required by the CEO Act, ensuring that the financial statements meet prescribed standards (e.g., form, content, etc.);

providing staff direction and guidance in the design, development and implementation of automated systems required to comply with new accounting standards and the accompanying reporting requirements;

analyzing, interpreting, and implementing accounting standards developed by FASAB and prescribed by GAO and OMB, advising management on the implications of the new standards and expected impacts on the bureau in implementing new standards, coordinating with bureau financial and program officials to ensure effective implementation of required accounting standards;

developing and performing ongoing analyses and interpretation of financial data in the general ledger to determine if the information is accurate, complete, and informative to management. Performs specific analyses to ensure that the general ledger is maintained to provide the quality and reliability of information sufficient to preclude audit qualifications on the bureaus CFO financial statements;

analyzing the requirements of the government Standard General Ledger (SGL) Board and develops new accounts, posting rules/models, policy, and instructions to ensure bureau compliance with standards;

participating actively as the bureaus representative on the SGL Board and other Departmental teams to ensure the bureaus unique accounting and information requirements are considered and included in the promulgation of standards;

developing and maintaining a complex of automated subsystems to produce accounting and financial information, and defining systems specifications;

coordinating the resolution of accounting system issues arising from such factors as changes in legislation, regulation, and accounting standards; testing systems changes to ensure they do not compromise reporting requirements; evaluating proposals to integrate the accounting system with interfacing administrative support and functional program information systems; and/or

analyzing operations, financial systems, periodic and special reports and systems edits to develop information on trends, anomalies, or problems, and develops solutions; planning and executing changes to the content and nature of financial reports and application of computer technology to accounting functions.

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position Level 1-8, 1550 points

This position requires:

mastery of, and skill in applying, financial management concepts, principles and techniques,

including new developments in financial management concepts and techniques to changing programs;
expert knowledge of Federal accounting principles, practices, and standards;
comprehensive knowledge of the Chief Financial Officers Act, Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) Statements and Concepts, OMB Circulars Form and Content, GAO Titles, Treasury Letters and Bulletins, and GSA directives and other pertinent government guidelines;
extensive comprehensive knowledge of the Interior financial management system and/or bureau financial management operations and activities;
extensive skill in oral and written communications; and
extensive skill and knowledge of personal computer-based software for account analysis and reporting

sufficient to:

devise, plan, and complete complex bureau-wide studies and write reports, operating procedures, and guidelines that serve as authoritative guides and precedents for other financial specialists in bureau headquarters and regional and local offices;
develop necessary bureau-wide policies, procedures, practices, and guidelines needed to produce financial statements and reports;
perform detailed analysis of the impact of policy changes on related programs and to analyze internal data and general ledger sources to be used to prepare external financial reports to the Department of the Interior, Department of Treasury, and to OMB;
recommend alternatives and solutions, and initiate revised standards and procedures when needed for programs and policies that are highly legalistic, technically intricate, and administratively detailed in nature;
effectively plan and delineate tasks for major project activities; define objectives, milestones, and resource requirements, and coordinate work activities/solutions with professional and technical staff; and
explain subtle distinctions and complex relationships to key management officials, and develop and justify policy or program goals.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls Level 2-4 450 points

The supervisor outlines overall objectives and available resources. The employee and supervisor, in consultation, discuss timeframes and scope of assignment, including possible stages and approaches.

The employee:

determines the most appropriate principles, practices, and methods to apply in all phases of assignments;

interprets regulations on his/her own initiative;
applies new methods to resolve complex and/or intricate, controversial, or unprecedented issues and problems;
resolves most of the conflicts that arise; and
keeps the supervisor informed of progress and of potentially controversial matters.

Work is reviewed for soundness of overall approach, effectiveness in meeting requirements, and adherence to requirements.

Factor 3, GuidelinesLevel 3-4, 450 points

Typically, guidelines are broad and nonspecific and are stated in terms of goals to be accomplished rather than the approach to be taken. Examples of guidelines include OMB circulars, Department of Treasury regulations, and Comptroller General decisions.

The employee uses initiative and resourcefulness in:

acquiring information;
analyzing and interpreting the available guidance; and
devising methods to accomplish tasks.

Factor 4, ComplexityLevel 4-5, 325 points

Work is characterized by extremely diverse and complex assignments. The employee must function in a broad interdisciplinary context as the work concerns a field of rapidly evolving technology as well as changing practices.

The employee is engaged in a wide variety of activities, including:

interpreting and applying complex guidelines;
designing and modifying accounting and financial management sub-systems as they interface with other sub-systems, and eventually, the overarching Departmental system;
establishing or evaluating system enhancements of central importance to the bureau;
resolving extremely stubborn financial management problems involving conflicting demands from such conditions as funding priorities, economic interest, public interest, or equivalent concerns;
serving as an authority, advising directors; and
writing reports.

Work is further complicated by points of law without precedent, conflicting legal requirements, and undefined issues requiring extensive probing and analysis. The employee must be innovative and adept at conceiving new strategies for solving problems.

Factor 5, Scope and EffectLevel 5-5, 325 points

Work involves isolating and defining unknown conditions, resolving critical problems, and developing new approaches.

The employee

provides expert advice to program officials, accountants, financial analysts, and other specialists on the interpretation of financial regulations;

solves significant problems in the development of systems and sub-systems, or in the financial management of organizational programs;

provides guidance and leadership to develop and maintain a cost effective system of management and financial controls necessary to compile accurate and reliable financial information; and assesses the impact of proposed systems features on major systems development or modification efforts.

Activities of the employee have a direct and significant impact on:

the financial integrity of the Department of the Interior and bureau operations;

the reliability of financial data used to manage and measure bureau programs and performance;

the perception of external parties as to the soundness of bureau financial and accounting practices;

the bureaus ability to obtain an unqualified audit opinion (Note: Qualified opinions are unacceptable to the bureau Chief Financial Officer, Department Chief Financial Officer, and the Bureau Director); and

the capability of the accounting system to support managements financial information needs.

Factor 6, Personal Contacts and Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts Level 3C, 180 points

Contacts are with officials of the Department and bureaus, the Department of Treasury, OMB, and FASAB. Contacts are generally not routine and depend on events that are usually not predictable. The contacts vary with respect to purpose; ground rules for conducting the contacts likewise vary.

The primary purposes of contacts are to justify, defend, negotiate or settle matters involving significant or controversial issues. Examples include:

defending alternative methods of financing substantive program operations or the redistribution of appropriated funds and programs;

negotiating and resolving controversial financial and program issues of considerable significance which are not susceptible to resolution at lower echelons in government; and/or

justifying the overall direction for the bureaus financial management or budgeting program.

Factor 8. Physical Demands Level 8-1, 5 points

The work is principally sedentary, although there is some walking, bending, and carrying of light items. The work can also require long periods of concentrated effort working with detailed data.

Factor 9. Work Environment Level 9-1, 5 points

Work is performed in an office setting with adequate light, heat, and ventilation. Travel is required.

Total Points: 3290

Grade Conversion: GS -13