

**CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT**

*Class specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in the class. Specifications are **not** intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.*

**DEFINITION**

Under general direction, performs advanced professional accounting work and financial systems development, analyses, recording and reporting; may act in the absence of the Accounting Manager; may supervise assigned staff and do related work as required.

**CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

The work of this class requires the application of advanced professional accounting techniques to a variety of situations. Incumbents must be able to exercise considerable judgment in allocating charges and credits to proper accounts; prepare standard special financial reports; interpret procedures and regulations; and possess strong personal computer skills. Work may involve supervision of clerical and professional accounting staff.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES** - *Examples of duties performed by employees in this class may not include all required duties, nor are all listed tasks necessarily performed by everyone in this class.*

Monitor and participate in finance, accounting, budgeting, record keeping and reporting work of the Department, performing the most technically difficult work; perform quality control reviews of work performed by staff; adjust accounting records to conform with generally accepted accounting principles; prepare statements, schedules and notes to the financial statements; activities and services; assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, policies and procedures for assigned functions; examine accounts and records for proper authorizations, certifications and distribution of charges; supervise control over general and subsidiary ledger controls; review and verify journal and ledger entries and trial balances; inspect accounting system to determine efficiency and protective value and recommend improvements; analyze data and prepare reports of findings and recommendations; instruct and advise on preparation of financial statements and other related records and reports; prepare federal and state reports; participate in the assessment of risk and the internal control environment; participate in the development of internal control and internal audit functions; plan and coordinate annual and special audit services and requirements and provide assistance to external auditors; participate in recommending the appointment of division staff; oversee customer service and facilitate the efficient flow of information to internal customers and department staff; supervise and participate in the collection and tracking of multi-year statistical data for use in the annual financial report and for official reports; monitor and prepare a variety of internal and external reports, as assigned; prepare various administrative reports on operations and activities; provide professional and technical advice on accounting pronouncements, standards, policies and procedures; coordinate the work of outside contractors/consultants, as necessary.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Operations, services and activities of a municipal accounting program at an advanced level;
- Modern and complex principles and practices of governmental accounting, finance and auditing and their application to a wide variety of accounting transactions and problems;
- Financial reporting practices as applied to governmental accounting regulations;
- Automated financial management systems;
- Principles and practices of job costing and cash flow, financial modeling and data processing;
- Operation and use of microcomputer hardware and software including spreadsheet and data base applications and word processing;
- Principles of supervision, training and performance evaluation;
- English usage, spelling, grammar and punctuation;
- Modern office methods, practices, procedures and equipment.

### **Ability to:**

- Perform complex professional accounting duties;
- Effectively and accurately analyze and evaluate complex accounting documents, reports and auditing problems;
- Detect and explain account irregularities and recommend effective corrective measures;
- Exercise sound judgment and common sense;
- Plan and organize work with a high degree of independence of action;
- Design and implement complex computerized schedules, accounting system modifications and reports;
- Conduct detailed technical review of a wide range of financial records and documents in specialized areas of accounting;
- Prepare clear and concise oral and written reports, both narrative and statistical;
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with all levels of City staff, labor associations, other governmental agencies and the general public;
- Supervise, organize, and review the work of assigned professional, technical, and clerical staff; select, supervise, train and evaluate staff;
- Utilize computer systems to enter and retrieve data;
- Read, understand, interpret and apply laws, policies, procedures, rules, contracts, guidelines, legal documents and professional practices;
- Speak clearly and effectively before individuals and groups.

### **Experience and Training Qualifications**

**Experience:** Five years of increasingly responsible experience performing the full range of professional, technical and analytical accounting duties, two of which must have been in a municipal or closely related environment and one of which must have included supervisory or lead responsibility.

**Training:** Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in accounting or a closely related field. A Masters Degree or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Certification are highly desirable.

**License or Certificates:** Possession of, or ability to obtain, an appropriate, valid California driver's license.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Environmental Conditions:** Office environment; exposure to computer screens.

**Physical Conditions:** Essential and marginal functions may require maintaining physical condition necessary for sitting for prolonged periods of time.