

City of South San Francisco
Human Resources Department

Payroll Specialist I/II
Class Description

Definition

Under general supervision, performs a variety of complex and specialized accounting duties related to processing Citywide payroll; functions as a liaison between the Finance Department, and other City departments and employees by answering questions and solving complicated and/or sensitive payroll problems; performs a variety of technical tasks relative to payroll; and performs other related duties as assigned.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The Payroll Specialist I is the entry-level classification in the Payroll Specialist series. Positions in this class typically have little or no directly related work experience and work under immediate supervision while learning job tasks. The Payroll Specialist I is distinguished from the II level by the performance of less than the full range of duties assigned to the II level. Incumbents work under immediate supervision while learning job tasks, progressing to general supervision as procedures and processes of assigned area of responsibility are learned.

The Payroll Specialist II is the experienced journey-level classification within the Payroll Specialist series. Payroll Specialist II is distinguished from the I level by the performance of the full range of duties assigned. Positions assigned to this class are required to carry out assigned duties and responsibilities under general supervision and receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise, and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. Positions assigned to this class may be assigned to train and provide lead direction to lower-level payroll staff.

Payroll Specialist I and II are flexibly staffed. An incumbent Payroll Specialist I may promote directly to a Payroll Specialist II upon obtaining the requisite qualifications, subject to availability of authorized positions and Finance Director approval.

Typical and Important Duties

1. Perform specialized and detailed work in the review and processing of Citywide payroll and related materials; ensure the integrity of data and information related to payroll.
2. Analyze and reconcile a variety of payroll records; prepare, process, and maintain payroll records, and transactions, including Workers' Compensation, State Disability Insurance, and Employment Development Department.
3. Reconcile and transfer payroll taxes, quarterly taxes, and PERS retirement contributions.
4. Audit and process timecards; prepare and submit payroll accounting information for data processing; check payroll batches for errors and reconcile differences.
5. Audit and calculate adjustments and retroactive pay, benefit changes, pay raises and promotions; review all personnel transactions for accuracy and compliance.
6. Answer questions and provide information to employees, departments and timekeepers

about payroll and personnel procedures; interpret and explain payroll rules and regulations.

7. Balance payroll system controls; balance and post payroll transactions to payroll ledgers and reconcile to the accounting system; and balance various other financial transactions with source documents and controls.
8. Prepare, compile, tabulate and maintain payroll data and complex documents; assist with preparing technical financial, statistical and operational reports, statements and records.
9. Prepare payroll retention records for storage.
10. Assist with implementation of payroll and benefit changes, reviews memoranda of understanding, contracts, and policies for their impact on payroll processes.
11. Build and maintain positive working relationships with co-workers, other City employees and the public using principles of good customer service.
12. Perform related duties and responsibilities as assigned.

Job-related Qualifications

Knowledge of:

- Practices, methods, and terminology used in payroll and timekeeping.
- Principles and practices of routine analytical research.
- Pertinent local, State and Federal laws, ordinances, rules and regulations related to payroll, wage and garnishment laws.
- Governmental accounting and payroll practices, especially as applied to municipal organizations.
- Business letter writing and report preparation.
- Customer service principles and problem resolution techniques.
- Modern office practices and procedures, computer equipment and software applications related to financial accounting.
- Techniques for dealing effectively with the public and City staff, in person and over the telephone.

Ability to:

- Perform difficult and responsible technical work related to payroll and related statistical record keeping.
- Process and reconcile complex payroll documents.
- Prepare, process, review, and check submitted payroll and financial documents, records, and forms for accuracy, completeness and conformance to applicable policies, rules, and regulations.
- Research and compile technical and financial information.
- Make accurate mathematical calculations.
- Respond to and assist in resolving difficult and/or sensitive inquiries related to payroll processes.
- Operate a personal computer for data entry, inquiry, and report generation.
- Maintain confidentiality of a wide range of sensitive information.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Establish and maintain cooperative relations with those contacted during the course of work.
- Work in a safe manner, following City safety practices and procedures.

- Maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information.

Skill in:

- Word processing and working with a variety of computer applications with sufficient speed and accuracy to perform assigned work.
- Entering and retrieving data into standard computer with speed and accuracy sufficient to perform assigned work.
- Managing electronic and hard copy records.

Experience and Training

Any combination of experience and training that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities would be qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge, skills, and abilities would be:

Payroll Specialist I

Experience:

Two years of responsible experience performing clerical accounting duties, preferably involving payroll.

Training:

Equivalent to an Associate's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in public administration, business administration or a related field.

Payroll Specialist II

Experience:

Three years of progressively responsible payroll experience in a public agency, equivalent to a Payroll Specialist I.

Training:

Equivalent to an Associate's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in public administration, business administration or a related field.

Licenses and Certificates

All licenses and certificates must be maintained as a condition of employment.

- Possession of, or the ability to obtain, an appropriate, valid California driver's license and a satisfactory driving record.

Special Requirements

Essential duties require the following physical skills and work environment:

Physical Skills:

Able to use standard office equipment, including a computer; mobility to work in a typical office setting to use standard office equipment; sit, stand, walk, kneel, crouch, stoop, squat, twist, and maintain sustained posture in a seated position for prolonged periods of time; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone; lift and carry 25 pound boxes, files, and materials.

Work environment:

Work in a standard office setting.

Ability to:

Travel to different sites and locations.

Additional Information:

- Approved: 11/9/2022
- Revised Date: 2/24/2025
- Former Titles:
- Abolished:
- Bargaining Unit: Confidential
- DOT: No
- Status: Classified/FLSA Non-Exempt
- Job Code: Payroll Specialist I - O275, Payroll Specialist II – O270