

South Heartland District Health Department

Job Description

TITLE: Environmental Health Specialist	OCCUPATION: Public Health Administration
POSITION STATUS: Full-time or Part-time, Regular	FLSA STATUS: Non-Exempt
WAGE RANGE: Entry-Level \$23.32 - \$26.50 / hr	DATE: April 10, 2023
REPORTS TO: Program Supervisor	APPROVED BY: Michele Bever

QUALIFICATIONS:

GENERAL: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily and in a manner that is consistent with professional development standards of ethical conduct. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill and/or ability required.

QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE:

Required Education and Experience:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Environmental Sciences, Public Health or closely related field
 - Degrees must include 30 semester hours of college credit in basic science coursework and credits for a college level math or statistics course. Basic sciences include Life Sciences, Natural Sciences, Physical Sciences or Health Sciences.
- Certification as a National Environmental Health Association Registered Environmental Health Specialist preferred.
- National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant within 6 months of employment.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office computer applications and data base applications.
- Ability to operate standard office equipment including but not limited to computers, printers, copiers, scanners, calculators, facsimile machines and telephone systems.
- Valid driver's license and proof of personal driver's insurance required. Ability to utilize own transportation for work purposes as necessary. Ability to travel within the SHDHD four county service area. Further distances on occasion.
- Ability to work well with diverse groups in the public sector and demonstrate cultural awareness and sensitivity.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Must comply with organizational and departmental policies and procedures and various laws and regulations.
- Must possess a valid Nebraska driver's license.
- Must successfully pass a background check.
- Must possess demonstrated ability to relate to individuals and families of varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds, ages, and economic circumstances.

JOB SUMMARY: Responsible for developing, implementing, managing, and evaluating efficient, fiscally responsible, and effective environmental programs and education.

JOB DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Enforce laws and regulations passed by the board of health, State of Nebraska and other entities that protect health and ensure safety.
- Investigate citizen environmental complaints, contact appropriate agencies for help or referrals, and provide recommendations or follow up for recorded events.
- Monitor and track the surveillance of environmental health issues/diseases: i.e., West Nile Virus, lake algae, public health water violations, etc.
- Inform, educate, and empower citizens about environmental health issues such as radon, lead, mercury, pharmaceutical disposal, mold mitigation, indoor air quality, bed bugs, and other issues that impact the communities.
- Develop, promote, conduct, and evaluate accepted best practice programs, new and innovative department programs, education, and activities as well as strategies to increase participation in the programs.
- Has knowledge of disease prevention, health promotion, prevention and lifestyle risk reduction education, current public health problems and organizations which deal with those problems.
- Demonstrate sound fiscal accountability.
- Search for funding opportunities and develop, submit, and implement grants, budgets, and contracts with various funders.
- Comply with work plans, reporting requirements, and timelines per grant and/or contracts in an accurate and timely manner.

- Operate and maintain specialized environmental sampling and testing equipment.
- Evaluate training courses and seminars on environmental health issues to educate the public and to promote compliance with environmental laws, regulations and programs.
- Develop information and information systems to provide the most current information concerning environmental health risks and environmental biotechnology to the public, industry and other governmental agencies.
- Educate the public regarding home environment issues; provide advice and resolve challenges associated with housing sanitation and safety.
- Compliance with all SHDHD policies and procedures.
- Participation in assigned internal staff committees.
- Participation in required SHDHD trainings.
- Participate in performance management, activities to sustain a culture of QI within SHDHD and department accreditation efforts.
- Maintain strict confidentiality of sensitive information in accordance to department confidentiality and HIPAA regulations.
- Able to work some evenings and weekends as needed.
- Represent SHDHD in a professional manner when out in the community in a variety of settings.
- Assist with emergency response efforts to disease outbreaks and/or disasters when requested.
- Participate in media interviews when requested.
- Provide accurate, complete and timely documentation of work activities and program data /statistics; prepare reports and summaries as required.
- Promote services and programs at SHDHD.
- Work toward meeting the Core Competencies of Public Health (listed below).
- Other duties as assigned.

SCOPE OF AUTHORITY: This position does not have supervisory responsibilities.

FINANCIAL: Work within limitations of program budget, being mindful of the need for cost-effective use of resources. Provide data as requested to support financial reporting. Prepare reports and gather documentation for timely program invoicing and program accountability.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Utilize and incorporate professional standards of practice criteria and guidelines into program development, implementation, and evaluation. Participate in the process of continually improving quality and performance. Provide accurate and timely data, records and summary reports for reporting to the Board of Health or as required by program grants or contracts.

SECURITY/ACCESS: This employee will be issued picture identification and will understand and comply with agency security/access policies and procedures.

EXPOSURE TO HAZARDS: Characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. The noise and environmental temperature levels in the work environment are normal/moderate. Although universal precautions will be encouraged, there may be a slight risk that the employee can be exposed to a communicable disease or an unsanitary environment during the course of work activities. While performing the duties of this position, the employee may be occupationally exposed to outside weather conditions. The employee may need to drive in inclement weather and must have the ability to navigate out-of-town travel. The employee will be exposed to a variety of environments when visiting business sites such as high noise levels, dust and pollution for short periods of time.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Ability to maintain confidentiality.
- Ability to listen, read, comprehend, and effectively communicate information both written and orally to all individuals.
- Ability to carry out written and oral instructions.
- Knowledge of public health principles and techniques, basic sciences; knowledge of related cultural, social, and economic forces in family and group relationships. Knowledge of community health and welfare resources.
- Ability to apply professional public health principles, techniques, and basic sciences in homes and the community.
- Knowledge of available resources and organizations, including behavioral, psychosocial, medical, social and health services programs.
- Ability to exercise judgment in the application of professional services.
- Ability to work in a team environment, establishing and maintaining collaborative and cooperative working relationships with staff and external partners.

- Ability to maintain an objective attitude and maintain a calm, supportive demeanor when working with community processes and individuals.
- Ability to gather, organize and analyze a variety of information.
- Ability to work in a smoke/tobacco-free and drug-free work environment.

IDENTIFIED SKILL SETS:

- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Excellent organizational and planning skills.
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to comply with work plans, reporting requirements, timelines and budgets per grants/contracts and SHDHD policies and procedures.
- Ability to exercise judgment in the application of professional services.
- Excellent interpersonal skills: Ability to work in a team environment, establishing and maintaining collaborative and cooperative working relationships with staff and external partners.
- Ability to maintain an objective attitude and maintain a calm, supportive demeanor when working with community processes and individuals.
- Equipment. Responsible for proper use and operation of supplies and equipment including but not limited to: telephone, computer, printer, copier, LCD projector, and fax machine.
- Computer Literacy. Ability to operate a personal computer and utilize a variety of software programs including word processing, database management, desktop publishing, social media platforms, and e-mail.

PHYSICAL/CRITICAL DEMANDS: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit; walk, stand, and drive; use hands, fingers to handle or feel; reach with hands and arms; and talk and hear. The employee is occasionally required to stand, climb stairs, walk short distances, stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl, or physically demonstrate activities. The employee must regularly lift and/or move up to ten pounds and occasionally lift and/or move 30+ pounds. Specific vision abilities required include those of close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and ability to adjust focus.

SCOPE OF CONTACT WITH CLIENT POPULATION: In the course of performing the duties of this job, the employee may encounter volunteers, board members, and interested/impacted individuals from preschool to the geriatric age group, from business owners to governmental officials as well as community members and leaders from varying cultural and ethnic backgrounds, from diverse regional locations, and from differing service-related sources. Must be knowledgeable and sensitive to the needs of vulnerable and at-risk populations and to issues of trauma and its effects.

IDENTIFIED CORE COMPETENCIES OF PUBLIC HEALTH:

Tier 1 – Front Line Staff/Entry Level. Tier 1 competencies apply to public health professionals who carry out the day-to-day tasks of public health organizations and are not in management positions. Responsibilities of these professionals may include data collection and analysis, fieldwork, program planning, outreach, communications, customer service, and program support. (from: Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals, Council on Linkages, 2021).

There are 8 domains of public health competency: Data Analytics and Assessment Skills, Policy Development and Program Planning Skills, Communication Skills, Health Equity Skills, Community Partnership Skills, Public Health Sciences Skills, Management and Finance Skills, Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills. Upon hire, new employees will complete a self-assessment of core competencies and, if needed, will work with their supervisor to develop a plan for core competency development that will support their specific position.