

Employee Benefits Specialist Tompkins County

Department: Human Resources Department

Classification: Competitive

Labor Grade: Confidential Grade 60

Approved: 6/2025

By: RP, Commissioner of Human Resources

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two-year college AND three (3) years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in employee benefits, benefit plan administration or coordination, or relatable work; OR
2. Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND five (5) years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in employee benefits, benefit plan administration, or relatable work; OR
3. Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that specified in (a), (b) and (c) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The Tompkins County Benefit Specialist is responsible for the administration and coordination of employee benefits programs for county government employees and retirees, ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations while providing exceptional customer service and guidance to employees and retirees regarding their benefits options. This position administers county employee benefits per contractual agreements and county policies including but not limited to health insurance, dental, vision, retirement plans, life insurance, flexible spending accounts and other related benefits. The Benefits Specialist educates and assists employees and retirees in understanding benefits options, enrollment processes, and changes during open enrollment and qualifying life events, providing timely and accurate information and resolving concerns. Additional responsibilities include preparing reports related to benefits, enrollment, utilization and costs for management review, preparing informational materials and presentations and participating in benefits renewal and vendor negotiation processes as needed. The work requires maintaining relationships with benefit providers, Consortium staff, County staff, employees and retirees. The employee will work under the general direction of the Commissioner of Human Resources or their designee and may supervise staff as directed. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Provides outstanding customer service to employees and retirees in assisting them in gaining a better understanding of employee benefits available to them;
- Coordinates with third-party vendors on behalf of the County for various benefits related activities or programs;
- Maintains subscriber information through third-party vendor websites and systems;
- Addresses benefit questions for management, employees, dependents, retirees, and survivors, as well as various providers;
- Assists in Orientation and Informational Sessions for employees;
- Assists in gathering necessary information for completing and processing payroll status reports, as well as wage and health benefits reports to various agencies;
- Communicates eligibility of employees and assists in enrollment;
- Provides information to health care providers on medical benefits and coverage;
- Maintains health insurance and other benefit related records;
- Assists employees with retirement matters and preparing for retirement/enrolling in retiree health insurance.

- May assist with Administrative special projects, as requested.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- General knowledge of employee benefit laws, rules, regulations and best practices;
- Ability to understand, and interpret complex written material, including Federal and State laws, contract language, collective bargaining agreements, etc.;
- Strong customer service skills and the ability to communicate complex information clearly and effectively.
- Excellent organizational skills with strong attention to detail;
- Working knowledge of Microsoft office products and benefits administration software at an intermediate level;
- Ability to prepare, maintain and follow up on independent correspondence, necessary forms, reports and records as required to enable correct and timely administration of benefit areas;
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and handle sensitive information professionally;
- Ability to operate a personal computer as required, either with or without reasonable accommodation;
- The employee's physical and mental condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodation.

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