

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**Code No. 002718
Grade 21**

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISOR

DEFINITION OF CLASS:

This is full-performance investigative, outreach and educational work involved with identifying, controlling and preventing the occurrence of sexually transmitted diseases (STD/AIDS). Contacts include co-workers, clinic physicians and nurses, hospital and laboratory personnel, infected individuals and their contacts, and the general public for the purpose of providing information about and coordinating services to patients, presenting technical information regarding epidemiology, and to convey STD/AIDS educational materials. Public service and assistance is provided by employees in this class on an on-going basis, and requires judgment when questioning clients to obtain factual, sensitive information, and determine the nature of follow-up services required.

An employee in this class, working under general supervision, is responsible for independently planning and carrying out tasks associated with conducting day-to-day testing, counseling, and investigatory and outreach services pertaining to sexually transmitted diseases occurring in Montgomery County. Work involves locating infected individuals and their contacts, informing them of the nature of their disease, and motivating them to reveal pertinent information and obtain medical assistance. A significant aspect of the work is concerned with motivating patients to reveal sensitive personal information. Guidelines consist of Federal, State and local laws governing epidemiology and confidential relationships with physicians, laboratory personnel, patients, and the public, and Health Department policies and procedures. However, existing guides are not always applicable for unusual conditions encountered in the work, and require the employee to use sound judgment and ingenuity in selecting or adapting appropriate guides to fit specific situations. Incumbents must be able to resolve problems and situations as they occur, in the field or in the clinic, on their own. The complexity of the work is characterized by obtaining detailed personal information from reluctant, often hostile citizens, and convincing the clients to seek and receive medical assistance. Frequently, this involves dealing with delicate situations where sound judgment is essential. Incumbents must be able to speak knowledgeably with physicians, laboratory personnel and other health professionals about the clinical aspects of sexually transmitted diseases and the interpretation of laboratory diagnostic tests. The impact of this class of work directly affects the general public by interrupting and preventing the spread of STD/AIDS. The work environment includes clinics, "field operations" and the Detention Center, with recurring exposure to cold, heat and other adverse weather conditions and to body fluids, which requires the occasional use of special/protective equipment, e.g., gloves/masks. Work requires considerable traveling throughout Montgomery County to meet with contacts and other persons in the community. Due to the uncertainty of work environments, incumbents must be alert to and aware of their surroundings at all times. Employees are also occasionally exposed to hostile or abusive behavior from clients and other persons.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: (Illustrative Only)

- Conducts investigations of persons suspected of having or known to have sexually transmitted communicable diseases (STD/AIDS); interviews neighbors and relatives of same and searches files of public agencies to locate persons.
- Interviews and re-interviews STD/AIDS patients to elicit from these individuals their contacts, and other information needed to effect disease intervention.
- Conducts partner notification interviews and refers persons to treatment services.
- Provides pre and post test counseling for all clients seeking STD/HIV (AIDS) testing, to include inmates at the Detention Center and patients of detoxification centers and methadone clinics.
- Prepares literature for and conducts informational workshops for County (high-risk) agencies, e.g., Detention Center, shelters and half-way houses.
- Counsels STD/HIV positive persons as to the cause, symptoms, effects and treatments of diseases; follows up on treatment or referral, to include emotional support throughout duration of treatment.
- Draws blood and takes specimens to detect diseases; performs technical microscopic test for the detection of infectious syphilis.
- Contacts private physicians and laboratories to explain the objectives and functions of sexually transmitted disease control; solicits their cooperation in furnishing names and addresses of persons found by them to have STD/AIDS.
- Conducts information and education sessions and activities for the general public and for public and private medical personnel, e. g., health fairs, schools, community/church groups, hospital and laboratory staffs to provide information on various aspects of STD/AIDS.
- Develops and implements specially focused programs of information on education geared to the age and background of the population group, to include radio and television.
- Prepares and maintains accurate and complete records of time spent on assigned cases, information obtained, and results of investigation which are incorporated into monthly reports.
- Coordinates case activities with other health care agencies both within the Washington Metropolitan area and throughout the United States.
- Attends local and State meetings and conferences on STD/AIDS related matters.
- Performs related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Knowledge of the causes, effects, transmission, treatment and control of sexually transmitted diseases (STD/AIDS).
- Skill in the techniques of interviewing and field follow-up of communicable disease patients, their contacts and others associated with them to elicit sensitive and identifying information regarding sexual contacts and substance abuse.
- Skill in drawing blood samples for serologic testing.
- Ability to compile and analyze communicable disease information as it applies to STD/AIDS and to present this information to groups of varying size and socio-economic background.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with government agency representatives, health care personnel in the public and private sectors, diseased individuals and the general public, including various ethnic and cultural groups.
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Experience: Three (3) years of experience in either public health investigation or health education related to STD/AIDS.

Education: Completion of a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in one of the Social or Biological Sciences, Health or related field.

Equivalency: An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted.

LICENSE:

- Possession and maintenance at all times of valid Class "C" (or equivalent) driver's license from the applicant's state of residence.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD:

Individuals appointed to a position in this class will be required to serve a probationary period of six (6) months, during which time performance will be carefully evaluated. Continuation in this class will be contingent upon successful completion of the probationary period.

MEDICAL EXAM PROTOCOL: Limited Core Exam.

Class Established: September 1967

Revised: August 1970

February 1974

October 1981

Classification Study: May 1991 (M)

August 2013

Formally Titled: "Communicable Disease Investigator"