



# **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATOR**

## **DEFINITION**

Under direction of the City Administrator, conducts background investigations of applicants to determine suitability of employment; and performs other and related work as required.

## **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

An incumbent in this class conducts thorough and objective background investigations of applicants to determine employment suitability; researches information and prepares written recommendations based on findings.

## **EXAMPLE OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS**

- ▶ Conducts thorough and complete background investigations according to department policies, applicable laws, and procedural requirements; reviews applications/personal history statements (and other documents, as required to determine suitability) for completeness and directs applicants to provide additional information if needed; obtains proper information release documents.
- ▶ Contacts and conducts investigative interviews of applicants, applicant personal references and applicant employment references; develops and pursues lines of inquiry.
- ▶ Gathers, verifies, and analyzes personal, professional, credit/financial, and educational documents; contacts other agencies, governments, and professional organizations to obtain and verify information.
- ▶ Researches, obtains, and reviews data from various databases and information systems to verify information and/or check for inconsistencies related to applicant information.
- ▶ Prepares letters, reports and written summary of findings; analyzes investigation results and draws logical and objective conclusions; confers with hiring managers; makes recommendations regarding suitability for employment.
- ▶ Responds to requests for information; assists outside agencies when appropriately requested to provide background information regarding previous applicant background investigation; answers applicant questions; refers requests or questions to managers, as appropriate.
- ▶ Attends training sessions, seminars and conferences; trains and advises others as required.
- ▶ May be required to travel to interview sources and verify information.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

**Knowledge of:** Principles and practices of investigation and research, including interviewing techniques, conflict management, and methods and techniques of negotiation; electronic information systems to access data; principles of identification, report writing and techniques; principles and procedures of record keeping and reporting; research techniques, statistical analysis and data collection; basic computer and modern office automation technology and computer software programs relevant to department operations; relevant federal, state and local laws, codes, and ordinances related to the legal requirements of background investigations and hiring practices of applicants;

**Ability to:** Effectively evaluate suitability of an applicant and prepare sound recommendations based on research and analysis; demonstrate sensitivity of diverse cultures and individuals; work within stringent deadlines; organize, prioritize and perform multiple tasks to complete work; work independently; read, comprehend and interpret complex written materials; perform detailed work with accuracy; exercise good judgment in safeguarding confidential and sensitive information; exercise diplomacy when dealing with people in sensitive situations; operate computers and related software; establish and maintain effective working relationships with applicants, agencies, employees, and the general public; communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

**Education/Experience:** Any combination of training and/or experience which is equivalent to:

- ▶ High School graduation or equivalent.
- ▶ Two years performing employment applicant investigative work in a government or contract investigative agency;  
or  
Four years experience as a full-time paid peace officer conducting investigations.
- ▶ Completion of a Peace Officers Standards and Training POST approved Background Investigator course preferred.

**License:** Possession of a valid California driver's license.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Physical/Mental Requirements:** *Mobility* - frequent operation of a data entry device; repetitive motion; sitting, standing, walking for extended periods of time; driving; occasional pushing, pulling, bending, squatting, climbing; *Lifting* - frequently 5 pounds or less; occasional 5 to 30 pounds; *Visual* - constant good overall vision and reading/close-up work; frequent color perception and use eye/hand coordination; occasional use of depth perception and peripheral vision; *Dexterity* - occasional reaching; grasping; frequent repetitive motion; writing; *Hearing/Talking* - frequent hearing of normal speech, hearing/talking on the telephone, talking in person; *Emotional/Psychological* - constant decision making, concentration, and public contact; public speaking; dealing with emergency situations; *Special Requirements* - may require working overtime, weekends and nights; working alone; *Environmental* - occasional exposure to varied weather conditions.