

# COUNTY OF SOLANO

## CLASS SPECIFICATION

### VETERANS' BENEFITS COUNSELOR (Senior)

#### CLASS SUMMARY:

Under general supervision, the Veterans' Benefits Counselor (Senior) classification, leads, plans, schedules and reviews the work of Veterans' Benefits Counselors, while performing the same and/or more complex duties associated with assisting veterans and their dependents and survivors in understanding and obtaining benefits provided by Federal and State laws and regulations; interprets Federal and State laws for recipients; interviews, counsels, and prepares all documents to file claims for veterans' benefits and entitlements for veterans, dependents and beneficiaries of veterans.

#### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This class is distinguished from the:

- Director of Veterans Services class, which has executive responsibility and accountability for planning, directing, organizing, staffing, and controlling the activities and functions of the Solano County Veterans' Service Office
- Veteran's Benefits Counselor class, which is the journey level class having no oversight in the training, scheduling and reviewing of work of other Veteran's Benefits Counselors.

#### SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:

- Supervision is provided by a Director of Veteran's Services.
- No supervision is exercised over others, however, an employee in this class performs lead duties, and trains new Veterans' Benefits Counselor on departmental procedures and federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to client eligibility for benefits and assisting clients in receiving those benefits.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES:** This class specification represents the core area of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the department.

- Performs lead worker duties such as:
  - providing on-the-job training;
  - sharing instructions received from supervisor and getting work started;
  - distributing work among staff;
  - monitoring status of work being performed and keeping supervisor informed of work progress and likelihood of meeting timelines and required deadlines;
  - reviewing work of assigned crew, informing supervisor of customer feedback, work quality, conduct problems, etc. and providing input on performance to supervisor; and
  - ensuring work is performed safely and efficiently.

- Performs the same duties as the work being led such as the following:
  - Interviews veterans and/or their dependents or beneficiaries to gather information needed to determine eligibility for a variety of benefits and services.
  - Answers general inquiries made by callers over the phone and in person; provides information regarding claims procedures, eligibility criteria and related information; deals with clients of various socio-economic levels and temperaments; makes referrals to other agencies; conducts routine briefing sessions as needed.
  - Communicates with representatives of other agencies to determine status or explain circumstances of claims submitted; clarifies regulations; prepares and coordinates client referrals.
  - Files appeals regarding denied claims; researches and evaluates applicability of regulation and documents supporting claims; may represent clients before hearing boards.
  - Prepares and maintains work records; reviews and stays abreast of legislation and regulations; completes claims forms for a variety of benefits and programs; prepares transmittal letters; orders documents needed to support claims; establishes and conducts follow-up on case files.
  - Keeps abreast of changes in job-related laws and regulations; attends training programs, workshops and seminars as appropriate.
  - Performs other duties of a similar nature or level as assigned.

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:**

**Education:** Associate's degree or higher from an accredited college or equivalent in Business Administration, Public Administration, Sociology, Psychology or a related field.

**Experience:** Two (2) year of full-time paid experience in the area of veterans' benefits counseling, which included completing and processing forms or applications.

**LICENSING, CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:**

- Employees are required to obtain a valid California Driver's License, Class C, by the time of appointment.
- In accordance with title 39, Code of Federal Regulations 14.629, all persons appointed to this class are required to obtain accreditation with the State of California Department of Veterans Affairs within six (6) months of appointment to this class. Failure to successfully obtain this accreditation may be cause for disciplinary action.

**Note:** All licenses, certificates and registrations must be kept current while employed in this class.

**REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:**

**Knowledge of:**

- Standard and accepted principles of leadership, on-the-job training, and work review;
- Veterans Affairs claim process initial filling, appeal and reviews;
- Military procedure and processes;

- County Veteran Services Office (CVSO) and CalVet funding;
- CalVet Subvention and auditing process;
- Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) and claim filing for discharging veterans;
- Federal, state and civil laws and regulations regarding typical benefits afforded veterans and their dependents;
- Medical and military terminology that are used in claim filing;
- Benefits and services generally available within the area to veterans and their dependents;
- Interviewing techniques;
- Customer service techniques for dealing with customers, often in a difficult or confrontational situation;
- Office operations and record maintenance procedures.

**Skills and/or Ability to:**

- Distribute work and provide work directions, review work performance and conduct of staff, and provide on-the-job training to staff led;
- Understand and apply complex government regulations related to veteran's affairs.
- Learn local and regional providers of social and other specialized services.
- Interpret information/regulations and apply such to specific cases
- Interview others to gather information to complete claim forms; review medical records for service-related disabilities.
- Demonstrate tact, diplomacy, patience and compassion.
- Deal effectively with people of various socio-economic levels, mental and physical capacities and temperaments.
- Communicate effectively with veterans, their dependents, and beneficiaries of veterans.
- Complete and process claim forms.
- Compose and prepare routine correspondence.
- Drive a motor vehicle, and
- Utilize basic office equipment.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- **Mobility and Dexterity:** Positions in this class typically require stooping, kneeling, reaching, standing, walking, fingering, grasping, feeling (i.e. sense of touch), and repetitive motion.
- **Lifting, Carrying, Pushing and Pulling:** Employees in this class exert up to 10 pounds of force occasionally and/or a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to lift, carry, push, pull or otherwise move objects.
- **Vision:** Positions in this class require the employee to have close visual acuity, with or without correction, to prepare and analyze data and figures, transcribe, view a computer screen, read, etc. Positions in this class also requires employees to have depth perception in order to operate a motor vehicle.

- **Hearing/Talking:** Positions in this class require the employee to perceive the nature of sounds at normal speaking levels with or without correction and have the ability to receive detailed information through oral communication. Positions in this class require the employee to express or exchange ideas by means of the spoken word.

**WORKING CONDITIONS:**

- **Office Work plus Outdoor Work:** While most work will be in an office setting, visits to outdoor worksites will require an employee in this class to occasionally work outside and be subject to a variety of weather conditions, walking on uneven terrain, and working around vehicles in operation and around machinery with moving parts.
- **Traffic Hazards:** Employees in this class will be required to operate a vehicle and thus will be subject to traffic hazards while driving.
- **Disruptive/Confrontational Human Contacts:** Employees in this class may be subject to disruptive and confrontational people.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

- **Background Checks:** The County may conduct a background check and a reference check on candidates prior to appointment to a position within this class. The background check may include the State of California Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Child Abuse Central Index (CACI), and criminal checks in any City/County where the applicant has lived, worked or gone to school.
- **Independent Travel:** Incumbents are required to travel independently, for example, to perform work at other work sites, to attend meetings with other County employees, to attend meetings with community organizations, etc.
- **Language Proficiency:** Some positions allocated to this class will require the applicant to speak, read and write in a language other than English.
- **Elder Abuse Reporting:** Selectees for employment must, as a condition of employment, sign a statement agreeing to comply with Section 15630 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code relating to elder abuse reporting.

**CLASS HISTORY AND CLASS INFORMATION:**

- **Date Approved by the Civil Service Commission:** August 12, 2020
- **Date Adopted by the Board of Supervisors:** September 1, 2020
- **Class Code:** 444100