CONFIDENTIAL ASSISTANT TO THE COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES II

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is a senior professional position responsible for providing high-level strategic, administrative and operational confidential support to the Commissioner of Social Services. The incumbent coordinates and monitors special projects in accordance with specific policies and objectives. The role involves discretion and independent judgment in handling sensitive matters, advising the Commissioner and representing the Commissioner within county government and externally. The work is performed under the general direction of the Commissioner of Social Services. Supervision may be exercised over paraprofessional and support staff. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Provides high-level strategic advice and recommendations to the Commissioner regarding department-wide policies, programs, operations, organizational structure and regulatory compliance;

Plans, directs and monitors complex, multi-departmental or countywide projects on behalf of the Commissioner, ensuring alignment with strategic priorities and statutory requirements;

Handles sensitive and confidential matters, including personnel issues, investigations, legal inquiries and high-priority concerns from constituents or stakeholders;

Serves as the Commissioner's senior liaison to elected officials, county leadership, state and federal agencies, union representatives, contracted service providers and community partners;

Oversees communication strategy for the Commissioner, including preparation or review of major reports, executive briefings, public statements and departmental communications;

Evaluates departmental operations, identifies opportunities for improvement and collaborates with division directors to implement changes in business processes, service delivery models, workflow, staffing and interdepartmental coordination;

Leads cross-functional teams in the development and implementation of operational reforms, special projects and new initiatives mandated by legislative or regulatory changes;

Coordinates major meetings, strategic planning sessions, advisory council functions and executive-level work groups and assesses recommendations and advises the Commissioner on feasibility, impacts and needed actions;

Conducts advanced research and analysis on emerging policies, legislation, funding opportunities and best practices in social services administration;

Oversees preparation of high-level documents, executive decision memos, program evaluations and performance dashboards for departmental leadership;

Performs additional confidential and policy-influencing tasks as assigned by the Commissioner;

May supervise and provide guidance and direction to assigned staff involved in project coordination, research, administrative operations, or special initiatives;

May participate in budgetary planning, monitoring, or forecasting for department-wide initiatives.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of the programs, services, mandates, organizational structure and operations of the Department of Social Services*; thorough knowledge of New York State and federal laws, regulations, policies and funding structures related to social services administration*; strong leadership ability and skill in supervising managerial, professional, paraprofessional and support staff; excellent organizational, planning and project-management abilities, including managing large-scale or cross-departmental initiatives; excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to prepare and present complex information to senior officials, staff and the public; ability to exercise a high degree of confidentiality, judgment, discretion and diplomacy in handling sensitive matters; ability to establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including government officials; ability to interpret complex regulations and develop policy recommendations; ability to independently plan work, think strategically and manage competing priorities in a fast-paced environment.

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MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. A Bachelor's degree and five (5) years of paid work experience in administrative operations, project or program coordination or executive level administrative support, at least three (3) years of which must have involved independent responsibility for directing such activities or providing analysis and recommendations on operations, projects or programs to executive level leadership; or

2. A Master's degree or higher in Public Administration, Business Administration, Social Work, Public Policy, Organizational Leadership or comparable degree and three (3) years of paid work experience in administrative operations, project or program coordination or executive level administrative support, at least two (2) years of which must have involved independent responsibility for directing such activities or providing analysis and recommendations on operations, projects or programs to executive level leadership.

*To be demonstrated during the probationary period.