

PRINCIPAL SOCIAL SERVICES INVESTIGATOR (FRAUD)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is advanced investigative work involving oversight and coordination of fraud investigations within the Department of Social Services. The role includes supervising investigative teams, analyzing complex fraud cases, ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations and collaborating with legal offices to support fraud prosecutions. The work is performed under the general direction of a higher-level administrator with wide latitude for independent judgment, and supervision is exercised over lower-level investigators. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Supervises and directs investigative staff conducting fraud investigations;
Coordinates complex investigations involving fraudulent activities across multiple social service programs by collecting evidence and testimony to confirm or disprove fraud allegations;
Reviews investigative reports and provides guidance to ensure accuracy, thoroughness and compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
Represents the Department of Social Services in legal court proceedings (e.g., Family, Supreme and Justice Courts) presenting evidence, expert testimony and investigative findings;
Develops fraud prevention strategies and recommends policy changes to improve investigation efficiency;
Acts as a liaison and collaborates with various State legal offices, law enforcement agencies and state officials to facilitate complex fraud cases;
Oversees financial audits related to fraudulent activities and ensures proper determination of overpayment recovery;
Provides training to investigative staff on fraud detection techniques and best practices;
Collects statements and affidavits from clients;
Evaluates and determines eligibility of client after allegations of fraud have been substantiated and computes overpayments made to client;
May perform field investigations, as needed.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of the principles and techniques used in maintaining and verifying financial records and reports; thorough knowledge of investigative techniques used to access financial practices and financial status of individuals; thorough knowledge of Federal and State social services and related laws, rules and regulations concerning support, desertion and fraud*; ability to develop materials for legal actions according to prescribed regulations; ability to interpret and apply complex legal and policy guidelines related to fraud investigations; ability to prepare written reports; ability to analyze facts and use them in making informed decisions; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to assess investigative findings and implement corrective measures to strengthen fraud prevention strategies; ability to conduct high-level case analysis and develop legal materials for prosecution.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. An Associate's degree in Criminal Justice or comparable degree and four (4) years of interviewing and/or investigative experience** involving public contact***, one (1) year of which must have included the supervision of others; or

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2. A Bachelor's degree or higher in Criminal Justice or comparable degree and two (2) years of interviewing and/or investigative experience** involving public contact***, one (1) year of which must have included the supervision of others.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Possession of a valid driver's license or access to transportation to meet field work requirements in a timely and efficient manner.

PROMOTION: Two (2) years of permanent status as a Senior Social Services Investigator (Fraud).

*To be demonstrated during the probationary period.

**Investigative experience shall have substantially included systematic (e.g., step-by-step) research and/or evaluation of evidence, facts, allegations or other related information pertaining to individuals or organizations.

***Public contact shall be defined as direct contact (e.g., in-person or telephone interactions) with clients, customers or members of the public that involves persuasion, negotiation, counseling, gathering, disseminating, or clarifying information and inspection activities that include contact with individuals, or similar activities. The nature of the contact is such that it requires judgment and independent thinking on the part of the individual in dealing with or responding to another person.