

AUDITOR, PRINCIPAL

KIND OF WORK

Fourth-level professional auditing work.

NATURE AND PURPOSE

Under administrative direction, performs the most difficult and/or sensitive internal and/or external financial, compliance, operations, management performance, information systems or investigative audits or reviews of the activities, controls, records and business systems of governmental agencies/programs, health care facilities, companies and/or other entities and guides & reviews the work of other advanced-level auditors to ensure: financial records & reports conform to generally-accepted accounting principles (GAAP); audits conform to generally-accepted auditing standards (GAAS) and government audit standards (GAS); proper controls and reporting procedures are in effect; and compliance with state and federal laws and rules. Performs related work as required.

Positions plan, schedule, coordinate, and review the audit activities within a state department, agency or institution. Audit activities may include traditional financial/compliance audits, management/performance audits, internal control assessments, consulting services, and investigative/special reviews. Provides independent, objective assurance and advice to management on issues and operations that present a significant risk to division or agency-wide operations.

This class represents the highest non-supervisory level in the Auditor class series. Positions apply knowledge of professional audit standards to resolve the most complex and sensitive audit issues and provide technical leadership and direction to other advanced-level auditors during financial, operations and/or compliance audits. The scope of responsibilities and complexity of the audit programs and issues encountered are important allocation considerations to this class. Job holders possess deep technical expertise.

This class differs from Auditor, Senior primarily in the complexity of program work performed. This differs from Auditor Principal, Supervisor and Audit Director positions in being non-supervisory and in the limited level of collaboration and communication with senior and executive-level agency management and in exhibiting a more limited level of representation to and contact with external agencies or other governmental units.

This level typically reports to an Audit Director, Agency Internal Audit Manager or to agency executive-level staff charged with oversight of the Chief Financial Officer and senior management. Positions have sufficient independence and authority to provide leadership on audits/review/investigative or internal control matters, provide advice/consulting services to senior management and Chief Financial Officers and are expected to effectively recommend & implement corrective actions as directed by the agency head/commissioner or senior executive staff (Deputy/Assistant Commissioner).

The level of a particular position in a classification series is based on a combination of factors not always present in class specifications. Among these factors are the position's responsibilities within the overall program/operation and its relationship to others in a unit, department and/or state service as a whole.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

(A position may not include all the work examples given, nor does the list include all that may be assigned.)

Plans and develops comprehensive audits and issue-oriented reviews for complex activities to execute external and/or internal audit programs by coordinating audit requirements and needs with divisional and departmental goals, setting priorities for the audit program, developing a work plan and ensuring operational procedures are developed/revised, and by identifying & analyzing changes in applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations.

Determines scope and completes field work of complex audits so management is informed of the status of the organization's financial operations, including compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative requirements, by developing audit programs, selecting sampling techniques, leading entrance, exit and other conferences, and documenting audit work performed.

Directs and reviews the work of other auditors to ensure the preparation of final reports conform to generally-accepted auditing standards by establishing appropriate audit procedures, coordinating the preparation of various sections of the report, reviewing the findings & recommendations, recommending changes, providing training & technical assistance, and reporting the results of the audit.

Performs or leads financial and/or compliance audit engagements and/or reviews of agency records. Plans engagements, to include determining audit risk, scope, population, sample selection and procedures. Develops new or modified procedures to meet special audit or review needs. Employs computer-assisted audit techniques wherever appropriate and feasible to improve effectiveness and efficiency of audit procedures. Oversees procedures performed by the audit team and ensures engagement objectives are achieved. Reviews work papers completed by internal audit staff and submits for final review by internal management. Ensures work paper documentation is sufficient to support engagement conclusions/findings, and findings/recommendations and management responses are supported by engagement documentation.

Completes audit reports to convey findings and recommendations clearly, accurately and concisely by summarizing audit findings/results, determining cause/effect criteria and recommendations, and editing/writing final reports.

Interprets audit results to administrators of the audited program during exit conference to inform them of audit analysis of financial statements, effectiveness of administrative controls, and additional training needed by scheduling a conference, advising and making recommendations on financial and management practices. Performs follow-up reviews to determine progress or status of corrective actions.

Reviews and evaluates permanent audit files developed/updated by audit staff members during and upon completion of the audits/reviews to ensure that they provide accurate & useful data, and include appropriate internal control information.

Testifies in litigation to ensure factual data is accurately compiled and presented by researching and analyzing financial data, cost reports, related cases, applicable rule provisions, and writing reports to be used by the Attorney General's Office in litigation.

Evaluates and recommends modifications to computer systems to ensure that adequate controls are included by selecting databases to audit and analyzing systems reports for accuracy and errors.

Provides collaborative leadership and consultation services in the collection, compilation and analysis of a wide range of fiscal, program and budget reports and studies, to include providing professional or expert advice on governance activities, risk management, process analysis, information technology security, management activities.

Leads division projects and participates in agency team projects. Assists in performing department supervisory functions in accordance with agency and state practices and policies, including assists supervisory/management staff in the training, development and evaluation of audit staff. As assigned, plans and directs and evaluates the work of audit/review team members.

Coordinates investigations resulting from allegations, complaints and/or special reviews. Conducts investigations, documents evidence and reports results. Has unrestricted access to all agency activities, records, systems, property, and personnel; develops communication channels to encourage and facilitate reporting from internal or external sources. Composes press releases for review and approval by management; assists with legislative presentations and/or requests for information.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (KSA's) REQUIRED

(The KSA's required may vary somewhat from position to position, depending on the type of auditing and responsibilities/duties, i.e., a position may not require all the KSA's listed below, nor does the list include all that may be required.)

Knowledge of:

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) & pronouncements of the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) & Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS) for the professional practice of internal auditing sufficient to determine compliance with same, evaluate accounting policies and financial records/statements, operational performance & and internal controls, identify deficiencies and recommend corrective action.

Code of Ethics and the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA); Internal Control Framework (COSO); Enterprise IT Framework (COBIT); and applicable governance practices.
Risk assessment and internal control concepts & methods.

Federal and/or state laws, rules and program policies and procedures applicable to the audit/review/investigation topic sufficient to determine compliance with same.
Government Data Practices Act (MS Chapter 13) and Whistleblower Act (MS 181.932).

Sampling methods sufficient to select a representative sample that will permit drawing conclusions about population values at the desired level of confidence;
IS auditing (standards, methods, tools & techniques) and technology sufficient to ensure that adequate internal controls are included in the design, development, testing, implementation and maintenance of computer systems – *some positions*.
Forensic computer tools sufficient to conduct or oversee investigations.
Technology environment (systems and processes).

Depending on the position, current certification as a Certified Internal Auditor (CIA), Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) and/or Certified Government Auditing Professional (CGAP) may be a requirement.

Skill in:

Oral communication sufficient to communicate effectively with various levels of external staff and management and to both large and small groups (e.g., explain audit standards & policy; lead and participate in entrance & exit conferences; interview staff at the audited organization; train & guide other auditors; present & explain audit/review findings and recommendations to management/administrators; testify at hearings and in court; and effectively communicate technical information to non-technical audiences).

Written communication sufficient to draft & edit reports of audit/review findings, including recommendations for fiscal and operational changes/improvements and material for promotional & informational publications.

Computer skills (e.g., e-mail, word-processing, database, spreadsheet, presentation graphics, charting, Internet browser & search software, IS audit tools).

Human relations skills sufficient to interact with staff, management and internal & external clientele in a courteous, constructive and effective manner and communicate audit/review/investigation findings & recommendations in a tactful, effective manner.

Ability to:

Lead a team of auditors sufficient to determine the scope and approach to an audit/review, evaluate risks & internal controls, prepare work papers, conduct exit conferences, and write reports of findings and recommendations.

Ability to effectively & professionally represent the agency at entrance & exit conferences, legislative hearings, meetings with the OLA, or as a representative on committees, taskforces or at conferences/seminars.

Maintain the confidentiality of data and information sources by not inappropriately disclosing sensitive/confidential information;

Maintain a neutral, objective position in all work assignments

Organize, plan and prioritize work effectively and complete it on time..

Analyze complex data/information, issues/problems and systems.

Demonstrated problem-solving ability (ability to recognize problems, identify causes, identify & evaluate alternatives, and recommend/choose the most effective action/solution).

Negotiate and resolve conflicts.

Respond to agency personnel inquiries or complaints regarding internal audit issues and/or fraud, gather relevant information, and perform a preliminary assessment of the situation.

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Former Title(s):