

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Policy/Data Analyst

Class Code: 11422

Pay Grade: GI

A. Purpose:

Develops and maintains program policy and procedure manuals; reviews internal processes and procedures and recommends and/or takes action to correct; drafts changes to department rules, policies, and/or laws and implements procedural changes in response to legislated changes; researches and writes grants; develops and applies research techniques in the collection, analysis, and reporting of data or information to be used by management in assessing operations and for planning purposes; and develops and maintains surveys to assess department programs, activities, and operations and offer information or ideas to be used by a department.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

The Policy/Data Analyst is responsible for reviewing processes, reviewing and developing policies and procedures, conducting research and surveys, and data collection and analysis to aid a department and its associated programs.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Maintains, updates, researches, and provides advice on policies, procedures, laws, and comprehensive plans to ensure the department and/or operations meet state and federal requirements and operations/interpretations are uniform within the agency.
 - a. Researches, develops, and maintains policy, procedure, and reference manuals.
 - b. Develops comprehensive plans to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and requirements.
 - c. Reviews all policy, procedure, and law changes and how they affect current operations.
 - d. Determines inconsistencies in the application of laws or policies, advises management, and makes recommendations to correct.
 - e. Advises department staff of approved changes in the interpretation of laws, rules, and policies.
 - f. Participates in department meetings to discuss laws, administrative rules, and policies and to gather information.
 - g. Reviews and comments on proposed federal regulations, national policy memos, and letters that may impact department operations; briefs administrators on potential impact.
 - h. Prepares comments on proposed state and federal regulations.
 - i. Researches resources and facts and writes reference materials for agency use.
 - j. Designs studies, conducts research, and analyzes results.
 - k. Develops or revises procedures.
 - l. Oversees the implementation of all new or revised policies and procedures.
2. Gathers and analyzes information/data and manages data systems to provide management with necessary data to make decisions and implement or modify programs/operations.
 - a. Researches state and federal requirements and ensures data systems meet those requirements.

- b. Educates department staff on new or revised reporting requirements, formats, and procedures.
 - c. Reviews and makes changes to data reporting instruments.
 - d. Establishes and analyzes controls for the quality of the data system.
 - e. Investigates and resolves problems with data.
 - f. Compiles, reviews and analyzes processed data and creates turnaround documents and reports.
 - g. Provides data and reports to others.
 - h. Determines the need for and requests programming changes to data systems.
3. Reviews work products for compliance with program and department guidelines and program performance standards and recommends corrective action.
 - a. Coordinates and conducts reviews or the validity review process of work products for compliance with program and agency guidelines and recommends corrective action.
 - b. Develops and maintains a process and procedure to review cases, files, or documents.
 - c. Selects and reviews cases.
 - d. Coordinates reviews with other staff and state or federal agencies.
 - e. Recommends strategies for corrective actions.
 - f. Identifies problem areas and negative trends.
 - g. Discusses review findings with management and assists in developing a corrective action plan and monitors its implementation.
 - h. Reviews cases to ensure department has met its contractual obligations.
 - i. Makes recommendations to improve case management services.
 - j. Conducts annual reviews for compliance with program performance standards.
 4. Designs survey questionnaires/instruments to gather and analyze data/information for an agency.
 - a. Designs a sampling plan and schedule.
 - b. Designs surveys and survey related documentation based upon program or legislative requirements.
 - i. Designs and defines data collection methodologies.
 - ii. Selects and modifies desired participants.
 - c. Oversees the preparation and mailing of survey documents and loading of survey results into a database.
 - d. Reviews and analyzes survey results and prepares recommendations and reports citing findings.
 - e. Provides trend data.
 5. Evaluates and prepares reviews of documents, grants, reports, plans, and regulations to address concerns and presents findings.
 6. Provides technical assistance to other state and local agencies by assessing needs, visiting with officials, developing strategies, and making recommendations.
 7. Works on special projects to deal with concerns or needs of an agency.
 8. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to an administrator; may act as a lead worker and provide work direction to others.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged in compiling, controlling, and analyzing data, procedures, reviews, processes, and policies. This is challenging because of the need to ensure quality and accuracy, recommended courses of action are in the best interest of the agency, and to assess the potential impact of proposed or actual changes or needs. Another challenge is dealing with mandated timeframes. This is difficult because many variables are involved and often conflict with the attempt to meet deadlines.

Typical problems include analyzing inconsistencies in reporting, maintaining control over the gathering of data, being able to extract required data from the computer systems, coordinating the survey process when surveys overlap and require mass mailings at different stages, deadlines, being able to defend collected and analyzed data, researching and developing the best approach to deal with situations, organizing materials and information in a logical manner that can be used by many different individuals or agencies, rewriting queries to access and analyze data, whether existing reports will meet special requests for information, determining long range implications, recognizing the limitations of surveillance systems and initiating steps to improve and or correct limitations, incomplete data requests, and new databases.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions made include determining the most efficient methods for extracting data; selecting the appropriate data to respond to requests; content and format of reports; sampling design and schedule; format of databases; research design and procedures; who needs what information; recommendations to improve the system, policies, and procedures; content of materials; recommendations for corrective action; format for reviews; how to summarize findings; whether there are discrepancies in data or trends; corrections, actions, or adjustments needed to resolve problems; needed system requirements; corrective action that needs to be taken by others; if training is needed to deal with problems or errors; comments on state and federal legislation; impact of federal policy memos or letters; content and design of surveys and forms; methods of data collection; content and format of tables, graphs, and charts; whether data collection complies with state and federal requirements; and recommending upgrades to data collection systems.

Decisions referred include when program staff request changes that may not be appropriate for a survey or report, whether to add a new survey and final approval of the content of that survey, approval of budget, major changes in program design, approval of reports, changes in analyses methodology and collection methods, scope of projects, whether completed projects meet requirements, final approval of policies and procedures, approval of corrective action plans, sensitive issues, whether to provide data to non-state agencies, whether systems will be redesigned, how to deal with conflicting policies and procedures, and what to do when required data or surveys are not submitted.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily to monthly contact with the public, agency staff, and other federal or private agencies to give and receive information, provide technical assistance, or discuss activity/problems.

H. Working Conditions:

Typical office environment.

I. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- the data collection process;
- data analysis techniques;
- research or survey methodology;
- applicable computer software and operating systems.

Ability to:

- deal tactfully with others;
- communicate clearly and concisely;
- prepare study outlines and proposals for projects;
- collect and compile data using scientific processes;
- analyze and interpret data or findings using statistical processes or analytical tests;
- present the results of research and analysis in various forms;
- establish and maintain effective working relationships with others;
- interpret and apply laws, rules, policies, and procedures;
- create progress reports and final reports;
- recommend solutions to address short- and long-term needs;
- seek out creative solutions;
- analyze and evaluate operational situations and complex federal regulations.