



CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

Department: Finance
Job Class #: 158600
Pay Range: Executive 7

FLSA: Exempt
Represented: No

Classification descriptions are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in this class and are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

GENERAL FUNCTIONS

This is highly responsible, complex administrative and professional work in the Finance Department. The Chief Accountant is responsible for managing the financial and accounting operation for Pierce County including supervision of professional, technical, and clerical staff performing financial and accounting operations. The Chief Accountant is responsible for establishing operating policies and procedures, and assuring County-wide compliance with governmental regulations and policies.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Manage and oversee all financial and accounting operations for Pierce County including payroll, accounts payable, and/or accounts receivable, and other related activities.
- Set the Accounting standards for the County, and communicate those standards to all County finance staff and managers. Provide guidance to other accountants and assist with decision making that supports accurate timely accounting in accordance with Federal, State, GAAP and GASB standards. Assist in auditing activities by providing necessary information and preparing requested documentations.
- Act as an integral member of departmental management team focusing on cross-program, cross-division and Countywide issues, and initiatives.
- Monitor changes in federal, state and local laws and regulations to ensure department maintains compliance and is positioned to take advantage of opportunities.
- Recommend amendments and revisions to County codes and ordinances within area of responsibility. Recommend State legislation.
- Plan, assign, and review the work of staff performing payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and other accounting and financial management functions.
- Oversee reporting and analysis of financial records involving budget monitoring and financial accounting.
- Prepare County's annual Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
- Develop procedures for handling accounting and financial activities including pre-audit, posting of expenditures and revenues, payroll, and other related activities.
- Oversee and manage the County's bi-weekly and semi-monthly human resource and payroll systems, feeders, databases and operations.
- Evaluate computerized accounting systems and provide recommendations to IT team for performance improvements.
- Generate financial reports and statements to Managers for review. Analyze financial discrepancies and recommend effective resolutions.
- Monitor expenditures, analyze revenues, determine accuracy of all accounting transactions, and report the same to management.
- Prepare annual goals and objectives for the assigned area. Provide quarterly progress reports.
- Respond to accounting inquiries from management in a timely fashion.

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- Monitor hiring, training, scheduling, and assignment of accounting employees. Counsel accounting staff on performance goals and evaluate job performance. Provide interpretation of personnel policies; approve or deny use of sick leave, vacation leave, and overtime.
- Ensure consistent interpretation and application of laws, rules, policies, and procedures.
- Effectively persuade, inform, educate, train, solicit information, motivate, and direct a wide variety of individuals or groups.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with County officials, governmental agencies and departments, community social services agencies, public and private officials, and the general public.
- Maintain regular, predictable, and punctual attendance during regularly scheduled work hours at assigned worksite.
- Meet travel requirements of the position.
- Perform the physical requirements of the position; work within the established working conditions of the position.
- Work a flexible schedule, which may include evenings, weekends, and holidays.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Perform other job functions as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED: Work is performed with considerable latitude for independent judgment. The Chief Accountant is expected to manage accounting staff in conjunction with the Department's responsibilities. Work is reviewed by the Director and/or designee for compliance with legal, regulations, policies and procedures. The Chief Accountant has full supervisory responsibility for assigned employees.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment characteristics described herein are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the position. Work is performed in an office environment and at various field offices. May be required to work at a desk or other workstation for prolonged periods; constant attention to detail is required. Ability to concentrate with frequent interruptions and general office noise is required.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: The physical demands described herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions. Ability to meet the travel requirements in order to attend meetings at various field sites and locations. The ability to sit for prolonged periods of time. Finger dexterity is required in order to use and operate a personal computer and related office equipment. The use of eyesight to read and interpret policies, procedures, regulations, contract agreements, and related management correspondence. Talking, seeing, hearing and the use of verbal and written communication is performed on a frequent basis.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Considerable Knowledge of:

- Government financial practices and governmental accounting principles, theories, and concepts to include compliance with GAAP, GASB and other reporting and disclosure requirements.
- Washington State Budgeting, Accounting, and Report System (BARS).
- Strategic planning approaches including the Balanced Scorecard, and process improvement.

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- Automated financial and human resources systems.
- The methods and techniques of grant administration and grant audits.
- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) preparation.

- **Knowledge of:**
- Generally accepted accounting practices and procedures.
- Federal, State and local laws, regulations and ordinances pertaining to public fiscal affairs and general and special fund accounting.
- The basic principles of effective management and supervision.
- Principles, concepts and practices of financial management.
- Finance/Accounting project management techniques and principles
- Current literature and recent developments in all areas of departmental responsibility.

- **Skill in:**
- Use of independent judgment and effective decision-making in the application of a wide variety of laws, policies, and procedures and in effective problem solving.
- Establishing and maintaining strong relationships with various groups and organizations including, state, federal, and local officials.
- Policy analysis and design.
- Working in a political environment.
- Communicating effectively, orally and in writing.
- Analyzing financial systems, procedures and controls and recommending improvements.
- Operation of computers and financial application software.
- Problem-solving and decision making.

- **Ability to:**
- Provide strategic direction, plan, establish goals and objectives, as well as implement department policies and procedures, and short- and long-range goals.
- Analyze situations quickly and determine proper course of action; and, use appropriate independent judgment to make decisions of a technical, management, and/or administrative nature in support of the department/County goals and objects.
- Effectively assign, evaluate, and supervise professional, technical, and administrative staff, including subordinate managers and supervisors.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with department managers, supervisors, and employees, as well as officials, providers/contractors, other agencies, and the general public.
- Develop and administer laws, complex policies and procedures, regulations, financial processes and systems, and other activities.
- Oversee complex financial transactions and make recommendations regarding fiscal policy to the Director.
- Work under stress and pressure and respond to crises or emergency situations;
- Understand and follow written and verbal instructions.
- Work effectively and productively with others.
- Communicate effectively verbally and in writing to audiences of various social, cultural, ethnic, educational, and economic backgrounds.

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Ability to (continued):

- Effectively coordinate, perform, and complete multiple duties and assignments concurrently and in a timely manner.
- Meet the travel requirements of the position, if any.
- Physically perform the essential job functions of the classification.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY:

Graduation from a four-year college or university with major course work in finance, accounting, public administration, business administration or a related field and four or more years of experience in governmental accounting with at least two years experience in a supervisory of professional, technical and/or administrative personnel. Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO) highly desirable. Additional education or experience may substitute for the recruiting requirements.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AND/OR QUALIFICATIONS: A valid Washington State driver's license may be required when travel is required of the position. Applicants will be required to pass a Pierce County background investigation including criminal history prior to employment.