



Town of Needham Massachusetts

Town of Needham	Public Health Specialist	
Health & Human Services	Grade: GE-22	Status: Full-Time

Overview: Under the direction of the Director of Health and Human Services, the Public Health Specialist functions on behalf of the Needham Board of Health and is responsible for the planning, implementation, and enforcement of public health and environmental laws and regulations. He/she designs and implements preventive health and environmental programs, conducts inspections, and educates and informs the public as well as license and permits holders. Additionally, the Public Health Specialist supports the Director and establishes long and short-range plans, objectives, and professional performance standards, and shares responsibility for achieving the Public Health Division's goals and objectives. In particular, the Public Health Specialist assesses the Public Health Division's functions and recommends performance and process improvements.

The Public Health Specialist performs varied and responsible functions requiring considerable judgment in the interpretation and application of public health practices, laws and regulations to frequently changing conditions, threats and problems. Under the guidance of the Director, he/she is recognized as the division's authority in interpreting the state regulations and federal guidelines, in determining how they should be applied, and in developing operating policies.

The Public Health Specialist oversees and conducts public health inspections in accordance with State/Federal Environmental and Sanitary Codes, Town By-Laws, and Board of Health Regulations. He/she enforces a variety of national, local, and state environmental sanitary and health regulations, state and local permit and licensure requirements, specific legal mandates, and other rules, regulations, and advisory requirements.

The Public Health Specialist investigates and takes action in response to complaints of violations of local and state rules and regulations, and he/she conducts general inspections in the interest of protecting the public's health. He/she pursues legal action when appropriate and necessary to enforce codes and regulations and to obtain compliance, may serve as administrative officer and preside over hearings in the absence of the Director, and performs any other duties as needed to protect the public and environmental health.

Duties: The Public Health Specialist directs the inspection and compliance operations of the Public Health Division. He/she inspects and evaluates health risks in food establishments in Town including restaurants, retail stores, snack bars, commissaries, mobile food vendors, farmers' markets, bakeries, catering establishments, home food kitchens, carnivals, food manufacturing facilities and other establishments to ensure compliance with appropriate laws, regulations, rules, and by-laws. He/she performs plan reviews of food establishments, and may issue fines, schedule administrative hearings, or request temporary closure in accordance with established policies and procedures.

The Public Health Specialist oversees and conducts inspections of living facilities, hotels, recreational camps for children, health clubs, ice skating rinks, and both public and semi-public swimming pools, and cooperates with Needham Police and Massachusetts Department of Public Health inspectors in the review of Bodyworks and Massage establishments. He/she conducts and interprets indoor air and water quality tests, reviews plans for construction and renovation of buildings throughout the community, and is an active member of the Town's Development Review Team (DRT). The Public Health Specialist inspects, reviews, and approves plans for private sewage disposal systems for Title V (Septic) compliance, and conducts plan reviews for irrigation and geothermal wells to assure compliance with established regulations.

He/she oversees and investigates environmental health complaints, including food, smoking, housing/hoarding, and nuisance noise violations reported to the Public Health Division and the Board of Health. The Public Health Specialist oversees and inspects and evaluates housing facilities including tenant occupied and single family dwellings, lodging houses, group homes, residential school buildings, and hotels for conformance to Chapter II of the State Sanitary Code: Minimum Standards of Fitness for Human Habitation; this work includes enforcement of the Lead Poisoning Prevention law.

The Public Health Specialist also assesses health risks and conducts inspections pertaining to off-street drainage, subdivision control, solid waste, noise, water, vector control, and air pollution when directed. Such inspections are often conducted in concert with other Town Departments, especially the Building Department, Needham Fire and Police Departments, and the other Health and Human Services Department divisions.

He/she directs and manages the Town's enforcement of tobacco and medical marijuana regulations, overseeing Public Health and Police Department staff members, and serves as an Assistant Animal Inspector for the Town. Additionally, he/she issues order letters and orders of compliance relative to the environmental health field, with input and advice of the Director in complex cases.

The Public Health Specialist conducts detailed policy analysis, researches policies and regulations, and drafts "case for change" memoranda. In conjunction with the Director, he or she develops new public health regulations and revises existing regulations. He/she educates and informs the public and business community about public health and environmental health by developing and delivering training and community presentations and by writing articles and items for publication. Additionally, he/she is responsible for the maintenance of public health records and the preparation of monthly and annual reports, drafts regulations, bylaws and warrant articles, and conducts permitting and licensing processes.

The Public Health Specialist represents the Town by preparing cases for court and performs other environmental health functions as requested by the Director of Health & Human Services. He/she attends and presents reports to the Board of Health at monthly meetings, represents the Director and the Public Health Division on Town-wide, regional, and state committees, task forces, and working groups, assists the Director with the preparation and administration of the division's operating and capital budgets, and performs other related duties as assigned.

The essential functions or duties listed are intended as illustrations of various types of work to be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, and logically related to the position. The position functions as a part of the overall municipal team to ensure effective and efficient municipal operations.

Basic Knowledge: The position of Public Health Specialist requires knowledge of public health, environmental health, or a related field equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree.

Required Credential: The position of Public Health Specialist may require certifications, credentials, and qualifications in the following areas (exact determination to be made by the Director of Health & Human Services):

- Certified Environmental Health Technician or must obtain certification within the first 12 months of employment;
- Registered Sanitarian (Registration as a Sanitarian or an environmental health specialist required), or must obtain registration within the first 12 months of employment and be willing to maintain certification by obtaining required annual CEUs;
- SERV Safe Certified Food Safety Manager (certified food safety professional preferred or must obtain certification within the first 12 months of employment);
- Food Allergy Training certification or must obtain certification within the first 12 months of employment;
- Licensed Soil Evaluator or must obtain certification within the first 12 months of employment;
- Licensed Lead Paint Determinator or must obtain certification within the first 12 months of employment;
- Certified Massachusetts Housing Inspector or must obtain certification within the first 12 months of employment;
- Certified Pool Operator or must obtain certification within the first 12 months of employment; and
- Other appropriate credentials, certifications, and qualifications as determined by the Director of Public Health or the Director of Health & Human Services.

Preferred Credential: Master's Degree in the fields of public health, environmental health, or a related field is strongly preferred.

Experience: The position of Public Health Specialist requires five (5) to seven(7) years work experience in public health, environmental health, or a related field. Work experience as a volunteer, intern, or part-time employee may be considered to fulfill a pro-rated portion of this requirement.

Independent Action: The Public Health Specialist functions independently with modest direct supervision; he/she uses discretion and judgment to make important policy and enforcement decisions, and refers truly unusual problems to the Director of Health and Human Services for guidance. The Public Health Specialist may function as Acting Health Agent in the absence of the Director of Health and Human Services.

Supervisory Responsibility: The Public Health Specialist functions independently within a broad scope of established regulatory powers and in alignment with Board of Health regulations, Federal Food Code, Title Five Septic Code, State Sanitary Code, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Public Health regulations and guidelines, and Massachusetts General Law requirements. He/she will supervise a full-time Environmental Health Agent, and volunteers, interns, clerical staff, part time or per diem Health Agents as directed.

Physical and Environmental Standards:

- A combination of office and fieldwork. Field conditions include a variety of settings such as indoor and outdoor pools, open fields, restaurants, markets, houses, basements, construction sites, dumpsites, and similar settings. Inspections occur at all times of the day (and occasionally evening) and during all seasons and all types of weather.
- Must be able to climb stairs, bend, kneel, and perform other physical activities during the course of conducting inspections and taking samples. There may be sustained periods of standing and walking on various terrain and surfaces and carrying field-testing equipment.
- Regular interruptions to assist citizens and Town employees
- May spend extended periods at computer workstation, on telephone, or operating other office machines, requiring eye-hand coordination and finger dexterity.
- Regular lifting and carrying of files, documents, records, etc.

Other Requirements:

- Possession of a valid state-issued driver's license.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and the employee, and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and the requirements of the job change.