

Commissioner of Social Services Tompkins County

Classification: Non-competitive

Labor Grade: Management Grade 91

Approved: 01/01/1969

Revised: 1/82; 5/91; 6/91; 9/96; 7/99; 4/03; 6/10; 4/17

By: HH, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered four-year college or university with Bachelors Degree **AND EITHER:**

(a) Six years of satisfactory full-time paid experience in a health, education or social agency, four years of which must have been in a satisfactory administrative or supervisory capacity; **OR**

(b) Six years of responsible full-time paid experience in an administrative or management position, where there is responsibility for planning, directing and coordinating the work of a substantial staff working in several units or performing several separate functions; **OR**

(c) Experience as a local social services commissioner: Each year of experience as a chief executive officer of a social services district, within six years immediately preceding the date on which appointed, shall be the equivalent of two years of the above prescribed experience; **OR**

(d) Post graduate training: Post-graduate study in a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university specifically in social work, public administration, hospital administration, educational administration or business administration, shall be the equivalent , on a year for year basis up to two years, of the above prescribed experience. However, no such post-graduate training, shall be the equivalent of the four years of administrative or supervisory experience required in (a)above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

APPOINTMENT TO THE POSITION: Appointments to the title of Commissioner of Social Services shall be for a term of five years, pursuant to New York State law and the Tompkins County Charter and Code. Appointments are subject to the approval of the New York State Offices of Temporary and Disability Assistance. The position is in the non-competitive class of civil service. No civil service test is required.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

This position is considered to be a public officer. Pursuant to Article 3 of the NYS Public Officers law, the holder of this position must be a United States citizen and a resident of Tompkins County.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The Commissioner of Social Services is charged with the responsibility for administering public assistance and care as defined in the Social Services Law. In discharging this responsibility, the Commissioner must organize, direct and coordinate the work of all employees, both professional and non-professional, in the social services department to achieve the effective and efficient operation of the multiple programs undertaken by the department. The Commissioner has complete control over department operations and the direction of personnel subject to financial limitations imposed by the local legislative body and the Rules and Regulations of the State Offices of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Health, Labor, and Children and Family Services. Oversight of all Departmental programs, such programs include for example, welfare benefits, child protective services, child welfare, adult protective services, Medicaid, employment services, child support, and homeless services. Major objectives of the Commissioner and the department are to provide adequately for those unable to maintain themselves and to administer such care, treatment and service as may restore such persons to a condition of self-support. An additional objective is to give such service to those liable to become destitute as may prevent the necessity of their becoming public charges. The work is performed under the administrative direction of the County Administrator. Supervision is exercised over the work of all department employees. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Is responsible for all phases of the public welfare program, including planning, organizing, directing and coordinating the work of the various units of administration for efficient and effective operation;
- Has charge of financial planning, including preparation of budgets, maintenance of fiscal controls and submission of required reports to the local legislative body and state board;
- Determines personnel requirements, and is responsible for the appointment of staff in compliance with State law and Local Civil Service Rules;
- Oversees the organization and administration of a comprehensive and effective staff development program, including in-service training and appropriate use of other educational resources;
- Cooperates with representatives of the state offices of Temporary and Disability Assistance and Children and Family Services, as well as the state departments of Health and Labor in the operation and development of the local social services district program, and directs the preparation and submission of required reports to these state departments;
- Is responsible for the public relations of the social services district, and for the interpretation of the public welfare program to the community;
- Cooperates with other agencies, public and private, officials and citizens in planning for community service;
- Evaluates social, economic, and legislative trends and reviews as a basis for determining the need for revisions in or additions to established department programs and services investigates and settles major complaints, grievances or requests from the public, employees, and agencies in the community.
- Controls expenditures through budget planning, financial reports and special studies.
- Serves in a leadership ambassador for the county and serve along with the County Administrator and other department heads, collectively ensure the health and well-being of County resources, employees and service recipients.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Comprehensive knowledge of Federal, State and local public welfare laws, rules and regulations;
- Comprehensive knowledge of modern principles and practices of social case work and public welfare administration;
- Good knowledge of modern principles and practices of public administration;
- Ability to demonstrate business acumen, inclusive of ability to effectively communicate with all functional areas in the organization, fiscal management skills, leadership/workforce development skills and the ability to develop and share a vision.
- Ability to articulate experience and commitment to cultural competency and cultural fluency. Inclusive of the following knowledge, skills and attributes: valuing and leveraging diversity; cultural self-awareness; understanding the dynamics of difference and equity; conflict and change management skills; communicating across difference; cultivating respectful, inclusive and safe environments.
- Ability to develop and foster strong relationships with community stakeholders and agencies, internal and external to the county, to anticipate competing influences and mitigate our inability to be successful at attaining our goals.
- Ability to build partnerships within local networks of community leadership to develop best practices and cultivate diverse and inclusive programs that is a standard for excellence in service for the county.
- Ability to plan, coordinate and supervise a wide variety of social services activities on a large scale; Ability to prepare complex written and oral reports clearly and concisely;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with the public and other governmental and private agencies;
- Ingenuity and resourcefulness in solving administrative problems;
- Good judgment;
- The employee's physical and mental condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodations.

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