

# Senior Environmental Health Specialist Tompkins County

**Department:** Health Department  
**Classification:** Competitive  
**Labor Grade:** P (16)  
**Approved:** 3  
**Revised:** 11/90; 5/91; 5/13; 1/22  
**By:** RP, Commissioner of Personnel  
**BBP Risk Factor:** 2

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree in the physical and biological sciences, public health, or a closely related field; AND completion of one year of experience in environmental health or a related field or as a Public Health Sanitarian/Environmental Health Specialist; **OR**
2. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's Degree including thirty credit hours in the physical and biological sciences, AND completion of two years of experience in environmental health or a related field or as a Public Health Sanitarian/Environmental Health Specialist; **OR**
3. Five years as a Public Health Technician PLUS two additional years of environmental health experience as deemed satisfactory by the local Commissioner of Health or Public Health Director; **OR**
4. Any equivalent combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined in (a), (b) and (c) above.

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

## **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Appointees must satisfactorily complete a training course approved by the State Health Department within one year of appointment.

Appointees must possess a valid New York State driver's license at time of appointment and maintain such license for the duration of employment.

## **DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

This position involves responsibility for supervising and performing complex work in the application of the principles of the physical, biological and social sciences for the detection, evaluation, control and management of those factors in the environment which influence health. An employee in this class is responsible for planning, supervising, carrying out, and enforcing one or more environmental health programs. The work is performed under the supervision of the Director of Environmental Health Division. Supervision is exercised over Environmental Health Technicians and Environmental Health Specialists who are responsible for one or more public health programs. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

### **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

Supervises all or part of one or more major environmental health programs such as: food service establishments, rabies prevention, public water systems, and private sewage disposal. This supervision includes: interpreting codes, policies, and guidelines; developing program goals and objectives; preparing statistical and narrative reports; initiating and following through with enforcement actions (office conferences, compliance schedules, administrative hearings, etc.) with the Assistant County Attorney, Hearing Officers and others. Supervises subordinate staff who are responsible for supervising and administering one or more environmental health programs such as: private water systems, rabies control, bathing beaches and pools, summer camps, hotels/motels, etc. This supervision includes: preparing written evaluations of staff; training and advising Environmental Health Specialists and Technicians in technical and administrative matters; reviewing written reports and correspondence for completeness, and adherence to division policies; Studies present and proposed local regulations to determine conformity with the State Sanitary Code and confers with local officials regarding resolutions which do not conform. Develops program policies and priorities with the Environmental Health Director and Whole Health Commissioner. Develops and maintains contacts with State Health Department personnel, municipal Code Enforcement Officials, and other professionals to ensure overlapping services are efficiently administered; Investigates communicable disease outbreaks, (food, water, etc.), which includes interviewing ill persons, obtaining stool, vomitus, food, water samples; write epidemiological reports; and work with the Division of Community Health Services during the investigation and education phases of such out breaks; Conducts epidemiological investigations relating to injuries, illnesses and deaths at permitted facilities; Performs field investigations at potentially dangerous and disagreeable areas such as construction sites, garbage and refuse disposal area, hazardous waste sites, chemical spill sites, failed sewage systems, rodent and insect infestations. Educates community public action groups, regulated facilities, engineers and attorneys about development and administration of codes, programs and/or Public Health practice; May be required to edit and update web pages.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

Thorough knowledge of environmental health principles and modern inspection methods;

Thorough knowledge of state and local sanitary codes, laws and regulations, and applicable portions of Environmental Conservation Law and the Agriculture and Markets Law;

Good knowledge of natural science and mathematics;

Ability to plan and supervise the work of Environmental Health Specialists and Environmental Health Technicians;

Ability to develop and maintain good public relations and secure the cooperation of others;

Ability to work under pressure from frequent interruptions and conflicting deadlines and priorities;

Ability to communicate codes, rules, and public health practices to people under tense conditions, sometimes with sharp disagreement, to facilitate abatement of public health nuisances and hazards;

Ability to prepare records and reports;

Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position which includes walking over rough ground carrying environmental samples, test kits, tools, and climbing ladders;

Ability to use field test kits and meters for water and air analyses and collect environmental samples for precise laboratory analyses;

Good professional judgement.

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Change in title from Senior Public Health Sanitarian (S29) to Senior Environmental Health Specialist (S174) 1.19.2022

