


JOB DESCRIPTION
Senior Payroll Specialist

Date of Last Revision: July 2025

 WESTERLY Rhode Island	DEPARTMENT	Finance Department		
	REPORTS TO	Senior Accountant		
	FLSA STATUS	Non-Exempt, Full-Time		
	POSITION TYPE	Non-Union	PAY GRADE	

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Senior Payroll Specialist reports to the Senior Accountant. This position is responsible for performing a variety of complex administrative, technical, and professional work in Payroll and HRIS systems. This position coordinates all payroll functions for the town and school organizations. This position is also responsible for ensuring payroll related disbursements are processed on time, accurately, and in compliance with government regulations.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Complies with federal, state, and local legal requirements.
- Maintains payroll information by collecting, calculating, and entering data.
- Reviews and analyzes current payroll and payroll related benefits and tax procedures.
- Creates and maintains payroll codes in the ERP system.
- Sets up and reconciles voluntary payroll deductions.
- Manages payroll workflow to ensure all payroll transactions are processed accurately and timely.
- Pays employees by directing the production and issuance of paychecks or electronic transfers.
- Processes biweekly payroll and all payroll related transactions for the organization.
- Communicates actively with Department Directors, other staff members and employees, and the Finance team to review cross-departmental impacts and reconcile data sharing.
- Resolves all payroll issues and communicates/explains the resolution in-person or via phone/e-mail to affected individuals.
- Identifies areas of opportunity to improve existing ERP processes, functionality, and workflow, and maximizes technological capabilities to reduce manual processes and improve data management and efficiency.
- Ensures accuracy and completeness of data in master files and various support tools.
- Utilizes tools to develop custom reporting out of the ERP system and acts as a point of contact to all users on retrieving data from the system to meet their needs.
- Demonstrates continuous effort to improve division and/or department operations, decrease turnaround times, streamline work processes, and work cooperatively to provide quality customer service.
- Maintain, identify, and recommend updates to payroll related software, systems, and policies and procedures.
- Organizes payroll information to respond to periodic audits and external reporting requirements.
- Reconciles benefit related invoices to payroll deductions monthly and reports discrepancies to the Director of Human Resources and Director of Finance.
- Ensures payroll functions are staffed during employee absences.
- Responsible for ensuring all financial, tax, and payroll year-end reporting requirements and deadlines are adhered to. (Examples include but are not limited to: W-2, ACA)

ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Attends conferences, seminars, committee meetings as required.
- Prepares relevant management reports, including weekly, monthly, quarterly, and year-end reports (gross payroll, hours worked, vacation accrual, tax deductions, benefits deductions, etc.)
- Utilizes computer applications such as word processing, database, internet, desktop publishing and HRIS.
- Travels to test sites, on-site job audit locations, training locations, or other Town facilities as required.
- Other related duties as assigned.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

For successful performance in this position, the incumbent will need to demonstrate the following:

KNOWLEDGE of:

- Expert knowledge in the principle, practices, laws, regulations, and procedures of automated payroll systems.
- Knowledge of ERP systems which includes configuration and testing to meet business needs.
- Expert knowledge of Federal, State, and local laws pertaining to payroll practices including pre- and post-tax deductions, annual payroll reporting requirements, ACA and other related legislation.
- Expert knowledge of various human resources information systems (HRIS).

SKILLS in:

- Sound administrative and management skills in the areas of policy interpretation, procedures, and people.
- Well-developed analytical capabilities.

ABILITY to:

- Prepare and analyze comprehensive reports and carry out assigned projects to their completion.
- Maintain effective working relationships with all contacts.
- Understand and communicate written and verbal instruction.
- Effectively interact and communicate with the general public and fellow employees and a variety of other stakeholders.
- Understanding of town ordinances, state laws and regulations governing human resources issues.
- Manage various computer applications including Excel and Word

MINIMUM POSITION REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources or related field and/or equivalent experience preferred.
- Minimum of three (3) years of full-time equivalent related experience preferably in a municipal setting.
- Any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience that provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully perform the essential job functions of this position.

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- A valid driver's license.
- Certified Payroll Professional (CPP), or Fundamental Payroll Certification (FPC) by the American Payroll Association is highly preferred. Human Resources Information Professional (HRIP) by the International Association for Human Resources Information Management is preferred. One professional certification will be required within the first 12 months of hire.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS

- Working in an office environment with light to moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances.
- Work may be required outside of normal business hours during peak times including but not limited to payroll end of year reporting, beginning / end of school year, and auditor field work.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

- Sedentary office work although standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required.
- Finger and hand dexterity to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator, and to operate standard office equipment.
- Mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen, make color distinctions, and have normal depth perception; ability to smell fumes like odorous gas; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone.
- Occasionally bending, stooping, kneeling, reaching, pushing, and pulling drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information.
- Ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to thirty (30) pounds.

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

POSITION DESCRIPTION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

POSITION TITLE: Senior Payroll Specialist

DATE RECEIVED:

I understand that nothing in this position description restricts this organization's right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time. I also understand that this position description reflects the assignment of essential job functions; it does not prescribe nor restrict the tasks that may be assigned. I further understand that this position description may be subject to change at any time due to reasonable accommodation or other reasons.

I have reviewed this document and discussed its contents with my supervisor, and I fully understand the nature and purpose of this position description and its related duties.

Employee

Date

Department Head

Date

Town Manager

Date

Human Resources

Date