

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

**OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION**

Positions in the Administrative Assistant occupation exist for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of others by performing as many office support duties as possible. This includes serving as the principal clerical and administrative support position in the immediate organizational unit in, or for which the persons assisted have responsibility, by carrying out and coordinating all the clerical and day-to-day administrative support activities, which are typically required to accomplish the work of the organization. The nature and variety of the activities depend on the needs of the organization served.

**Major Administrative Assistant Functions**

Administrative Assistants perform numerous tasks which are dissimilar in kind, but which have in common the purpose of assisting the work of one or more persons in an organization. Because all of the individual tasks performed by Administrative Assistants are related to the work of the people they assist, there are unique opportunities available for Administrative Assistants to increase the scope of their position. That is, by using information and insight obtained in performing one task, Administrative Assistants can enlarge scope and effectiveness of their performance of others. There is also a special opportunity for Administrative Assistants and the people they support to build a mutual working relationship, which results in an Administrative Assistant's acting and speaking for these individuals with an authority not common in other administrative support positions.

The duties of an Administrative Assistant are, in some respects, similar to those found in many of the specialized clerical series. Administrative Assistants are part of a broad and inclusive responsibility, which requires that the Administrative Assistant be aware of virtually everything happening in the entire organization. The typical Administrative Assistant position requires a general knowledge of substantive work of the organization under the jurisdiction of the persons assisted and, as the Administrative Assistant's participation in the management of the organization increases and as the nature and extent of that management effort increases through differences in the work situation, the amount of knowledge required increases accordingly. Positions at the lower grades consist primarily of clerical and procedural duties and, as positions increase in grade, administrative support functions are more predominant. At the higher levels, the Administrative Assistant applies a very considerable knowledge of the organization, its objectives, and lines of communication.

For a position to be included in this series, it is *not* necessary for it to include typing or any other single duty. Positions in this occupation involve the performance and coordination of various duties, rather than performance of any one duty such as the preparation of a particular report or the processing of a particular kind of document.

The nature and extent of assistance provided by the Administrative Assistant varies. There may be instances where the unit consists of one employee doing substantive work with the Administrative Assistant working only for that one employee. In some organizations, the Administrative Assistant primarily assists the supervisor of the organization while providing limited assistance to members of the supervisor's staff. In other situations, positions may involve significant assistance to several staff members, usually the senior members in an organization, in addition to the supervisor. In organizations with a small staff, the Administrative Assistant may assist all members. Because the nature of the work in this occupation involves, in varying degrees, all of the administrative and clerical functions of an office, Administrative Assistants provide some amount of assistance to everyone in the organization served. However, in all such cases, the Administrative Assistant serves as the principal clerk or administrative assistant to the head of the organizational unit. Therefore, there typically is no more than one Administrative Assistant role possible in each organizational unit. The most common exception, of

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

course, is where both a chief and a deputy each might have a bona-fide Administrative Assistant position. Finally, it should be noted that a sole clerk is not necessarily an Administrative Assistant; there must be a comprehensive range of clerical or administrative support duties to be performed.

Work assigned to Administrative Assistant positions may range from very routine and procedural duties, such as providing receptionist, phone, and typing services, to very responsible work, such as developing information for use in large, complex, and critical conferences. Generally, an Administrative Assistant can provide assistance in the more procedural aspects of general office work for several staff members without difficulty. There is no hard, fast rule as to the number of people an Administrative Assistant can serve. However, the number of people to whom an Administrative Assistant can provide higher level, more responsible assistance, is limited because of the demands such duties place on the Administrative Assistant in terms of awareness of the activities, views, programs, and commitments of the person assisted. It is also unreasonable to expect an Administrative Assistant to provide clerical support to a large number of people, and at the same time, provide higher-level administrative support. The presence of high volume, routine business will almost invariably preclude performance of the higher-level work.

**DEFINITION OF CLASS**

The Administrative Assistant class is a non-supervisory role that organizes and expedites office management activities in each major division of the City of Detroit. Administrative Assistants in this class are classified as Administrative Assistants, levels I-IV, with varying degrees of responsibility.

Administrative Assistants in this class lead and perform general office assistant work. The work requires knowledge of the procedures, techniques and practices involved in carrying out the work of an organization within established guidelines, and the skill to use various office equipment including fax machines, photocopiers, scanners, videoconferencing, telephone systems, and the ability to create and edit documents.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (Illustrative)**

The duties specified below are representative of the range of duties assigned to this job class and are not intended to be an inclusive list.

- Supports department managers, department directors or related management staff
- Prepares standard and custom reports of a financial, personnel, payroll, or department-specific nature
- Greets visitors or callers and handles their inquiries or direct them to the appropriate persons according to their needs
- Sorts, opens, and distributes incoming mail to staff
- Makes copies of correspondence or other printed material
- Answers telephones and gives information to callers, takes messages, or transfers calls to appropriate individuals
- Requisitions office supplies, repairs on office equipment, and printing services
- Coordinates conferences, meetings, or special events, and arranges travel reservations for office personnel
- Maintains scheduling and event calendars
- Locates and assembles documents for briefings and conferences
- Assists staff by providing information about procedures, practices and policies in division
- Prepares minutes of meetings from notes and/or recordings
- Serves as liaison between management and staff by transmitting information, explaining appropriate work instructions, and following up on assignments

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

- Sets up, manages, and develops systems for paper or electronic filing systems, records information, updates paperwork, or maintains documents, such as attendance records, correspondence or other material
- Checks and/or compares documents, forms, applications, or other materials for accuracy, completeness, grammar, and format
- Creates, maintains, and enters information into databases
- Writes simple or repetitive, non-technical correspondence such as letters of acknowledgement in accordance with a given format
- Operates electronic mail systems and coordinates the flow of information, internally or with other organizations
- Operates office equipment, such as fax machines, copiers, or phone systems and arranges for repairs when equipment malfunctions
- Uses computers for various applications, such as database management or word processing
- Independently notes and follows up on commitments made at meetings and conferences by staff members
- Develops material for supervisor's use in public speaking engagements
- Maintains information needed for budget purposes
- Performs special projects and other duties as assigned

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

The knowledge, skill, and ability of an Administrative Assistant increases with the level of responsibility and experience.

At the entry-level, knowledge requirements might include basic paraprofessional knowledge of:

- Basic or commonly used rules, procedures, or operations, which typically require some previous experience or training
- Administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology, for example, to file material and obtain requested data from files
- Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services, which includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction;
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and required formats sufficient to recognize and correct such errors in correspondence and reports

At the intermediate level, knowledge requirements might include detailed, intensive knowledge of:

- Basic or commonly used rules, procedures, or operations, which typically require some previous experience or training
- Administrative and clerical procedures and systems, such as word processing, managing files and records, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology, for example, to file material and obtain requested data from files
- Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services, which includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and required formats sufficient to recognize and correct such errors in correspondence and reports

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

- Extensive body of rules, procedures, or operations applied to clerical assignments and knowledge of the organization and functions of the office in order to perform all of the procedural work of the office. This includes knowledge to carry out and coordinate, in a timely and effective manner, many different procedures, each of which might involve numerous steps.
- Advise clerks or secretaries in subordinate organizations of the appropriate procedures to use

At the advanced level, knowledge requirements might include paraprofessional, comprehensive knowledge of:

- Basic or commonly used rules, procedures, or operations, which typically require some previous experience or training
- Administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology, for example, to file material and obtain requested data from files
- Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services, which includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and required formats sufficient to recognize and correct such errors in correspondence and reports
- Extensive body of rules, procedures, or operations applied to clerical assignments and knowledge of the organization and functions of the office in order to perform all of the procedural work of the office. This includes knowledge to carry out and coordinate, in a timely and effective manner, many different procedures, each of which might involve numerous steps.
- Advise clerks or secretaries in subordinate organizations of the appropriate procedures to use
- Duties, priorities, commitments, policies, and program goals of the staff sufficient to perform non-routine assignments
- Coordinating the work of the office with the work of other offices
- Administrative concepts, principles, and practices sufficient to perform independently such duties as eliminating conflict and duplication in extensive office procedures

Skill in:

- Use of personal computers, telephone systems, fax machines and other standard office equipment
- Use of Microsoft Office (e.g. Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint) and other office suite software packages
- Use of Excel (e.g. Formulas, Pivot Tables, Vlookup, Hlookup, other functions, charts, tables) and other financial management software packages functionality
- Adapting policies or procedures to emergency situations and establishing practices or procedures to meet new situations
- Recognizing how and when certain policies, procedures, or guidelines will be confusing to others
- Communicating effectively, both orally and in writing
- Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents
- Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times
- Talking to others to convey information effectively
- Managing one's own time and the time of others

Ability to:

- Effectively speak, write, read, and understand the English language
- Follow written and oral directions

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

- Read and comprehend relevant documents
- Process and integrate simple data
- Hear at a conversational level
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with both external and internal contacts

**SUPERVISORY CONTROLS**

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the Administrative Assistants responsibility, and the review of completed work. Controls are exercised in the way assignments are made, instructions are given, priorities and deadlines are set, and objectives and boundaries are defined. The responsibility of the Administrative Assistant depends upon the extent to which the supervisor expects the Administrative Assistant to develop the sequence and timing of various aspects of the work, to modify or recommend modification of instructions, and to participate in establishing priorities and defining objectives. The degree of review of completed work depends upon the nature and extent of the review, e.g., close and detailed review of each phase of the assignment; detailed review of the finished assignment; spot-check of finished work for accuracy; or review only for adherence to policy.

Supervisory controls over Administrative Assistants may be exercised by the head of the organization served and, in part, through direction provided by Administrative Assistants at higher echelons, or occasionally by other staff members. For the sake of editorial simplicity, the term "supervisor" in the following factor level descriptions may refer to any one of these sources of supervision.

**GUIDELINES**

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them. Guides used in this occupation may include, for example, reference materials such as dictionaries and style manuals, agency instructions concerning correspondence, and operating procedures of the organization served. Individual jobs may vary in the specificity, applicability, and availability of the guidelines for performance of assignments. Consequently, the constraints and judgmental demands placed upon Administrative Assistants also vary. For example, the existence of specific instructions, procedures, and policies may limit the opportunity of the Administrative Assistant to make or recommend decisions or actions.

**COMPLEXITY**

The complexity of the work may derive from the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work. Work complexity may be further driven by the policies and procedures that guide the work or from communications with City employees unfamiliar with accounting, and ability to translate accounting data into reports easily understood by people with and without an accounting background.

**SCOPE & EFFECT**

Scope and effect covers the relationship between the nature of the work, the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment, and the effect of work products or services both within and outside the organization.

The scope and effect of the work of an Administrative Assistant may center on support to the supervisor, other supervisory or managerial staff, or other staff in the organization. The impact of the work performed impacts the day-to-day operational efficiency of the operations of organization. The Administrative Assistant at the higher levels, can have significant impact not only on the internal operations and efficiency of their own organization and staff, but on other external organizations as well.

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

**PERSONAL CONTACTS**

This factor may include face-to-face telephone contacts with persons not in the supervisory chain. These contacts may cover a full range of employees, elected officials and other both inside and outside of the City government.

**PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

The purpose of personal contacts may range from factual exchanges of information to resolving problems affecting the efficient operation of the office.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The work is characterized as sedentary. Typically, Administrative Assistants sit comfortably to do their work, interspersed by brief periods of walking, standing, bending, carrying of papers and books, and extended periods requiring the use of computer terminals to accomplish work objectives. Some work may require walking and standing in conjunction with travel to and attendance at meetings and conferences away from the work site.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Work is performed in a comfortable office environment, which is appropriately lighted, heated and cooled. The work environment contains no significant hazards.

During extended periods each year, Administrative Assistants may be required to work considerable overtime.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

These minimum qualifications establish the education, training, experience, special skills and/or license(s), which are required for employment in the classification. Note: additional qualifications (i.e., special conditions) may apply to a particular position.

Education

For all Administrative Assistants, it is a requirement to have completed High School graduation or General Educational Development (GED) certificate.

Experience

In addition to the minimum education requirements, the following experience requirements also apply:

For entry into the Administrative Assistant position, at least one (1) year of administrative support experience where use of personal computers to prepare correspondence, reports and charts to enter and retrieve information is required. Administrative Assistants must demonstrate proficiency with integrated word processing and spreadsheet functions. This proficiency may be measured by taking a written test.

For selection, appointment to an Administrative Assistant level II or higher, in addition to the minimum education requirements, more progressive levels of experience are required based on the following:

Administrative Assistant II – at least two (2) years of experience

Administrative Assistant III – at least three (3) years of experience

Administrative Assistant IV – at least four (4) years of experience

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

License / Certificates

None.

Equivalency

Equivalent combinations of education and experience that provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities will be evaluated on an individual basis.

**WRITTEN TEST REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants may be required to illustrate proficiency in the use of software packages such as the Microsoft Office Suite including Word and Excel. Applicants may be required to take written tests to illustrate proficiency in other skill sets as may be determined based on the duties and responsibilities to be performed. These written tests might include mathematical skills and writing skills, including grammar and reading comprehension.

**BACKGROUND AND OTHER CHECKS**

Applicants may be subject to background, criminal, and credit checks.

**POSITION TITLES**

There are four positions in the Administrative Assistant job class specification:

Administrative Assistant I

This is the entry level. As a trainee, the Administrative Assistant carries out a range of administrative assignments while learning the methods of the work.

Administrative Assistant II

This is the intermediate level. The Administrative Assistant performs an expanding range of administrative assignments in a developing capacity.

Administrative Assistant III

This is the experienced level. The Administrative Assistant performs a full range of administrative assignments. Considerable independent judgment is used to make decisions in carrying out assignments that have significant impact on services or programs.

Administrative Assistant IV

This is the advanced level. The Administrative Assistant may function as a lead administrative assistant or head administrative assistant. At this level, Administrative Assistants are responsible for overseeing the work assignments of other clerical or administrative support staff or have regular assignments, which have been recognized as having significantly greater complexity than those assigned at the experienced level.

Based on the program functional area, parenthetical titling may be used when special subject matter knowledge of a specific functional area is required.

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

Individuals appointed to a position in this class will be required to serve a probationary period of six months with the possibility of a six-month extension for a total of twelve months. If promoted to a position in this class, an individual will be required to serve a probationary period of six months.

**City of Detroit**  
**JOB SPECIFICATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

Performance will be carefully evaluated during the probationary period. Continued Employment in this class will be contingent upon successful completion of the probationary period.

**CODE DESIGNATIONS**

Class Code: 43-6011-00

EEO Code: 6

Date Established: 03/10/2015