

UTILITY CREDIT COUNSELOR

JOB DESCRIPTION

Classification Responsibilities: A Utility Credit Counselor serves as the primary point of contact for customers requesting payment arrangements on delinquent utility accounts and establishment of new commercial service utility accounts. This involves interacting directly with customers/citizens in person, by telephone, via e-mail, and in writing to process a variety of service requests and to receive and apply various payments for utility accounts (electric, gas, water, wastewater, solid waste, irrigation, and hydrant meters). Duties include: counseling utility customers regarding outstanding utility balances; determining eligibility for payment arrangements; explaining delinquency process; reviewing and evaluating accounts to make appropriate determinations; making outbound collection calls for outstanding utility account balances; quoting deposits and explaining the requirements to establish commercial utility accounts; obtaining information; resolving billing disputes; evaluating and determining residential and commercial deposit amounts for customer account maintenance; communicating with insurance companies regarding surety utility bonds; retrieving and processing information regarding a customer's credit history and financial situation; and completing various reports. The interpersonal communication in this classification requires considerable diplomacy, tact, patience, negotiation skills, and professionalism when providing information and explanations concerning City ordinances, policies, and procedures. This classification is expected to routinely handle difficult public contact situations and exercise initiative and independent judgment in ensuring the accuracy and completeness of work. Individual job assignment may vary. This class is also responsible for performing related duties as required.

Distinguishing Features: The public contact component of this classification involves: explaining and/or interpreting the City's policies and procedures, answering complex questions, and resolving customer and/or citizen problems and complaints. This includes interacting with citizens who are often angry, confused, and/or hostile. Employees in this class are expected to perform day-to-day activities independently within established guidelines and procedures under general supervision. This class is distinguished from the other clerical classes by the significant public contact that at times may be tense, unpleasant, and/or confrontational. This class is FLSA nonexempt. (The part-time class has been designated as a non-classified, non-merit system, at-will position.)

QUALIFICATIONS

Employee Values: All employees of the City of Mesa are expected to uphold and exhibit the City's shared employee values of Knowledge, Respect, and Integrity.

Minimum Qualifications Required. Any combination of training, education, and experience equivalent to graduation from high school or GED. A minimum of three years full-time experience in collections or two years full-time experience in a utility customer service environment.

Special Requirements. None.

Substance Abuse Testing. None.

Preferred/Desirable Qualifications. None.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Communication: Serves as the primary point of contact for customers requesting payment arrangements on delinquent utility accounts and establishing of new commercial service utility accounts. Makes inquiries into sensitive economic and other personal details pertaining to the customer in order to determine satisfactory financial payment arrangements. Explains and interprets City ordinances, policies and operating procedures. Communicates with the general public and other City employees to resolve disputes and complaints. Prepares written documents and statistical reports with clearly organized thoughts for such purposes as: obtaining information, explaining policy, resolving billing disputes, or tracking work unit productivity. Evaluates and determines residential and commercial deposit amounts for customer account maintenance. Communicates with insurance companies regarding surety utility bonds. Communicates with county and state agencies to exchange information regarding customer accounts in order to aid in securing financial assistance for utility payments. Generates field service orders and provides documentation on the utility billing system to update account activity and document customer interactions. Explains City policies and procedures pertaining to required deposits and service fees. Makes outbound collection calls in order to collect payment or make acceptable arrangement on outstanding account balances. Answers inquiries concerning utilities that have been disconnected for non-payment and explains requirements for the restoration of service. Interacts in a tactful, confidential, knowledgeable, and courteous manner with customers who may be angry, confused, and/or hostile.

Manual/Physical: Operates a variety of standard office equipment such as a personal computer (PC), fax, copier, and ten-key calculator. Enters narrative and numerical information in a Customer Information System to update utility account records. Maintains customer information on-line which includes notations of all customer contact, payment arrangements, unpaid returned items, bankruptcy information, agency guarantees, deposit requirements, and disconnection/reconnection information. As the initial point of processing of returned bank items for all City departments, generate spreadsheets to various City departments informing them of their department's returned items. Maintains record of all agency guarantees and monitors for payment from both customer/agency and generates disconnection service orders when necessary. Inputs all bankruptcy information on utility accounts and submits all required documentation to bankruptcy courts. Meets scheduling, attendance, accuracy, and reliability requirements.

Mental: Learns job-related material through classroom and on-the job training regarding customer service practices, telephone etiquette, Customer Information System (CIS), knowledge of Fair Debt Collections Practice Act, credit policies, and operation of administrative and field areas of the department. Makes mathematical computations rapidly and accurately. Learns to format and prepare a variety of customer service correspondence, reports, manuals, memoranda, forms, and statistical reports using a PC; proofs and reviews copies for proper grammar, spelling, English usage, and format according to specific styles and guidelines. Comprehends written and oral requests/complaints from customers in order to properly investigate and resolve the issue in questions and make corrections to customer accounts. Attends to details so that work product is within acceptable limits for accuracy and timeliness.

Knowledge and Abilities: (Common to all assignments)

Knowledge of:

customer service and credit practices;
modern office methods, practices, and equipment including PC's and specialized software systems;
basic mathematical principles;
proper format for letters, memos, and other written correspondence;
general office policies and procedures followed in the area to which assigned;
computerized records systems used in the area;
basic public relations techniques;
Fair Debt Collection Act; and
bankruptcy laws.

Ability to:

learn and retain information presented during training and to apply the information under general supervision;
communicate ideas and information clearly and concisely, both verbally and in writing;
interact tactfully and courteously with the public to answer questions and resolve complaints;
interact with coworkers to establish and maintain effective working relationships;
maintain a high level of attention to detail for quality control purposes;
operate a variety of standard office equipment;
remain calm and professional when dealing with frustrated and/or angry members of the public;
carryout recurring assignments independently without specific instructions;
learn and apply spreadsheet, word processing, and other work-related computer software; and
maintain the confidentiality of records when pressed for information by the public.

The duties listed above are intended only as general illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. Specific statements of duties not included does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Job descriptions are subject to change by the City as the needs of the City and requirements of the job change.

Revised 7/19

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PAY GRADE: 42

CS4234 (Part-time, Benefited)

PAY GRADE: 42

CS4231 (Part-time, Non-benefited)

PAY GRADE: 42

EEO-A/S

IND-8810

JOB FCTN-FIN

SWORN-No

INCREMENTS 62-200