Jurisdictional Class: Competitive
EEO Category: Professionals
Revised: 11/04/2026
Approved by OTDA: 09/22/2005

SOCIAL SERVICES INVESTIGATOR

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: Employees in this class investigate cases of alleged welfare fraud and conduct internal agency investigations. The work involves research and field investigation of individuals and vendors in cases where there is allegation or suspicion of improper amounts of payments, failure to make support payments, and attempted or actual welfare fraud. Incumbents are responsible for gathering evidence and documentation, including individuals' statements to develop cases. The work includes negotiating payment agreements according to individual circumstances. The work is performed under general direction, with broad discretion permitted in carrying out the details of the work. The incumbent performs related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative Only)

Conducts assigned investigations of cases of suspected Public Assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, and vendor fraud;

Has knowledge of public assistance laws and rules, and obtains information to determine type of fraud involved and discusses the possibility of criminal charges;

Interviews clients, their relatives and others, and initiates proper procedure to obtain support or gather information concerning violation of social service laws;

Makes field visits to question recipient's neighbors, acquaintances, employers and others to secure information for the possible prosecution of fraud cases;

Conducts internal agency investigations;

Makes field visits when needed to obtain information or documents required to determine financial eligibility for public assistance or other programs;

Serves summonses upon respondents who have a record for non-appearance in court;

Prepares detailed reports for each case;

Answers correspondence and inquiries concerning support or fraud matters from other government agencies, beneficiaries and respondents;

Appears on the Department's behalf at pre-trial hearings, felony hearings, grand juries, and trials to give testimony, and helps coordinate other agency witnesses;

May serve subpoenas upon witnesses in paternity or support cases.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Good knowledge of investigative techniques used in determining financial practices, and status of vendors and individuals, and in locating missing persons; good knowledge of office technology and methods used in keeping and checking financial records and reports; working knowledge of Federal and State social service and related laws and regulations in regard to desertion and fraud; ability to develop materials for legal actions according to prescribed regulations; ability to prepare written reports; ability to analyze facts and use them in making judgment in desertion and fraud cases.

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MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Either:

(A) Possession of Bachelor's Degree; **OR**

(B) Possession of Associate's Degree in criminal justice accounting, business, or a closely related field, **AND** one (1) year of field investigation*, or one (1) year of interviewing or investigative experience involving public contact; **OR**

(C) Successful completion of thirty (30) credit hours in criminal justice, accounting, business or a closely related field at a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university **AND** two (2) years of field investigation* experience or two (2) years of interviewing or investigative experience involving public contact.

*Field investigation involves traveling to an office, home, place of business or other location deemed important to the investigation. Data and evidence are gathered from these field visits and statements and/or affidavits from involved individuals and witnesses may be obtained.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Possession of a valid New York State driver's license at time of appointment. License must remain valid throughout appointment.

NOTES:

1. Verifiable part-time experience will be pro-rated toward meeting full-time experience requirements.
2. Degree(s) must have been awarded by a college or university accredited by a regional, national, or specialized agency recognized as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Secretary of Education. If the degree was awarded by an educational institution outside the United States and its territories, the candidate must provide independent verification of equivalency. A list of acceptable companies who provide this service can be found on the Internet at http://www.cs.ny.gov/jobseeker/degrees.cfm. Candidates will be required to pay the evaluation fee.

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