

**CLASS SPECIFICATION****HOUSING INVESTIGATOR, 8516**

06-22-06

Summary of Duties: Conducts preliminary and follow-up investigations of alleged violations of the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO) and/or Housing Code (Los Angeles Municipal Code Chapters XV and XVI); gathers and evaluates evidence through investigative research, which may include inspecting properties, interviews tenants, complainants, landlords, and other witnesses; obtains physical and documentary evidence; compiles, analyzes and organizes legal documents; undertakes legal research; prepares oral and written reports on investigative findings; prepares legal cases for referrals to the City Attorney's Office Criminal Division; negotiates complaint settlements and case closures with landlords and tenants; represents the City at public events to provide information about the RSO; may act as a lead investigator reviewing the work of a team of housing investigators; may supervise investigative support and public counter staff; and performs related work.

Distinguishing Features: Housing Investigator is a journey-level professional position employed at the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD). Employees of this class receive assignments in the form of written case referrals or through oral or written instructions, and they are expected to handle routine investigations independently. Housing Investigators are expected to have prior professional work experience related to the application of California landlord/tenant laws along with a working knowledge of the principles of contract law and the rules of evidence. Housing Investigators will receive detailed on-the-job training regarding the RSO and the City's Housing Code, as well as additional orientation to the overall policies and procedures of LAHD and the City as a whole.

Examples of Duties: A Housing Investigator:

- Conducts and/or participates in investigations into potential violations of the City's RSO and/or Housing Code, which may include illegal eviction, illegal rent increase, non-payment of relocation assistance, reduction of services, non-registration of units, and the operation of multi-family rental housing under sub-standard conditions;
- Applies appropriate investigative techniques to develop reliable and admissible information on complaints received of alleged violations of the RSO or Housing Code, including research of property ownership and legal status;
- Interviews all relevant persons, including complainants, property owners or property management agent and City employees;

- Collects and analyzes documentary evidence, including affidavits of witnesses, correspondence, bank records, financial records and other relevant records;
- Performs field inspections to observe and note physical conditions at property that is the subject of investigation;
- Writes reports to present investigative findings in a comprehensive narrative and/or statistical format;
- Prepares documentation as necessary for referral of cases to the City Attorney for criminal prosecution;
- Negotiates equitable settlements of complaints within the parameters of the RSO;
- Appears as a witness in court or in other authorized proceedings as necessary;
- Attends community events to make presentations regarding the RSO;
- May act as a lead investigator reviewing the work of a team of housing investigators; or
- May supervise one or more clerical staff handling investigation support or public counter functions.

May occasionally be assigned to other duties for training purposes or to meet technological changes or emergencies.

Qualifications: Incumbents must have the following knowledge and abilities:

Knowledge of:

- Proper investigative techniques and procedures for conducting investigations;
- Applicable local, state and federal laws, rules and regulations governing housing, real estate, business and landlord-tenant relations;
- Rules of evidence and court procedure;
- Techniques of identifying, preserving and presenting evidence;
- Interviewing techniques and strategies;
- Effective negotiation and mediation techniques;
- Principles and practices of confidentiality sufficient to recognize actions that may compromise the integrity of the investigation or investigation files.

The ability to:

- Utilize appropriate investigative techniques to obtain information;
- Read, comprehend and interpret detailed, complex written material;
- Correctly interpret and apply relevant state and local laws, Rent Adjustment Commission regulations, and City and departmental policies and procedures;
- Define problems, analyze situations, and implement or recommend an effective and reasonable course of action;

- Establish facts and formulate valid conclusions based on the law and evidence;
- Prepare clear and concise written reports;
- Prioritize and manage duties;
- Deal effectively with landlords, tenants and City representatives;
- Remain calm and professional when interviewing distraught or combative persons during the investigative process;
- Maintain confidentiality of evidence gathered;
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Bi-lingual speaking and writing ability is desirable.

Persons with disabilities may be able to perform the essential duties of this class with reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation will be evaluated on an individual basis and depends in part, on the specific requirements for the job, the limitations related to the disability and the ability of the hiring department to reasonably accommodate the limitations.

Minimum Requirements:

1. Graduation from a recognized four-year college or university, and two years of professional experience investigating complaints, analyzing evidence, and preparing legal documents related to civil or criminal enforcement actions under housing law; **or**
2. A paralegal certificate from a recognized paralegal training program and two years of full-time paralegal experience investigating complaints, analyzing evidence and preparing legal documents related to civil or criminal enforcement actions under housing law; **or**
3. Four years of full-time paid experience investigating complaints, analyzing evidence, and preparing legal documents, two years of which must be related to civil or criminal enforcement actions under housing law.

NOTE: One year (i.e., 30 semester or 45 quarter hours) of classes from an accredited American Bar Association law school or a paralegal certificate from a recognized paralegal training program may be substituted for one year of the professional experience specified in Requirement #1.

As provided in Civil Service Commission Rule 2.6 and Section 4.55 of the Administrative Code, this specification is descriptive, explanatory and not restrictive. It is not intended to declare what all of the duties and responsibilities of any position shall be.