

RISK COMMUNIQUÉ

Employment Practice Exposure—Position Description

A detailed position description is the starting point of a thorough hiring/membership process. A position description informs the applicant of the essential functions of the position. The “essential functions” of the position are important since these are the functions that the employee/member must be able to perform to be considered a viable candidate for a position.

The following is an outline of a possible approach that can be used to create new descriptions or modify existing descriptions in your effort to comply with the position description aspects of the American Disabilities Act. The information contained in the sample position description is for general information purposes only. VFIS recommends your position description, whether sampled or developed, be reviewed by a local attorney.

Position Summary

Should answer the question “why does this position exist in the organization.” This should be a brief statement of the major components of the position, including:

- Essential position functions
- Purpose and objectives of these functions
- Key relationships

SAMPLE: POSITION SUMMARY

Respond to emergency calls for service to provide efficient and immediate care to the critically ill and injured, and to transport the patient to a medical facility. The EMT must participate in the training and maintenance activities necessary to achieve that end.

SAMPLE: ESSENTIAL POSITION FUNCTIONS

- RESPONDS promptly to emergency calls for service when notified while on duty.
- DRIVES vehicles and OPERATES patient handling equipment.
- Has a basic understanding of stress response and methods to ensure personal well-being.¹
- Understands basic medical-legal principles.¹
- Functions within the scope of care as defined by state, regional and local regulatory agencies.¹
- Complies with regulations on handling of the deceased, notifies authorities and arranges for protection of property and evidence at the scene.¹
- Effectively COMMUNICATES verbally by means of two-way radio as person-to-person and in writing through completion of various records, memos and letters.

Position Responsibilities

This should be a list of specific responsibilities that cover the various aspects of the position.

SAMPLE: POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assess scene safety to avoid additional injury.
- Identify the mechanism of injury or nature of illness; the total number of patients; and request additional help, if necessary.

This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization's needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm, or damage to personnel, property, and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control Representative at 800.233.1957.

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- Open and maintain an airway including ventilation.
- Administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation, including use of automated external defibrillators.¹
- Provide prehospital medical care of simple and multiple system traumas.¹
- Provide emergency medical care and manage general medical complaints.
- Assist patient with prescribed medications as allowed by scope of care protocols.
- Reassure patients and bystanders by working in a confident, efficient manner.¹
- Avoid mishandling and undue haste while working expeditiously to accomplish the task.¹
- Report verbally and in writing, observations and emergency medical care of the patient while at the emergency scene and in transit.¹
- Maintain vehicles, equipment, buildings and grounds.
- Participate in training necessary to acquire the knowledge and skills required of the position.
- Perform other duties as required.

Required Education/Experience

The education and experience required should:

- Reflect the level that would be established to recruit for the position.
- Be the same for everyone in that position.
- Be consistent with position's responsibilities
- Reflect what best fits the requirements of the position or what qualifications are necessary to advance to a higher position.

SAMPLE: REQUIRED EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

- Requires a valid State Driver's License.
- Requires Emergency Medical Technician Certification.
- A general knowledge of a variety of subjects and skills related to emergency medical service and hazardous material.

Required Skills

Skills needed should be listed on the position description. It may be also beneficial to include the frequency with which the skill is required.

Skill requirements can only be listed with the following caveats:

- The disabled employee has the right to request an accommodation.²
- The organization has the obligation to provide an accommodation unless the accommodation would impose an "undue hardship" on the employer.²

SAMPLE: REQUIRED SKILLS

- Ability to respond quickly uses good judgment under stress in hazardous situations.
- Knowledge of street and receiving medical facility locations.
- Knowledge of dispatch procedure.

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Physical Requirements and Environmental Conditions

Document the physical capabilities required to perform the responsibilities (essential position functions) and the special environmental conditions that are inherent in the work area where the position functions are performed.

SAMPLE: PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Must be able to lift and move stretcher with a patient (able to lift and carry 125 pounds).
- Must have agility to traverse uneven terrain and stairs by climbing or crawling.
- Must be able to carry heavy loads up and down stairs.
- Must be able to operate medical equipment.
- Must be able to hear alarms and respond.
- Must be able to effectively communicate via two-way radio and over the telephone.

¹ NY State Department of Health: Job Description – Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2017, from <http://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/pdf/srgemt.pdf>

² Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-336, § 12112, 104 Stat. 328 (1990). Retrieved February 22, 2017, from <https://adata.org/publication/ADA-faq-booklet#Employment>