GENERAL PURPOSE

Under general supervision, performs routine or standard purchasing transactions; receives, reviews and ensures proper documentation for purchase request; researches and catalogs vendor related materials to obtain information on product price, terms and availability; recommends purchase awards to vendors in accordance with established procedures; maintains purchasing documentation including Insurance and Risk Management Safety requirements, purchase contracts and requisitions; and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Assistant Buyer is the entry-level class in the Buyer series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents perform routine or standard purchasing activities within established policies and parameters and assist vendors and District staff to understand purchasing procedures and resolve problems, while learning District policies and procedures and specific techniques and legal requirements related to the District’s procurement programs. As experience is gained, duties are performed with a greater degree of independence under general supervision.

Assistant Buyer is distinguished from Buyer in that the latter is responsible for independently performing more difficult or complex purchasing duties involving the application of a higher degree of analytical and problem-solving skill and a broader knowledge of purchasing practices and procedures and products, commodities and services used by the District.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to this class.

Performs routine or standard purchasing transaction related duties; reviews assigned purchase requisitions to determine the requesting departments’ exact requirements; verifies completeness, accuracy, account numbers and appropriate authorizations;
Conducts research to identify potential sources and vendors for specified products and commodities; reviews catalogues and other sources and verifies price, availability and terms with departments; places orders for materials and supplies by telephone, fax or on-line vendor ordering system in accordance with purchasing parameters and procedures; assigns numbers, creates and generates blanket purchase orders and contracts and issues releases as needed after verifying purchase order maximums have not been exceeded.

Prepares and issues purchase orders for designated commodities in accordance with purchasing procedures; from established vendors or new vendors when warranted, obtains quotations on price, terms and delivery by telephone or fax in accordance with division guidelines; analyzes quotations received; selects or recommends successful supplier in accordance with division guidelines; places orders with lowest responsible bidders; takes immediate action on emergency purchase requirements within division guidelines.

Confers with departments to resolve problems relating to substitutions, equivalents, delivery schedules and vendor problems; follows up on purchase orders to ensure products are received in a correct and timely manner; conducts research with vendors and others to resolve invoice disputes.

Follows up on purchase orders to ensure products were received in a correct manner and generate necessary supporting reports; researches and resolves invoice and billing issues; maintains ongoing relationships with vendors to ensure quality customer service.

Coordinates and prepares required paperwork for the repair of District items including motors, pumps, tools and related materials; directs paperwork to appropriate department for approval prior to creating purchase orders.

Enters vendor, purchase order or agreement and other data into the specialized computer financial system; generates purchase orders for signature by authorized staff when purchase order exceeds established signing authority.

Maintains and establishes a vendor database by adding to, or updating, vendor files, vendor selection, bid lists and vendor performance documentation.

Maintains vendor Insurance and Risk Management Safety documentation; verifies vendor compliance in obtaining proper/valid certificates and follows up as required; generates reports and records.

Explains District purchasing policies and procedures to departments and vendors.

With guidance, reviews contracts and blanket purchase orders and makes recommendations for renewal; negotiates terms and conditions for renewal with vendors.
within established guidelines.

With guidance, prepares formal and informal bid and request for proposal packets for review and approval.
Performs related duties as assigned

DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

Basic practices and techniques of public agency purchasing, including competitive bidding procedures; applicable laws and regulations governing District purchasing activities; District purchasing policies, rules, procedures and practices; general types and sources of products, commodities and supplies used by a water and water reclamation utility; data processing system operations and procedures applicable to automated purchasing and accounts payable transactions in the specialized computer financial system; basic research and data analysis techniques; District budgeting and recordkeeping practices and procedures; principles and practices of business communication.

Ability to:

Operate a computer and other standard business equipment and software; organize and set priorities; make sound independent judgments within established guidelines; interpret, apply and reach sound decisions in accordance with laws, rules, regulations and District procedures; make calculations and tabulations quickly and accurately; obtain informal quotations and complete assigned purchasing transactions accurately and with minimum supervision; communicate effectively, orally and in writing; follow and apply written and oral instructions; prepare clear, concise and accurate records and reports; establish and maintain highly effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Training and Experience:

A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined above is graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor’s degree in business administration, public administration, finance, operations management or a related field and some training or experience that provides familiarity with purchasing practices and procedures; or graduation from high school or G.E.D. equivalent; and four years of increasingly responsible office administrative support experience, at least one year of which involved purchasing or accounts payable responsibilities; or an equivalent combination of training and experience. Experience in a governmental or public utility is preferred.
PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS

The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by employees to successfully perform the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Physical Demands

While performing the duties of this class, employees are regularly required to sit, stand and walk; talk and hear, in person and by telephone; use hands repetitively to finger, handle, feel or operate standard office equipment.

Specific vision abilities required for this class include close vision and the ability to adjust focus.

Mental Demands

While performing the duties of this class, employees are regularly required to use written and oral communication; read and interpret data, information and documents; analyze and solve problems; make arithmetic calculations; learn and apply new information; perform highly detailed work on multiple, concurrent tasks with rapidly changing priorities; and interact with District staff and others encountered in the course of work.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Employees work under normal office conditions and the noise level is moderately quiet.

FLSA DETERMINATION: Non-exempt