GENERAL PURPOSE

Under general supervision, performs specialized tasks associated with the collection of delinquent customer utility accounts and unpaid, closed customer accounts; prepares demands for payment; files liens and pursues recovery in small claims court; trains and guides customer service personnel addressing difficult customer delinquency issues; performs collections and credit arrangement activities, and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Collections Representative I is the entry level class in the Collections Representative series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents perform the more routine duties while learning District policies and procedures and becoming familiar with the variety of departmental systems and practices. As experience is gained, duties become more diversified and are performed under more general supervision. This class is alternately staffed with Collections Representative II, and incumbents may advance to the higher level after gaining experience and demonstrating proficiency which meet the qualifications of the higher level.

Collections Representative II is the experienced/journey level class in the series, fully competent to independently perform duties. This class is distinguished from the lower classification of Collections Representative I by the relative independence with which duties are performed. A Collections Representative II is the fully qualified class specializing in performing tasks associated with maximizing collections of utility bill payments to reduce the loss of District revenue through write-offs.

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.

Reviews delinquent and closed unpaid customer utility account listings and customer account information; makes determinations of collections approaches to be followed; contacts customers first by telephone and later by multiple follow up letters to try to
secure cooperation in bringing accounts current or paying unpaid balances on closed
accounts; pursues payment by cooperative means as a first priority, making additional
or revised credit arrangements when circumstances warrant; updates customer records
in COINS with notations of actions taken.

Guides customer service personnel in options and techniques useful in bringing
accounts current; reviews customer account histories and notations in COINS to
determine need for more formal collections approaches.

Prepares logs to track accounts through all phases of collections activity; prepares and
sends unpaid accounts to collections bureaus in accordance with division guidelines;
reviews and monitors collections progress by the bureau; reviews delinquent unpaid
accounts for closure and write-off.

Writes-off delinquent balances too minimal an amount to send to collections or when
balances are delinquent due to death.

Reviews delinquent unpaid accounts, including deferred payment arrangements set up
through New Business, public administrator accounts, property tax status, and makes
determinations regarding the filing of liens or other efforts to secure recovery; prepares
and sends customers notices of intent to file a lien; files lien documents against
property owners with the County of Riverside; prepares demands and lien releases as
needed; maintains all lien records; maintains active files on accounts involving
customer bankruptcy filings and foreclosures; prepares filings and seeks restitution
through bankruptcy and foreclosure proceedings; pursues restitution against estate
claims.

Prepares delinquent customer accounts for an assessment to be placed on their
County of Riverside property taxes.

Develops and maintains written customer service collection procedures, including
procedures used by customer service personnel.

Files cases for recovery of unpaid account balances in small claims court; prepares and
files documents with the court; represents the District in case hearings.

Completes and balances required spreadsheets associated with morning banking
procedures; participates in the wire transfer authorization process; provides backup
support and vacation relief for technical accounting staff.

Provides a wide range of customer service related tasks including taking customer
telephone calls and opening/closing accounts; explains monthly billing to customers;
processes adjustments.
Maintains statistical data and prepares monthly and annual reports on collections activities, including the results of collection agency pursuit of payment, the imposition of liens and recovery through small claims court proceedings.

Evaluates and recommends revisions to collection practices to maximize collections results through proactive means consistent with the District’s values and desired image in the community.

Performs quality audits on credit and collections processes and provides results to supervisors.

Performs related duties as assigned.

**DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

**Knowledge of:**

Customer service practices and customer-oriented telephone etiquette; effective collections practices and procedures; standard office practices and procedures; sound business communication practices; correct English usage, including spelling, grammar and punctuation; Water Service Rules; characteristics of the District’s customer base; billing practices and procedures; rules, policies, practices and precedents for delinquencies, collections and credit, including U.S. Bankruptcy and Small Claims Court rules; practices, procedures and requirements for the filing of liens on real property; the operations, uses and requirements of COINS.

**Ability to:**

Operate an online computer, computer terminal and other standard office equipment; handle tactfully and effectively sensitive customer relations situations and defuse situations that are highly emotional and volatile; interpret, explain and apply complex District rules regarding water service rates and policies; use sound investigative techniques to develop information that can used to obtain account payment; reach sound decisions in accordance with rules and policies, particularly with regard to difficult, unusual or sensitive delinquent accounts and credit arrangements; understand and carry out written and oral instructions; prepare clear, accurate and concise computer entries and basic correspondence; maintain sensitive and confidential information; use tact, discretion, patience and understanding in dealing with customers and the public; establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work; follow and apply written and oral work instructions; communicate effectively, orally and in writing; make sound independent judgments within established guidelines.

**Training and Experience:**
A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined above is graduation from high school or G.E.D. equivalent and two years of customer service credit or collections experience, or an equivalent combination of training and experience. Experience in customer service functions in a government or public utility setting is highly desirable.

A Collections Representative I may be considered for advancement to Collections Representative II after demonstrating proficiency to perform all major duties assigned to the class.

Typically, a Collections Representative I is expected to be capable of meeting the proficiency criteria within a 12 month period, depending on an individual's prior experience and progression in performing the full range of Collections Representative duties.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS

The physical and mental demands described here are associate 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, the employee is regularly required to sit; talk or hear, both in person and by telephone; and use hands repetitively to operate, finger, handle or feel office equipment; and reach with hands and arms. The employee is frequently required to stand and walk.

Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance and the ability to adjust focus.
Mental Demands

While performing the duties of this class, the employee is regularly required to use written and oral communication skills; read and interpret complex data and information; make arithmetic calculations; analyze and solve customer problems; observe and interpret situations; learn and apply new information; perform highly detailed work on multiple, concurrent tasks; work with constant interruptions; interact with District staff, customers who are often upset and dissatisfied and the public.

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.

The employee works under office conditions involving a public counter and high telephone volume; and the noise level is moderately quiet.

FLSA DETERMINATION: Non-exempt
FLEX REQUIREMENTS
Collections Representative I (Flex)
Collections Representative II

LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED

A Collections Representative I may advance or “flex” to the Collections Representative II class after 12 months of experience in the Collections Representative I class.

PERFORMANCE RATING

The incumbents must receive an overall performance rating of “good” or better on their most recent annual performance evaluation in order to flex to the higher class.

COMMENTS

The Collections Representative I must also demonstrate proficiency to perform the full range of duties as described in the Collections Representative I/II job description.