

**HOUSING SPECIALIST**

**TOMPKINS COUNTY**

Department Social Services  
Classification Competitive  
Labor Grade I (9)  
Approved Res. #260, 12/20/05  
Revised \_\_\_\_\_  
By AF, Commissioner of Personnel

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

This position has primary responsibility for implementing various housing programs at DSS. The incumbent is responsible for working with DSS clients and their landlords to prevent eviction. Negotiation skills are of paramount importance. The incumbent will also educate landlords and tenants on their rights and responsibilities with regard to regulations pertaining to housing and DSS services. The incumbent will run the DSS Security Deposit program and will be responsible for inspecting housing units pre and post occupancy by DSS clients to negotiate security deposits agreements with landlords for inspected units. The incumbent will work with individuals in the homeless shelter to develop re-housing strategies. The incumbent will work closely with Fraud and Security Divisions to assist with the Front End Detection System and potential housing fraud. The incumbent will establish strong working relationships with all division within the Department of Social Services including protective and preventative services to children and adults, day care, Public Assistance, Medicaid, Food Stamps, Child Support, Fraud and Security. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Division Coordinator - Special Services with wide latitude for program development. There is no direct supervision over the work of program support staff. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

**TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

Develops and/or distributes information related to tenant/landlord rights.  
Maintains a liaison between local landlords and DSS.  
Works with existing community organizations to disseminate rental information and DSS services.  
Establishes working relationships with individuals receiving services from DSS with the goal to prevent evictions, maintain housing, and/or secure safe and stable housing.  
Enters dwelling units to conduct pre and post occupancy inspection for landlord/DSS security depart agreements.  
Completes documentation pertaining to the work performed.  
Works as a team member with the various divisions at DSS.  
Confers with local authorities, civic leaders, government officials regarding housing issues.  
Helps collect information for statistical reports.  
Responds to and investigates alleged housing fraud.  
Liaisons with local, state and federal law enforcement.

**FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

Thorough knowledge of programs and services offered by DSS;  
Working knowledge of landlord/tenant law;  
Ability to negotiate in potentially volatile/crisis situations;  
Ability to organize and coordinate information regarding housing;  
Ability to negotiate with a diverse local community;  
Resourceful and sound professional judgment;  
Ability to relay information clearly and concisely;  
Good powers of observation;  
Excellent verbal skills;  
Tact, courtesy and good judgment;  
Dependability;  
Good physical condition.

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## HOUSING SPECIALIST(CONTINUED)

### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- (a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two year college with an Associates degree and one year of full time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience examining, investigating or evaluating eligibility in a human services or housing services program operating under established criteria or working in law enforcement, building inspection, housing inspection, skilled construction work, independent contractor work, or in a related field; **OR**
- (b) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** three years of full time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience examining, investigating or evaluating eligibility in a human services or housing services program operating under established criteria or working in law enforcement, building inspection, housing inspection, skilled construction work, independent contractor work, or in a related field; **OR**
- (c) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that described in (a) and (b) above.

### SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Must possess a valid New York State Drivers' License at the time of application and maintain such license for the duration of employment.

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