

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION**

**EPIDEMIOLOGIST
CLASSIFICATION SERIES**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of This Classification Specification

This classification specification is the basic authority under ER 2.04, Wis. Adm. Code, for making classification decisions relative to present and future professional Epidemiologist positions. This classification specification is not intended to identify every duty that may be assigned to positions, but is intended to serve as a framework for classification decision making in this occupational area.

Classification decisions must be based on the “best fit” of the duties within the existing classification structure. The “best fit” is determined by the majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the work assigned to and performed by the position when compared to the class concepts and definition of this specification or through other methods of position analysis. Position analysis defines the nature and character of the work through the use of any or all of the following: definition statements; listing of areas of specialization; representative examples of work performed; allocation patterns of representative positions; job evaluation guide charts, standards or factors; statements of inclusion and exclusion; licensure or certification requirements; and other such information necessary to facilitate the assignment of positions to the appropriate classification.

B. Inclusions

This classification encompasses professional positions located at the Department of Health and Family Services or the University of Wisconsin – Madison. They are responsible for performing work involved in studying the distributions and determinants of disease and injury. Their activities include observing, describing, quantifying, and developing theories about the patterns, characteristics, causes, and prevention of disease and injury affecting population health. They apply epidemiologic methods to identify and understand causes of public health problems and to plan and evaluate public health interventions to prevent or reduce disease and injury burden or to evaluate outcomes of health service delivery.

C. Exclusions

Excluded from this classification are the following types of positions:

1. Positions which meet the statutory definition(s) of supervisor and/or management as defined in Wis. Stats. 111.81(19) and (13) as administered and interpreted by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission.
2. Positions that spend the majority of the time (more than 50%), engaged in public health education activities and which are more appropriately classified as Public Health Educator 1, 2, or 3.

3. Positions not located at the Department of Health and Family Services or the University of Wisconsin – Madison.
4. All other positions that are more appropriately identified by other classification specifications.

D. Entrance Into and Progression Through This Series

Employees enter positions within this classification series by competitive examination. Progression to the Advanced level will occur through reclassification.

II. DEFINITIONS

EPIDEMIOLOGIST

Employees in positions at this level are entry-level. They are responsible for conducting epidemiologic disease and injury investigations. Responsibilities include functioning as a study team member by analyzing the causes of disease and injury and communicating these findings; communicating on methods of disease/injury control; communicating with the general public concerning prevention; following implementation plans for disease and injury surveillance and control measures; and assisting with policy and procedure development for new and existing control programs.

Epidemiologic principles and practices have been learned prior to entrance into this classification series. Initial work assignments are well-defined and short term in duration. Over time the work assignments become long term or short term with the employee expected to exercise independent judgment in determining specifics and priorities, as the objectives are progressively less clear. Positions work under close or limited supervision.

Examples of Work Performed:

- Serves as a team member on epidemiologic investigations, surveillance, control, and evaluation programs.
- Compiles study, surveillance data, or data from other published sources; performs simple, descriptive statistical and epidemiologic analyses (e.g., total number of persons affected, percent affected or disease rate, 2x2 or 2xN frequency table chi-square analysis), uses Epi-Info, Excel, or other basic software packages to produce and display summary statistics.
- Gathers basic descriptive data for use in grant applications or for use in manuscripts and departmental reports.
- Follows surveillance system implementation protocols and works within existing surveillance systems.
- Performs assigned tasks during outbreak and other rapid response epidemiologic investigations; works with local health agencies to investigate health incidents.
- Contributes general public health information (e.g., simple descriptive statistics - see above) in the development and production of guidelines and disease control recommendations.
- Provides general public health information (e.g., simple descriptive statistics) to the public and medical community.

- Provides consultation to other state and federal agencies, local health agencies, private health care providers and others on the implementation of established disease/injury detection, prevention, and control programs.
- Provides training to local public health agencies, private health care providers and others on the implementation of established surveillance monitoring techniques and control methods.
- Assists with the development of educational and public information relative to epidemiologic programs or issues.
- Collects and reviews information, literature and/or records on epidemiologic issues.
- Assists in the preparation of reports and summaries of disease investigations and/or program activities.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST-ADVANCED

Employees in positions at this objective and full performance level function as epidemiologists in a public health program. Employees have a great deal of latitude for coordinating and implementing program activities, having primary responsibility for directing large (i.e., statewide or regional in scope), complex epidemiological investigations (i.e., those requiring more advanced designs such as case-control studies, cohort studies, nested case-control within cohorts, sample stratified cross-sectional studies). Work involves activities mentioned under Epidemiologist as well. Positions at the Epidemiologist–Advanced level work under general supervision.

Examples of Work Performed:

- Serves as project coordinator or lead worker of a study team on epidemiologic investigations, surveillance, control, or evaluation programs.
- Assists in the design and conduct of disease surveillance systems.
- Directs or coordinates a large epidemiologic investigation, surveillance, or public health intervention program.
- Manages and independently analyzes a large dataset (i.e., involving 500 to 1000 individuals or more) to discern exposure-disease relationships.
- Compiles investigation or surveillance data; performs advanced statistical and epidemiologic analyses (e.g., Mantel-Haenszel Chi-square analysis, odds ratio/relative risks with variance and confidence interval estimation, least squares and multiple logistic regression analysis, analysis of variance), uses Statistical Analysis System (SAS) or other advanced software packages to produce and display analytic statistics.
- Contributes to program activities by writing and co-authoring major sections of the program grant application, peer-reviewed manuscripts, and departmental reports.
- Develops surveillance system implementation protocols.
- Functions as study team leader during outbreak and other rapid response epidemiologic investigations by coordinating study activities; coordinates local health agencies and others in the investigation of health incidents.
- Provides advanced public health information in the development and production of guidelines and disease control recommendations to the public, medical community and others to raise awareness (e.g., confounder adjusted community odds ratio estimate of infant mortality and its confidence intervals utilizing advanced analytic statistics - see above).
- Provides consultation to other state and federal agencies, local health agencies, private health care providers and others on the implementation of new or emerging disease detection, prevention, and control programs.
- Provides training to epidemiologists and other team members on the implementation of established and emerging surveillance monitoring techniques and control methods.

- Coordinates the collection and review of information, literature and/or records on epidemiologic issues.

III. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications required for these positions will be determined at the time of recruitment. Such determinations will be made based on an analysis of the goals and worker activities performed and by an identification of the education, training, work, or other life experience which would provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This classification was created effective February 11, 2001, and announced in Bulletin CLR/SC-126 to describe positions that are responsible for performing work involved in studying the distributions and determinants of disease and injury. These positions were formerly classified as Public Health Educator 2 and 3.

The Epidemiologist was modified effective March 7, 2004 and announced in Bulletin OSER-0016-MRS-SC to provide that positions can be located at the Department of Health and Family Services or the University of Wisconsin - Madison.

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