

Writing Inclusive Service Descriptions

The first step in creating an inclusive National service program is to review your program's current service descriptions. Before you can begin to recruit, you need to be certain about the tasks that need to be accomplished, the environment where the participant will serve and other important details of the position.

A properly prepared service description will aid you in:

- Crafting your recruitment message to target potential National Service participants who possess the skills your program needs;
- Writing appropriate interview questions;
- Determining whether a person is qualified to perform the essential functions of the position;
- Identifying reasonable accommodations to enable a person with a disability to perform the essential functions.

When writing an inclusive service description, the position should be analyzed to determine the following:

- **Purpose** – the reason for the position;
- **Essential Functions** – the tasks or duties that are fundamental and critical to the performance of the position;
- **Marginal Functions** – those activities that are seldom or intermittently performed. The position does not exist to perform these functions and their removal would not fundamentally alter the nature, purpose, or result of the essential tasks to be accomplished by the National Service participants;
- **Setting** – the work station and/or conditions where the essential functions are to be carried out; and
- **Qualifications** – the minimal skills an individual must possess to perform essential functions.

It is helpful to describe the purpose and results of the essential functions (what needs to be accomplished) rather than HOW the function must be performed. Following are some questions to help you analyze each service description in your program.

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Purpose:

- What are the particular contributions of the position toward the accomplishment of the overall objectives of the organization?

Essential Functions:

- What three or four activities actually constitute the position? Does the position exist to perform these functions? Is each activity really necessary? For example, in order to perform essential duties, is it necessary to type, file, answer phones, and take dictation?
- What is the relationship between each task? Is there a specific sequence that the tasks must follow?
- Do the tasks necessitate specific physical activities such as sitting, standing, walking, lifting, carrying, etc?
- How many other people are available to perform an essential function? Can the performance of that function be distributed among any others?
- How much time is spent in performing each particular function? Are the less-frequently performed tasks as important to success as those done more frequently?
- What happens if the task is not completed in a certain time frame?
- Would removing an essential function fundamentally alter the overall purpose of the position?

Service Setting

- Is the setting compliant with ADA requirements? If not, what accommodation can be made to bring it into compliance or to change the setting?

Qualifications:

- Do the qualifications define the skills required to perform the essential functions and not the person who perform them?

The Attached Service Description Form will assist you in crafting an accurate, inclusive, service description.

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Service Description Form

Position Title:

Immediate Supervisor:

Supervisor's Title:

Phone:

Email:

Main Purpose of this Position:

Location(s) where service will be performed:

Machines, tools, electronic devices, communication devices, software, and other tools typically used to accomplish the tasks of this position:

Education, experience, or specialized training requirements:

Special conditions of service (if any):

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Position Duties: List both essential and marginal functions and their related tasks, starting with those that are the most important. A function is a distinct area of responsibility; a task is a particular work action performed to accomplish this function. Indicate the appropriate amount of time spent on each function, using percentages. The statements below are intended to describe the nature and level of work being performed within this position. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and tasks.

Percent of Time	Duties and Tasks - Essential Functions
	Essential Functions - the tasks or duties that are fundamental and critical to the performance of this position.

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Percent of Time	Duties and Tasks - Marginal Functions
	<p>Marginal Functions - those activities that are seldom or intermittently performed. The position does not exist to perform these functions and their removal would not fundamentally alter the nature, purpose, or result of the essential tasks to be accomplished by the National Service participant.</p>

Is a driver's license required to perform the essential functions of this position?

yes

no

Type of License:

Comments:

Can attendance hours be adjusted?

yes

no

Comments:

Type of supervision received:

Close Supervision

General Supervision

Off-Site Supervision

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List examples of written materials – such as correspondence, reports, or significant compositions – that the person in this position would be required to produce:

List examples of written materials – such as correspondence, reports, or significant compositions – that the person in this position would be required to access and comprehend:

Does this person in this position perform any of the following functions? If yes, provide examples:

a) Gather Information:

b) Identify Key Issues:

c) Analyze the impact of alternative solutions:

d) Make Recommendations:

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List contacts with other (internal and external) and describe the purpose and frequency (daily, weekly, occasionally) of contact:

Name/Title of Person/Organization	Purpose	Frequency
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Is this position subject to testing? If yes, list tests:

Is this position subject to a background check? If yes, list type of background checks:

Worksheet completed by:

Name

Title:

Date: