

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, CA

**SUBJECT: HR - Approve the Revised Class Specification for Buyer**

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Human Resources Director and the Civil Service Commission recommend that your Honorable Body approve the revised class specification for Buyer.

EXPENDITURE: None

**BACKGROUND**

The Buyer class specification was last revised in 1966 and the Finance Director requested a study of the classification .

The proposed class specification was approved by the Civil Service Commission at their meeting on February 8, 2010 and is before your Honorable Body for approval.

**ANALYSIS**

The study revealed that the class specification should be expanded to incorporate the full range of duties performed. The revised class specification reflects the current duties and responsibilities of the classification as well as the current format for class specifications used by City. Revision was required throughout the class specification.

The **Distinguishing Characteristics** section was added to show the differentiation between the Buyer classification and the Purchasing Manager classification. The **Supervision Exercised/Received** section was added to reflect reporting relationships for the classification.

The **Examples of Duties** section was modified to reflect the Essential Duties for all assignments.

The **Examples of Other Duties** section was added to reflect the full range of duties performed by this classification.

Several statements were added to the **Qualification Guidelines** section that reflect the Knowledge and Abilities required to perform the job duties of the position such as:

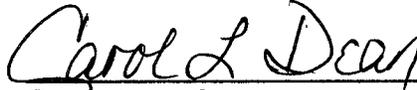
The **Experience and Education Section** was revised to more accurately describe the required experience and certification for the position as follows:

*Any combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities is qualifying. A typical way of obtaining the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities is:*

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Business or Public Administration or a related field and two years of progressively responsible experience purchasing materials, equipment, supplies and services in a municipal and/or high volume setting.

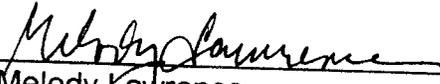
The **Special Requirements** and **Career Ladder** Sections were also added. The Special Requirements section reflects the physical requirements of the classification. The Career Ladder Information provides information about career movement for the classification.

Respectfully submitted,  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION



Carol Dean, Chair

ELAINE M. WINER  
Human Resources Director

By   
Melody Lawrence  
Human Resources Manager

CONCUR:



Elaine M. Winer  
Human Resources Director

NOTED:



LeRoy J. Jackson  
City Manager

**Attachments:**

- A. Civil Service Commission Meeting Item4, February 8, 2010

Commission Meeting  
February 8, 2010

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the Civil Service Commission  
City Hall  
Torrance, CA

**SUBJECT: Approve the Revised Class Specification for Buyer**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Human Resources Director recommends that your Honorable Body approve the revised class specification for Buyer and forward it to the City Council for approval.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Buyer class specification was last revised in 1966 and the Finance Director requested a study of the classification

The proposed class specification is submitted for your review and approval. The City has met and conferred with the Torrance Professional and Supervisory Association (TPSA) concurs in the recommendation before your Honorable Body.

### **ANALYSIS**

The study revealed that the class specification should be expanded to incorporate the full range of duties performed. The revised class specification reflects the current duties and responsibilities of the classification as well as the current format for class specifications used by City. Revision was required throughout the class specification.

The **Distinguishing Characteristics** section was added to show the differentiation between the Buyer classification and the Purchasing Manager classification. The **Supervision Exercised/Received** section was added to reflect reporting relationships for the classification.

The **Examples of Duties** section was modified to reflect the Essential Duties for all assignments. Duties performed when assigned to the specific assignment areas were added such as:

- Locates and evaluates sources of supply and determines the lowest responsible vendor.
- Interviews and evaluates vendors.
- Negotiates with vendors as required.
- Arrange for demonstration of products.
- Secures quotations and formal bids.
- Expedites and follows up on purchase orders.
- Monitors purchasing agreements to ensure vendor compliance.
- Ensures purchasing practices are in compliance with legal, professional and City established policies and procedures, the City Charter and Municipal Code.
- Reviews and processes requisitions, and places orders.

The **Examples of Other Duties** section was added to reflect the full range of duties performed by this classification.

Several statements were added to the **Qualification Guidelines** section that reflect the Knowledge and Abilities required to perform the job duties of the position such as:

**Knowledge of:**

- Market and economic trends and conditions related to procurement;
- Industry standards and practices for delivering products and services;
- Purchase contract development and administration.
- Public purchasing methods and procedures and sources of supplies;
- Methods of research and analysis;

**Ability to:**

- Write complex specifications, contracts and reports;
- Solicit competitive bids;
- Use good judgment and make sound decisions in accordance with established procedures and policies;
- Make accurate mathematical calculations;
- Analyze and evaluate detailed quotations, bids and proposals;
- Identify applicable contract elements based on the product or service being purchased;
- Maintain logs and data base information;
- Provide effective customer service in a pleasant, courteous and helpful manner even in difficult situations.

The **Experience and Education Section** was revised to more accurately describe the required experience and certification for the position as follows:

*Any combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities is qualifying. A typical way of obtaining the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities is:*

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Business or Public Administration or a related field and two years of progressively responsible experience purchasing materials, equipment, supplies and services in a municipal and/or high volume setting.

The **Special Requirements** and **Career Ladder** Sections were also added. The Special Requirements section reflects the physical requirements of the classification. The Career Ladder Information provides information about career movement for the classification.

Respectfully submitted,

By Melody Lawrence  
Melody Lawrence  
Human Resources Manager

CONCUR:

Elaine M. Winer  
Elaine M. Winer  
Human Resources Director

Bill Byron  
Bill Byron, TPSA  
President

NOTED:

Laura Lohnes  
Laura Lohnes  
Civil Service Manager

**Attachments:**

- A. Proposed Class Specification for Buyer
- B. Existing Class Specification for Buyer

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## Buyer

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### Definition

Under direction, performs professional level purchasing work and performs related work as required.

### Distinguishing Characteristics

The Buyer is distinguished from the Purchasing Manager in that the incumbent is not primarily responsible for the supervision of subordinate staff or for the oversight of the entire division. Incumbents perform a full range of complex tasks and work within a framework of established policies and procedures, the City Charter and Municipal Code with only occasional instruction or assistance. Work is reviewed upon completion and for overall results. Work involves frequent interpretation of policies, procedures and guidelines, and may involve development of recommendations consistent with directives, policies and regulations.

### Supervision Exercised/Received

Receives direction from the Purchasing Agent/Manager, Assistant Department Head or Department Head. May provide functional supervision to lower-level employees, but this task is ancillary to the primary focus of the classification.

### Examples of Essential Duties

*The following duties represent the principal job duties; however, they are not all-inclusive.*

- Purchases materials, supplies, equipment and services for use by City Departments.
- Locates and evaluates sources of supply and determines the lowest responsible vendor.
- Interviews and evaluates vendors.
- Negotiates with vendors as required.
- Arrange for demonstration of products.
- Secures quotations and formal bids.
- Expedites and follows up on purchase orders.
- Monitors purchasing agreements to ensure vendor compliance.
- Arranges for the sale or disposal of surplus property.
- Conducts surveys regarding purchasing practices and makes recommendations as appropriate.
- Ensures purchasing practices are in compliance with legal, professional and City established policies and procedures, the City Charter and Municipal Code.
- Reviews and processes requisitions, and places orders.
- Prepares reports and tabulations on materials and services, comparative prices and market trends.
- Researches and prepares purchase specifications.
- Examines and evaluates materials, supplies, equipment and services.
- Gains knowledge of the operations of City departments and provides guidance and training to city staff on purchasing processes.
- Assist in the resolution of accounting and receiving discrepancies; process claims with vendors for damaged materials; obtain credits where appropriate.

### Examples of Other Duties

*The following duties represent duties that are generally performed by this position, but are not considered to be principal job duties.*

- Attends meetings, workshops and seminars as required or appropriate.
- Keeps abreast of changing trends in public purchasing.

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- Performs related duties as required.
- May assume responsibility for the division in the absence of the Purchasing Agent/Manager

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### **Qualification Guidelines**

#### Knowledge of:

- Market and economic trends and conditions related to procurement;
- Industry standards and practices for delivering products and services;
- Purchase contract development and administration.
- English usage, spelling, grammar and punctuation;
- Business letter and report writing;
- Computer applications as they relate to areas assigned;
- Public purchasing methods and procedures and sources of supplies;
- Methods of research and analysis;
- Principles and practices of office management, and uses of office equipment and software applications.
- City codes and ordinances, and administrative rules and regulations affecting departmental operations.
- Public relations and customer service techniques, including telephone etiquette.
- City and Department Mission including strategic goals and objectives.
- General City operations.

#### Ability to:

- Write complex specifications, contracts and reports;
- Solicit competitive bids;
- Use good judgment and make sound decisions in accordance with established procedures and policies;
- Compose correspondence and reports independently;
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing, including clear and convincing oral presentations.
- Adhere to multiple deadlines and handle multiple projects;
- Understand and carry out assignments independently;
- Follow oral and written directions;
- Make accurate mathematical calculations;
- Analyze and evaluate detailed quotations, bids and proposals;
- Identify applicable contract elements based on the product or service being purchased;
- Maintain logs and data base information;
- Operate a personal computer and use applicable software.
- Maintain confidentiality and exercise sound judgment.
- Provide effective customer service in a pleasant, courteous and helpful manner even in difficult situations.
- Research, interpret, and apply policy and procedure, City ordinances, administrative rules and regulations, and/or legal compliance requirement.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with City employees, City Commissioners, public officials, private and community organizations and the public.
- Shift priorities as departmental workload demands require and meet deadlines.

#### **License or Certificate**

A valid California motor vehicle operator's license of the appropriate class.

To possess and maintain a certification as a Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM) certificate from the Institute of Supply Management is desirable.

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**Education and Experience**

*Any combination of education and experience that would provide the required knowledge and skills would be acceptable. A typical way to obtain the knowledge, skills and abilities would be:*

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Business or Public Administration or a related field and two years of *progressively responsible* experience *purchasing materials, equipment, supplies and services in a municipal and/or high volume setting.*

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**Special Requirements**

*Performance of the essential duties of this position includes the following physical demands and/or working conditions:*

Requires the ability to exert a small amount of physical effort in sedentary to light work involving moving from one area to another; requires sufficient hand/eye coordination to perform repetitive movements, such as typing, filing, and the use of commonly used office machines and supplies; may involve extensive VDT exposure. Tasks require visual perception and discrimination as well as oral communication ability.

Work is performed primarily indoors in an office environment, with frequent interruptions. Some work is performed off-site, visiting vendors and City facilities.

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**Career Ladder Information**

Experience gained in this classification may serve to meet the minimum requirements for promotion to Purchasing Agent/Manager.

**BUYER****DEFINITION**

Under general supervision to assist in the central purchasing, receiving and storing of supplies services equipment, and materials for use by City Departments; and to perform related work as required.

**EXAMPLES OF WORK**

- Purchases, receives, and supervises the storing of supplies, services, and equipment within budgetary and legal limitations;
- Locates sources of supply;
- Secures quotations and informal bids;
- Inspects and accepts supplies;
- Expedites and follows up purchase orders; conducts vendor survey work;
- Reviews and processes requisitions;
- Prepares reports and tabulations on materials and services, comparative prices and market trends;
- Assists superiors in preparing purchase specifications, and in examining and evaluating; confers with department heads on purchasing matters.

**LICENSE REQUIREMENT**

A valid California motor vehicle operator's license of the appropriate class.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS****Knowledge of**

Principles, methods, and procedures of governmental purchasing; supplies, materials, and equipment used by a City;  
Legal aspects of bidding and contract procedures;  
Inventory control and storage.

**Ability to**

Prepare bid specifications;  
Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with city officials, employees, and vendors.

**EXPERIENCE**

One year of recent experience in professional purchasing work.

**EDUCATION**

Graduation from an accredited college, including courses in business administration, public administration, accounting, or a related field.