

Position Classification Flysheet for Consumer Safety Inspection Series, GS-1862

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes technical positions concerned with planning and conducting inspections, investigation, and related sampling and data collection activities in support of the laws and regulations protecting consumers from foods, drugs therapeutic devices, cosmetics, fabrics, toys, and household products that are impure, unsanitary, unwholesome, ineffective, improperly labeled, or dangerous. These positions require a practical knowledge of the agency's regulations and programs; a practical knowledge of chemical and biological processes and analytical methods; the characteristics of regulated products; pertinent manufacturing, storage, and distribution methods; and techniques of inspection, sampling, and field testing.

This series supersedes the Food and Drug Inspection Technician Series, GS-1862.

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

Consumer safety inspectors perform inspections, sampling, and other data collection functions relating to regulated products. These products include foods, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, toys, sports equipment, flammable fabrics, and hazardous substances (a broad category that includes such things as lead based paints, household cleaning products, and detergents). The primary purpose of their work is to obtain information needed to protect consumers from products that are impure, unwholesome, ineffective, improperly labeled, or in some other way harmful or misleading.

Consumer safety inspectors provide support for professional consumer safety officers by carrying out duties that can be performed without full professional scientific training. The primary requirements in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities common throughout the inspection occupation are:

- practical knowledge of chemical and biological processes and analytical methods;
- practical knowledge of regulated commodities and their components or ingredients, and manufacturing, processing, and storage methods and techniques;
- knowledge of the pertinent aspect of laws, regulations, and programs relating to their assignments;
- ability to utilize the methods and techniques of conducting inspections and interviews; and
- skill at collecting samples and performing field analyses and sensory examinations of products.

These knowledge, skills, and abilities are acquired primarily through experience accompanied by training in the use of some basic scientific equipment and techniques. The analyses and

examinations consumer safety inspectors perform can be learned without prior preparation in the sciences.

Duties generally assigned to consumer safety inspectors include:

- collecting samples of products for laboratory analysis;
- conducting recall effectiveness checks, which include interviewing managers and inspecting facilities;
- following up routine consumer complaints relating to such things as filth or foreign objects in products, improper labeling, and deceptive packaging, which present no serious hazard to health or safety;
- conducting those inspections, for which professional scientific evaluations are not required, of manufacturing, storage, and distribution facilities;
- inspecting and collecting samples of imported products, which must comply with the same regulations as domestic products, at points of entry, usually piers, sometimes airports;
- inspecting carrier conveyances and determining sanitation ratings on the basis of established environmental sanitation and health standards for sources of water, food, and milk, and waste disposal; and
- presenting evidence obtained during an inspection to support legal actions. May present testimony in court.

EXCLUSIONS

The following types of positions are excluded from this series:

1. Professional scientific positions that involve inspections, investigative, and other regulatory work to enforce laws and regulations pertaining to foods, drugs, cosmetics, and related products are included in the [Consumer Safety Series, GS-0696](#). Consumer safety officers conduct those inspections and investigations that require professional scientific knowledge to evaluate aspects such as chemical formulation and processes, laboratory analytical methods, scientific research or investigation programs, and conditions affecting the growth of microorganisms.
2. Positions engaged primarily in inspecting meat, poultry, fish, and related products in order to determine compliance with standards of wholesomeness and purity are included in the [Food Inspection Series, GS-1863](#).
3. Positions engaged in inspecting food products primarily for the purpose of grading are included in the [Agricultural Commodity Grading Series, GS-1980](#).

4. Positions engaged in inspection of persons, carriers, and cargos participating in foreign transportation primarily to determine whether communicable or quarantinable diseases are present are included in the [Public Health Quarantine Inspection Series, GS-1864](#).
5. Positions engaged primarily in support work relating to accident prevention, including inspecting safety conditions, investigating and compiling data on accidents, and providing information on safety standards and techniques are included in the [Safety Technician Series, GS-0019](#).

TITLES

- Consumer Safety Inspection Aid is the authorized title for positions at GS-1/3.
- Consumer Safety Inspector is the authorized title for nonsupervisory positions at GS-4 and above.
- Supervisory Consumer Safety Inspector is the authorized title for positions performing supervisory duties and covered by the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#).

EVALUATION NOTES

This material does not include grade-level criteria. Positions in this series should be classified by comparison with standards for various inspection and technician occupations and application of sound classification judgment. The standard for the professional [Consumer Safety Series, GS-0696](#), will be helpful in evaluating inspector positions at the higher grade levels.