

RESEARCH ANALYST SERIES

II. DEFINITIONS

RESEARCH ANALYST

This is either an entry or objective level work for positions performing research, statistical analysis, and/or statistical information reporting (e.g., utilizing SAS or a similar statistical package). Positions are allocated to this level as either: (1) the entry level for positions that will eventually progress to the Research Analyst – Senior level and perform the work outlined at the Senior level, as well as progress from close to general supervision; or (2) the objective level for positions that spend a significant amount of time using survey and statistical procedures to collect and process data for routine, one time, or special projects. Positions at the objective level, meet the following criteria:

The **scope** of work may be defined by a supervisor or other technical lead within the work unit; *work is commonly focused on a specific survey or set of data*. Data is easily gathered and a limited range of standard procedures or methods is applied to analyze the data. Findings and statistics are verified for validity/accuracy and are shared within the agency; factual information may also be shared with specific stakeholders as requested (e.g., business sector representatives, media, industry meetings, etc.) via printed, electronic, or public presentations. Positions may be proficient in SAS or utilize existing or previously designed software reporting systems to extrapolate data.

The **impact** of positions at this level is often limited to a specific phase, major segment of a large project, or a complete project of a smaller scale, where the data results are not open to interpretation or few variables exist. Work results support other staff responsible for the entire project/system; work does not heavily impact the allocation of funds or extend across a wide range of program areas. The consequence of error is limited to the immediate program area or project, and errors can be more readily resolved.

The **complexity** of positions at this level involves analysis of problems or situations involving a variety of general or established standards, policies, or methodologies. Objectives are typically well-defined, recurring or predictable, and a comparison of facts with standards. Special or one-time projects may necessitate the use of more complex standard analytical approaches or techniques, but this is not a regular assignment or is performed under the direction of a more experienced analyst. Interactions are typically within the organization to plan and coordinate work efforts, provide technical assistance or interpretations, and to work towards a shared goal.

These positions may work under the leadership of a Senior or Advanced level Analyst.

RESEARCH ANALYST – SENIOR

Positions allocated to this objective level perform a variety of research, statistical analysis, and/or statistical information reporting, and serve as an expert in SAS, including extracting and manipulating data sets. Work includes a combination of semi-routine or specialized assignments as well as work for larger projects, a specific program, or a significant segment of a program on a regular basis. Work is completed under general supervision. Positions at this level may work as leadworkers to other Research Analysts. Positions meet the factor definitions below:

The **scope** of the work involves applying a wide range of research, statistical analysis, or data processing/systems analysis techniques, to complete major segments of large projects/programs, where

the analyst serves as a specialist for that program or a particular segment or phase of a program (e.g., the design of surveys and analysis of survey data, development of measures, etc.). Entire research projects may be assigned to positions where results depend on the analyst's development of new approaches or methods and the establishment of many of the criteria or presuppositions upon which project conclusions/recommendations depend. Positions may be assigned some outreach or educational tasks to share information with specific stakeholders (e.g., business sector representatives, media, industry meetings, etc.); positions will develop materials used in outreach activities.

Positions may develop and/or operate statistical information reporting systems, and/or may write language that allows databases to interact or allows users to extract data via queries. Positions may also serve as a trainer and specialist in reporting systems or analyses to other unit staff or external parties who may utilize a specific program areas' systems/tools.

The **impact** of the work products or services involve: a wide range of different programs or facilities, a specific program, or a significant segment of a program; controls the allocation of millions of dollars through the design of allocation formulas or providing the data necessary to administer such formulas; and provides information essential to key business decisions of a large number of private firms or external entities. The information compiled may be requested or used by internal management staff in the planning, budgeting, and evaluation of program areas. As a program area specialist, positions provide technical advice and consultation. Work product may affect the way others conduct studies or provide services; the consequence of error is increased and crosses program lines.

The **complexity** involves: relating the assigned problem to broad factors such as theoretical, public, or policy issues; the information needs of multiple users; or the operation of a variety of other systems or programs as well as testing different technical approaches and assumptions to determine the most appropriate methodology. Positions often develop original data or adapt data developed for other purposes. Advanced techniques are used to address multi-variable problems. Activities include designing multi-user, multi-purpose statistical information reporting systems and/or directing multi-disciplinary research projects stemming from a large, specific, or significant segment of a program. Complicating factors may include conflicting/ambiguous objectives or specifications, the need to conceptualize and define previously undefined variables, use of not yet standardized techniques, conflicts between technical requirements, or other similar factors.

Positions may participate or provide input to a project or research that results in the development of new policies, models, or programs, but do not have responsibility for overall implementation or administration of these new items.

Interactions regularly include the general public, individuals or groups, and staff at lower levels of other organizations. Internal contacts include both staff within, and outside of, the work unit and may be outside of the chain of command. The role of parties involved in a project may be initially unclear or frequently maintain varying perspectives or approaches in supporting a common goal; occasional controversial projects may be assigned.

RESEARCH ANALYST – ADVANCED

Positions allocated to this title definition serve in an advanced, full performance capacity, under general supervision. Positions at this level are considered to be the overall area expert or serve as the technical resource over a work unit of other Research Analysts. In addition to the research and analytical work described at the Senior level, positions must perform work in support of policy analysis, planning, or program evaluation. Positions at this level may work as leadworkers to other Research Analysts.

Positions responsible for statistical information reporting systems (or the analysis of IS systems) consider information needs analysis, development of detailed system specifications, design of system elements

(e.g., files, edits, coding instructions), liaison with users or data sources, testing & debugging of changes, and interpretation of data reported.

An expert at this level provides high level consultation to management, serving as the key point of contact for managers as well as other internal/external stakeholders and serve as a decision-maker responsible for implementation of recommendations, policy, or related program changes.

Positions further meet the factors as described below:

The **scope** involves administering a research and statistical analysis program, involving the collection and analysis of a wide range of data, including extensive use of SAS, Access, Excel, and other statistical and database programs at the consummate expert level. Positions oversee or manage a significant program research area and/or statistical information reporting program, establish program objectives and standards, decide what studies should be conducted or reporting systems developed, and provide authoritative consultation to agency management on all matters relevant to the program function.

Positions perform independent research utilizing all elements of the process from design of the study, to data collection, analysis, and publication of findings. To execute research studies, positions must have extensive knowledge of major programs.

Positions may also serve as a trainer and specialist in reporting systems or analyses to other unit staff or external parties who may utilize systems/tools from a specific program area. Positions may also oversee outreach activities being conducted by other unit staff.

The **impact** of the work products or services for which the position is responsible provide comprehensive information essential to the planning, budgeting, or evaluation of a number of major state government programs or a significant agency program with multiple, large user groups (e.g., large segment of the general public, etc.) and are the primary source of information for the public, the private sector and other levels of government on subjects such as: economic activity, health and vital statistics, transportation facilities and usage, state agricultural production, or other comparable areas. Work products or data provided to other levels of government are often used by additional user groups of the other government entity, so the impact is wide-reaching and errors are difficult to resolve. Consequences of decisions are not always known.

The **complexity** of positions at this level involves deciding what needs to be done, by addressing a variety of previously undefined issues, considering a wide range of facts and conditions external and internal to the organization (e.g., interest group sentiment, interagency relationships, budget constraints, top management's goals), and coordinating activities with a wide range of other programs to set policy for the program or develop policy recommendations. Problems may be defined only in terms of broad legislation or policy directions from top management, and involve multiple, often conflicting, goals and priorities.

Positions will be assigned to oversee the administration of new policies, models, and/or programs within the organization. Positions will serve as a resource to management and policy makers, providing comments on program direction.

Interactions regularly include program managers in other agencies, representatives of interest groups or private organizations, officials of other levels of government, legislative leaders, or other similar representatives of outside organizations. Divergent goals or priorities often exist among the contacts and adversarial relationships are often common or unpredictable.

II. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications required for these positions will be determined at the time of recruitment.

III. RELATED POSITION TITLES
Program and Planning Analyst