



OFFICE of HUMAN RESOURCES

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Essential Duties

A job description is a useful, plain-language tool that explains the tasks, duties, function and responsibilities of a position. It details who performs a specific type of work, how that work is to be completed, and the frequency and the purpose of the work as it relates to the organization's mission and goals. Job descriptions are used for a variety of reasons, such as determining salary levels, conducting performance reviews, clarifying missions, establishing titles and pay grades, and creating reasonable accommodation controls, and as a tool for recruiting. Job descriptions are useful in career planning, offering training exercises and establishing legal requirements for compliance purposes. A job description gives an employee a clear and concise resource to be used as a guide for job performance. Likewise, a supervisor can use a job description as a measuring tool to ensure that the employee is meeting job expectations.

Essential functions are **the basic job duties that an employee must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation.**

A job function may be determined as "*Essential*" when one or more of the following apply:

- a. The position exists primarily to perform the function(s) and the absence of the function(s) would alter the job.*
- b. The number of other employees among whom the performance of the job function(s) can be distributed is limited.*
- c. The function(s) requires a highly specialized skill, expertise or ability to perform the function(s).*

The Office of Human Resources maintains responsibility for obtaining position data, developing position descriptions, evaluating positions using established guidelines, and recommending pay levels. This applies to all clerical/support and administrative/professional positions with the exception of the president, vice presidents, academic deans, executive assistant to the president, coaches, academic associate vice presidents, academic and medical education associate and assistant deans, and other positions exempted upon implementation.

Individual position descriptions are prepared for all clerical/support and administrative/professional positions as defined in the Compensation Plan. These descriptions are a synopsis of the information provided by questionnaires (completed by the incumbents and their supervisors), and are maintained in the Position Description Management module of the eJobs system. Extensive changes in a position's duties and responsibilities should be discussed with the Office of Human Resources prior to the assignment of the new duties and responsibilities.

A **job audit** is a formal review of the current duties and responsibilities assigned to a position to ensure appropriate classification within the classified pay program. An audit should be requested if the duties and responsibilities of a position have significantly changed. A pre-audit should be requested for the creation of a new position.

The job audit/pre-audit process looks solely at the duties and responsibilities assigned to a position.

Incumbent employee performance is not a factor in an audit. When completing the Position Classification Questionnaire, supervisors need to consider the job's responsibilities and duties that are essential and are a regular part of the job.

Identification of functions that are essential to a position, and a written job description prepared before advertising or interviewing for a job will be considered by the EEOC as evidence of essential functions.

Other kinds of evidence that EEOC will consider include:

- * the actual work experience of present or past employees in the job,
- * the time spent performing a function, and
- * the consequences of not requiring that an employee perform a function.

Reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to a job or work environment that permits a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the job application process, to perform the essential functions of a job, or to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those enjoyed by employees without disabilities.

Reasonable accommodation also must be made to enable an individual with a disability to participate in the application process, and to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those available to other employees.

For details please view the [ADA and the Search Process](#) supplemental information in the Recruitment and Hiring Standards and the [Compensation Plan Guidelines](#).