

Sample Position Description for Temporary Positions

Senior Advisor to the Secretary

This is a temporary SES position established to facilitate the Department's transition to the new Presidential Administration.

The incumbent serves as a Senior Advisor to the new Secretary on sensitive issues and critical matters pertaining to policies, priorities, and program direction of the Department and to its structure, organization, and operation. Reviews and analyses will encompass key, emerging issues of direct and substantial interest and concern to the Secretary and the Administration. Once assigned studies are completed and major recommendations are made, the position will no longer be needed.

Major Duties:

The incumbent serves as a key senior analyst and advisor, providing expert executive level advice, guidance, and support to the Secretary on key mission-critical issues, initiatives, and agency functions.

- Conducts numerous complex and high-priority special assignments at the direction of the Secretary/Agency Head involving extensive research, fact-finding and program improvements on a variety of high-level subjects of critical importance to the Department. Determines requisite nature of background information and data, levels of coordination and consultation, format of presentation, etc. Assures that the Secretary is provided with pertinent information for decision-making on highly sensitive and potentially controversial issues. Recommendations arising from the studies and analyses are instrumental in the direction and development of major policy, program, and legislative initiatives.
- Advises on the implications of proposed, new, or revised policies, regulations, and legislative proposals and assesses their impact on agency mission and organizational structure.
- Coordinates and consults with senior management officials of the Department, other agencies, and external stakeholders, as appropriate, regarding major initiatives, actions accomplished, milestones to be achieved, and any issues or problems of significance.

Knowledge Required: An extensive background in and understanding of the Department's key mission and functions and proven record of progressively responsible work experience at the top executive and managerial levels in government and/or the private sector. Knowledge of management principles pertaining to large government and corporate organizations. Demonstrated ability to lead change, lead people, and achieve results through building partnerships and coalitions.

Supervisory Controls: Receives very broad guidance from the Secretary. Incumbent is expected to work with an exceptional degree of independence and initiative to reach conclusions and solve problems. Work is reviewed for accomplishment of broad objectives.

Scope and Effect of Work: The purpose of the work is to plan and conduct analyses of vital policies that are of Department-wide interest and scope; to generate and apply new hypotheses and concepts in the evaluation of complex matters; and to organize and present options and recommendations for use by the Secretary. The work affects the activities and operations of the entire Department and potentially national priorities.

Nature and Purpose of Contacts: Contacts include top officials of the Department and other Executive Agencies; members of Congress and representatives of Congressional committees; members of the White House staff; and other external departmental stakeholders. Contacts are made to resolve controversial, high level issues, and carry out the work of the Office of the Secretary.