

## OSHA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST SPECIFICATIONS AND DUTIES

### Introduction

As an OSHA Technical Assistance Specialist (OTAS) the incumbent will be temporarily employed by a state consultation project (21(d)) and supervised and directed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The OTAS will be assigned to a disaster area and will work to provide technical assistance interventions to employers and employees engaged in response and clean-up activities resulting from a natural disaster such as a hurricane, tornado, flood, earthquake or other incident. The incumbent will identify hazardous conditions through application of safety and/or industrial hygiene techniques, providing information and assistance to achieve safe working environments.

### Duties

Serves as an OSHA resource in conducting technical assistance interventions primarily addressing hazards related to emergency response activities. These include debris removal and reduction, demolition operations, infrastructure recovery, and may include maritime operations. Incumbent assures that employers correct hazardous situations, and may on occasion refer an employer to OSHA for enforcement action. This includes evaluating exposure to hazardous situations, taking the necessary steps to evaluate the hazards, including sampling, and providing the employer and employees the necessary information and training to assure the hazard is corrected.

### Knowledge

The OTAS shall possess comprehensive knowledge of safety and occupational health principles and practices, techniques and procedures, regulations and standards sufficient to enable the OTAS to identify and evaluate occupational hazards, especially those unique to disaster response. Incumbent must have completed ICS 200 training, and exhibit the skills and knowledge required as evidenced by education, experience and/or professional certification. Specific training or experience in disaster site response, emergency response, hazardous waste applications or other specialized training will be considered affirmatively. Bilingual skills are desired.

### Supervisory Controls

The OSHA area director or team leader will assign the OTAS to a particular site or geographic location. The OTAS will independently or as part of a team, carry out the technical assistance work, coordinating with others as necessary, and exercise considerable judgment and discretion in applying methods and procedures to resolve complex safety and health issues. Findings and recommendations are accepted as technically correct. The OTAS will record intervention activities and findings on specified forms electronically.

## Resources

Incumbent must have working knowledge of the following:

- OSHA standards and regulations
- National consensus standards
- Industry practices

In addition, the specialist uses resourcefulness in deviating from the standards and established practices to properly evaluate unconventional or new, hazardous work operations, materials and recently introduced equipment and machinery. The specialist must exercise experienced judgment to modify past practices and devise new methods to control hazardous exposures.

## Complexity

Technical assistance interventions include difficult hazard assessments in a highly charged, emotional and fast paced environment. There are layers of interaction with other federal agencies, the Incident Commander and the media where controversy may be expected, thus the incumbent's actions must be technically assured.

## Personal Contacts

Personal contacts within OSHA include safety engineers, safety and occupational health specialists, and industrial hygienists. Contacts during the course of conducting intervention work will include other federal agency representatives such as FEMA, HHS, the U.S. Corp of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, EPA, and the U.S. Coast Guard. There may also be interaction with various state and local government officials, as well as various security authorities.

## Physical Demands

The performance of technical assistance interventions requires frequent walking, standing, climbing, crouching, stretching and lifting of moderately heavy items such as equipment or boxes. Incumbent will be required to wear personal protective equipment including hard hat, safety glasses, reflective vest, hearing protection and respirator. Incumbent must be able to provide proof of a fit test within the most recent year. Incumbent must also provide a letter from his/her personal physician as evidence of their ability to carry out the work described.

## Work Environment

Technical assistance interventions are often carried out in adverse conditions. Heat, dust, noise, long work days, and frequent driving in unfamiliar, unmarked territory and often poor road conditions may exist. Additionally, there may be conditions of poor sanitation, and less than ideal lodging and eating facilities.