**MONTANA JUDICIAL BRANCH**

**Accounting Support Specialist**

**Nature of Work:**

Mentors and provides accounting support for various accounting functions. Duties include: reviewing and approving documents; providing financial information to management; working as a liaison with vendors, district court, youth court and drug court personnel as well as other department personnel. This position will be involved in special projects involving research and analysis of financial data and transactions.

Prepares financial reports and cash reconciliations for juvenile probation offices’ non-treasury restitution accounts to include bank statement balancing, clear check tracking, and determining the pending payouts. Analyze all transactions in such cash accounts and record on SABHRS accordingly. This position must have a thorough knowledge of the Juvenile Court Assessments Tracking System (JCATS), and provides guidance to the juvenile probation staff on financial aspects of the system. This position performs complex technical reconciliations of Juvenile Delinquency Intervention Program and Prevention Intervention Funds between JCATS and SABHRS to ensure proper spending and reporting of these funding sources which exceeds $4 million dollars per year.

The individual in this position develops and implements internal policies, procedures and systems that provide internal controls in the accounting system and implements changes based on audit recommendations and revisions to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Maintains a critical working relationship with other work units within the Court Administrator’s Office, other programs within the branch, and other state agency personnel. Judicial Branch programs include 33 Juvenile Probation Offices, 46 District Court Judges and staff, Drug Courts, the Law Library, Water Court, Supreme Court, Clerk of Court’s Office, and various boards and commissions. The individual in this position works independently with minimal supervision. This position reports to the Accounting Supervisor. Consults with the Financial Services Director or Accounting & Fiscal Policy Analysts when questions arise.

**Supervision exercised:**

No direct supervision, however, mentoring of Financial Specialist and PIF Specialists is exercised.

**Essential Functions:**

* Develop and maintain daily queries for Financial Services Division.
* Process incoming and outgoing inter-unit journals using SABHRS. Review and approve IUs entered by PIF Specialists and Financial Specialist.
* As needed, process daily deposits for all Judicial Branch entities using SABHRS.
* Reviews and approves deposits entered by Financial Specialist and PIF Specialists.
* Receive, verify, code and record attorney claims for payment using SABHRS. Insure accuracy of invoice and communicate any discrepancy with payment.
* Research and analyze financial transactions that error out and develop corrective action plan.
* Responsible to change SABHRS structure through set up of speedcharts, chartfields, and orgs using significant knowledge of current structure and how changes needed affect current use of SABHRS for the Judicial Branch.
* Balance Fees, PIF, and JDIP spreadsheets with SABHRS and JCATS monthly. Uses knowledge of JCATS and SABHRS to investigate and correct any discrepancies between systems.
* Responsible for all 1099 information corrections, adjustments and other problems related to 1099s for outside vendors. This duty is instrumental to making sure that the Judicial Branch is reporting accurate tax information to the IRS for all vendors paid by the Judicial Branch. Errors in completing this duty can result in penalties for incorrect tax reporting.
* Develop balancing points for financial processes.
* Manage workload to ensure daily incoming invoices are accurately paid within acceptable timelines for the complex programs under the Judicial Branch.
* Sets standards for excellence and utilizes knowledge of complex coding structure with multiple funding sources.
* Problem solves discrepancies and corrects errors.
* Identifies issues and formulates resolution while validating data.
* Access and retrieve data from automated systems.
* Develop and maintain spreadsheets to assist in financial processes.
* Update and maintain accounting applications to include data bases, systems and procedures.
* Coordinate procedures and processes among vendors, district court and drug court personnel, juvenile probation officers and staff.
* Provide department-wide support services for accounting, cash collection, purchasing and E-Market, pro-card, and cell phone usage.
* Plan, coordinate, and determine bill paying priority for accounts payable. Set tasks and monitor process.
* Lead worker in the prioritization of the workload of Financial Specialist
* Reviews and verifies accuracy of Financial Specialist and PIF Specialists projects and work assignments.
* Reviews and approves vouchers using SABHRS entered by Financial Specialist and PIF Specialists.
* Reviews and approves employee travel claims entered by Financial Specialist and PIF Specialists.
* Mentors Financial Specialist and PIF Specialists in best business practices.
* Provide coordination and direction to Financial Specialist and PIF Specialists as needed.
* Responsible to analyze fixed operating budgets for all District Court and Youth Court offices. Provides options for discussion with Financial Services Director to load fixed operating budgets at the beginning of each fiscal year. Uses spreadsheets in required format to upload budgets into SABHRS. Provides each district court and youth court office with a monthly budget status report using analysis skills to determine reasons for projected shortfalls and/or deficits and provides advice/support to all offices in fixed operating spending matters.
* Perform cash reconciliation for 27 non-treasury restitution accounts to include bank statement balancing, monitoring outstanding checks, and determining pending payouts.
* Analyze restitution and fees banking transactions to ensure procedures are being followed.
* Audit restitution collections and deposits from juvenile probation offices to ensure proper internal controls are being followed, and determine if in compliance with deposit guidelines. Notifies Financial Services Director when offices deviate from guidelines.
* Determine year-end balance of property held in trust and make necessary adjustment to SABHRS to ensure that proper balance is recorded in Judicial Branch financial statements.
* Coordinate uncashed checks/abandoned property process for the 27 restitution accounts. Act as liaison with Department of Revenue for abandoned property and prepares and uploads annual information as required.
* Accountable for all aspects of accounting for Pro-Card transactions. This includes application processing, analysis of Pro-Card logs, and reviewing and correcting coding. Supervises and approves coding into the SABHRS system for all credit card purchases for over 100 Judiciary employee Pro-Card holders. Responsible to watch for possible inappropriate use of pro cards and notifying Financial Services Director of any suspect transactions.
* Responsible for performing lead payroll duties as needed; this includes auditing timesheets for over 450 Judicial Branch employees; advising employees and supervisors about appropriate use of leave codes, holidays, etc; entering or approving short-term worker timesheets, taxable meal expenses and differential pay; calculating terminating employee’s payouts; working with central payroll when issues arise; verification of Judicial Branch payroll.

**Knowledge, Abilities and Skills:**

Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of accounting and budgeting; generally accepted accounting principles.

Thorough knowledge of government budgeting and accounting systems, functions, and operations; and a progressively responsible knowledge of state and branch accounting policies and procedures.

Extensive skills in reconciling accounts, identifying and resolving errors and discrepancies.

Extensive skills in managing multiple projects under inflexible deadlines.

Extensive skills in general office software (e.g., Word, Excel, etc.), and specialized system applications (e.g., SABHRS, JCATS).

Ability to develop solutions and alternatives to a variety of budget and accounting problems.

Ability to interpret, apply, and explain state and branch accounting policies and technical procedures to others.

Ability to resolve procedural, technical, and operational problems.

Ability to maintain confidentiality on account records and processes; and communicate effectively with other staff, vendors, and the public.

Ability to understand cause and effect relationships, to recognize similarities and differences in situations and to apply accounting theory and/or basic skills to help make effective decisions or to come up with new ways to accomplish a task.

Ability to break problems into components parts, consider and organize parts in a systematic way, and look for underlying causes through the consequences of different courses of action.

Must have the ability to plan, organize, and mentor the work of others; to provide direction and coordination; and to communicate clear objectives.

Must establish and maintain effective working relationships with Financial Services Division staff, attorneys, district court and drug court personnel, juvenile probation officers and staff, other state and local government agencies, and outside vendors to provide explanations, coordinate payments, gather information, respond to inquiries, and resolve complaints.

**Working Conditions:**

Work is performed primarily in an office setting, and requires frequent use of personal computers, telephone, calculator and copier. May experience levels of stress during peak workload periods such as increased demands created during fiscal year end. Must be able to lift up to 20-pound boxes.

**Qualifications:**

The above knowledge, skills and abilities are typically acquired through a combination of education, experience or training equivalent to a Bachelor’s Degree in Accounting, Business Administration or closely related field; three years of progressively responsible accounting experience, including at least two years of SABHRS experience. Must have considerable experience in the use of Excel.