



Town of Chester Town Accountant Job Posting

Last Updated: 9/22/2026

Approved:

Position Title:	Town Accountant	Grade:
Department	Accounting	Hourly Rate: \$24.50-\$28.00
Reports to:	Town Administrator/Select Board	Up to 24 hours per week
Status:	Salary Exempt – Non-Union	

SCOPE OF WORK

The Town Accountant performs professional accounting work of an administrative, supervisory, and participatory nature, with primary responsibility for maintaining the Town's overall fiscal health. Duties include, but are not limited to, maintaining the Town's General Ledger, processing accounts payable and payroll, monitoring and reconciling expenditures against approved budgetary appropriations, classifying revenues, and preparing a variety of financial reports in compliance with applicable local, state (MGL Chapter 41, Sections 50–61), and federal laws and regulations. The position is also responsible for maintaining accurate financial records, auditing departmental accounts, preparing and submitting annual reports to the Commonwealth; and providing the Town with comprehensive reports of all receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

SUPERVISION

Under administrative direction, the employee works within established policies, goals, and objectives, develops short-range plans and performance standards, and assumes direct accountability for departmental results. The employee consults with the Town Administrator or other designated supervisor only when clarification, interpretation, or exceptions to policy are required, or as otherwise requested. The position exercises independent judgment and authority in the development of departmental policies, goals, objectives, and budgets, and is expected to resolve conflicts and coordinate activities with other departments or agencies as necessary.

JUDGEMENT AND COMPLEXITY

Guidelines provide limited direction for performing the work and may take the form of administrative or organizational policies, general principles, regulations, legislation, or directives relevant to a specific department or functional area. The position requires extensive judgment and creativity to develop new methods or adapt existing approaches to achieve objectives or address new or unusual requirements within the framework of

established guidelines and policies. The employee is recognized as the authority in interpreting these guidelines and determining their proper application.

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

Relationships include interactions with co-workers, vendors, the public, peers from other organizations, and representatives of professional associations. The employee serves as a spokesperson for the Town on matters of significance, including departmental practices, procedures, regulations, and guidelines. The position may require discussing sensitive or potentially controversial issues, where tact and diplomacy are essential to maintain cooperation and prevent friction.

RECEIVED

Under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen, the employee plans and performs regular work in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, established operating standards, and prior training. The position carries substantial responsibility for determining the sequence and timing of actions and exercises considerable independence in planning and organizing the department's daily activities, including selecting appropriate work methods. The employee applies experienced judgment to resolve most routine or unusual problems by adapting methods or interpreting instructions as necessary. Instructions for new assignments or special projects generally consist of stated objectives, deadlines, and priorities. Technical or policy issues, as well as changes in procedures, are discussed with the supervisor; however, the employee is expected to independently plan, organize, and carry work through to completion.

EXERCISED

The employee, as a regular and ongoing responsibility of the position, is accountable for the direction and success of departmental programs and activities. The Department Head is responsible for analyzing program objectives, determining the necessary work operations to achieve them, estimating required financial resources, allocating available funds, and reporting periodically on the status and achievement of departmental goals. The Department Head typically develops or recommends the department's organizational structure, operating guidelines, and work processes. The position also prepares, formulates, and defends operating budgets and ensures the effective use of departmental funds. In addition, the Department Head coordinates program efforts within the department and with other departments, evaluates work in terms of program objectives, prepares progress reports, and establishes the department's operating practices..

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

An employee in this position may be called upon to do any or all of the following essential functions. These examples do not include all of the duties which the employee may be expected to perform. To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential function satisfactorily.

- Maintains comprehensive financial records for the Town including cash books, general ledger, general journal, and subsidiary ledgers in accordance with GAAP and UMAS.
- Accountable for all general ledger accounts involving revenue and expenditure accounts for all town departments, which involve cash, property taxes, liens, deferred taxes, motor vehicle excise tax, betterments, agency payable, tax titles, reserve fund balances, special revenue funds, revolving funds, trust funds, water and electric enterprise accounts.
- Oversee the preparation of warrants and the processing of bills to be paid. Processes accounts payable and denies payment of any inappropriate bills in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
- Responsible for the preparation of the fiscal year-end balance sheet, tax rate recap, schedule A (and other DOR reports), year-end transfers, appropriation and financial reports as requested by the Selectboard and Finance Committee.
- Balance and reconcile the general ledger to bank accounts, grants, receivables, trust funds, etc. with the treasurer and other applicable departments.
- Prepare journal entries, including commitments, abatements, and adjustments, to maintain and reconcile the general ledger and address variances or deficits as needed.
- Oversees the Town's annual financial audit of town with outside auditors.
- Required to attend training seminars or workshops to stay abreast of changes in local, state or federal laws or regulations applicable to municipal accounting.
- May include more as deemed necessary by the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen.
- Participate in weekly meetings with the Town Administrator

REQUIREMENTS

Bachelor's degree in accounting, or a closely related field; a minimum of five years general ledger accounting experience, preferably in the municipal field; with municipal financial software applications (SoftRight), policies pertaining to the town's payroll, bill paying, and employee leave time, or any combination of education, training and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.

Knowledge of

Thorough knowledge of municipal financial laws and regulations, accounting and auditing principles, practices and procedures; thorough knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles, promulgation's of UMAS, Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and GAAP accounting standards and applicable Massachusetts General Laws, regarding finance, insurance and procurement; knowledge of municipal budgetary functions; knowledge of financial software applications; thorough knowledge of the operations of town departments.

Ability to

Ability to develop effective working relationships with department personnel, subordinates and with the general public; ability to express oneself clearly and concisely

orally and in writing. Ability to use office equipment efficiently. Ability to take on multiple tasks in a detailed, organized manner.

Skill in

Excellent organizational and detail skills; excellent data processing skill in the use of personal computers and financial software including word processing and spreadsheet applications. Excellent analytical skills. Proficient customer service skills. Proficient oral and written communication skills.

Special Requirements

Massachusetts Accountants & Auditors Certification is preferred within one or (3) year of appointment. As a condition of employment, must complete a drug test, CORI check.

Physical Demands

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the position's essential functions.

Physical Skills: Little or no physical demands are required to perform the work. Work effort principally involves sitting to perform work tasks, with intermittent periods of stooping, walking, and standing. There may also be some occasional lifting of objects such as office equipment.

Motor Skills: Duties are largely mental rather than physical, but the job may occasionally require the application of basic motor skills in order to perform activities such as operating a telephone system, personal computer, office equipment, computer keyboarding, filing and/or sorting of papers.

PHYSICAL, MOTOR, AND VISUAL SKILLS

Physical Skills

The work principally involves sitting, with intermittent periods of stooping, walking, and standing. May be required to lift objects such as files, boxes of papers, office supplies, and office equipment weighing up to 30 pounds.

Motor Skills

Duties require motor skills for activities such as moving objects, using office equipment, including but not limited to telephones, personal computers, handheld technology, and other office equipment.

Visual Skills

Visual demands require routinely reading documents for general understanding and analytical purposes.

Comprehension Skills

The employee is required to constantly read documents, personal computer screens and written reports for general understanding and routinely for analytical purposes. The employee must have the ability to interact with others and comprehend.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and is subject to change by the employer, as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.