

CAREER GUIDE FOR OFFICE CLERKS, GENERAL

SOC Code: 43.9061

Pay Bands: 1, 2, 3 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Perform duties too varied and diverse to be classified in any specific office clerical occupation, requiring limited knowledge of office management systems and procedures. Clerical duties may be assigned in accordance with the office procedures of individual establishments and may include a combination of answering telephones, bookkeeping, typing or word processing, stenography, office machine operation, and filing.

General Office Clerk positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Administrative and Office Support Career Group](#):

[Administrative and Office Specialist I](#)

[Administrative and Office Specialist II](#)

[Administrative and Office Specialist III](#)

While General Office Clerks within the Commonwealth are all located within the Administrative and Office Support Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Groups that may be of interest are:

[Financial Services](#)

[General Administration](#)

[Hearing and Legal Services](#)

[Human Resources Services](#)

[Land Acquisition and Property Management](#)

[Policy Analysis and Planning](#)

[Procurement](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for General Office Clerks commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
2. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
3. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
4. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
5. Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.

Knowledge

Note: The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for General Office Clerks commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The **Knowledge** of:

1. Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
2. Administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.
3. The structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
4. Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, statistics, and their applications.

Abilities

Note: The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for General Office Clerks commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The **Ability** to:

1. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
2. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
3. Identify and understand the speech of another person.
4. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
5. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
6. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
7. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
8. Add, subtract, multiply, or divide quickly and correctly.
9. Choose the right mathematical methods or formulas to solve a problem.
10. Concentrate on a task over a period of time without being distracted.
11. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
12. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
13. Quickly and accurately compare similarities and differences among sets of letters, numbers, objects, pictures, or patterns. The things to be compared may be presented at the same time or one after the other. This ability also includes comparing a presented object with a remembered object.
14. Generate or use different sets of rules for combining or grouping things in different ways.

Tasks

Note: The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by General Office Clerks. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.

1. Collect, count, and disburse money; do basic bookkeeping and complete banking transactions.

2. Communicate with customers, employees, and other individuals to answer questions, disseminate or explain information, take orders and address complaints.
3. Answer telephones, direct calls and take messages.
4. Compile, copy, sort, and file records of office activities, business transactions, and other activities.
5. Complete and mail bills, contracts, policies, invoices, or checks.
6. Operate office machines, such as photocopiers and scanners, facsimile machines, voice mail systems and personal computers.
7. Compute, record, and proofread data and other information, such as records or reports.
8. Maintain and update filing, inventory, mailing, and database systems, either manually or using a computer.
9. Open, sort and route incoming mail, answer correspondence, and prepare outgoing mail.
10. Review files, records, and other documents to obtain information to respond to requests.
11. Deliver messages and run errands.
12. Inventory and order materials, supplies, and services.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

General Office Clerk work is called a “**Conventional Occupation**” since it may frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Generally this is not required for General Office Clerk positions in state government. However, to improve career advancement opportunities, you should consider the advantages of certification and include this step in your self-development plan.

As you gain experience, you may want to consider secretarial or administrative assistant jobs. To improve career opportunities, consider the Certified Professional Secretary (CPS) designation or the Certified Administrative Professional (CAP) designation. The International Association of Administrative Professionals administers these certifications. For more information on the CPS and CAP examinations, go to <http://www.iaap-q.org/CPS/Recertification.pdf>

Generally these are not required for clerical and administrative support positions in state government. However, to improve career advancement opportunities, you should consider the advantages of demonstrating your expertise and include this step in your personal career development plan.

There are professional development and certificate programs, associate degree and undergraduate degree focused on business, which are academic ways to demonstrate capability in the field. They are not required for employment in Virginia, but are one way to showcase your abilities to a prospective hiring official. Individuals interested in future career

advancement should strongly consider undergraduate education. Experience in the field with excellent references another way to demonstrate your abilities when seeking a secretarial or administrative support position.

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Jobs in clerical occupations may require some previous work-related skill and knowledge; prior experience may be helpful in these occupations, but usually is not needed. Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees. These occupations often involve using your knowledge and skills to help others. Some of these occupations may involve coordinating or training others. These occupations usually require a high school diploma and may require some vocational training or job-related course work. In some cases, an associate's or bachelor's degree could be needed.

As office automation continues to evolve, retraining and continuing education will remain an integral part of clerical and administrative support jobs. Changes in the office environment have increased the demand for employees who are adaptable and versatile. This may require attending classes to learn how to operate new office technologies, such as information storage systems, scanners, the Internet, or new updated software packages, or utilize online education. Office support clerks may acquire skills in various ways. Training ranges from high school vocational education programs that teach office skills and keyboarding to 1- and 2-year programs in office administration offered by business schools, vocational-technical institutes, and community colleges. Many temporary placement agencies also provide formal training in computer and office skills. Many skills are often acquired, however, through on-the-job instruction by other employees or by equipment and software vendors. Specialized training programs are available for students planning to become medical or legal secretaries or administrative technology specialists. Bachelor's degrees and professional certifications are becoming increasingly important as business continues to become more global.

For more information on the academic (2 year) and workforce development educational courses available at **Virginia Community Colleges**, visit the Virginia Community College System website at <http://www.so.cc.va.us>.

For more information on **colleges and universities** in Virginia go to www.explorevirginiacolleges.com

Local communities often offer computer and office management courses. Check your local and regional counties, libraries, and vocational schools. There are also private companies that offer computer and office training. Be sure to thoroughly check the credentials of any private company before enrolling in a course.

The Commonwealth of Virginia sponsors One-Stop Workforce Development Centers around the state that may be able to direct you to where training is available if you are having trouble finding sources for secretarial or computer software education. For a list of One-Stop Centers in Virginia go to <http://www.vec.state.va.us/wia.cfm?loc=wia&info=localwia>.

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be

observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

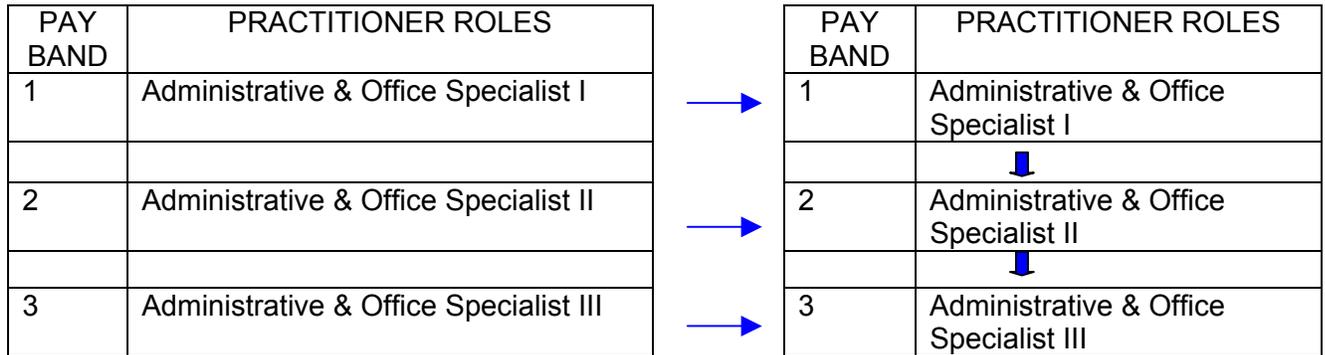
Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next higher role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example:



Sample Career Path

[Administrative and Office Specialist I](#)

The Administrative and Office Specialist I role provides career tracks for operational and administrative support specialists such as the office support aides or postal aides providing entry-level support by performing well-defined office duties of a routine and repetitive nature under close supervision. The range of duties includes, but is not limited to, alphabetizing, filing, photocopying, sorting, delivering mail, and/or routine document processing.

[Administrative and Office Specialist II](#)

The Administrative and Office Specialist II role provides career tracks for operational and administrative support specialists such as office support assistants and secretaries who perform a wide variety of journey-level office/program and administrative support duties based on agency business needs. Duties are performed within specific guidelines using established policies and procedures. The range of duties includes, but is not limited to, general office, secretarial, fiscal, and support activities.

[Administrative and Office Specialist III](#)

The Administrative and Office Specialist III role provides career tracks for operational and administrative support specialists, such as fiscal technicians, human resource assistants, claims technicians, medical records technicians, procurement technicians, licensing specialists, customer services representatives, executive secretaries, administrative assistants, office supervisors, and facilities coordinators. Duties range from journey-level to supervisory level and may include compliance assurance, report writing, reconciliation of information or financial data, records management, scheduling, claims review and processing, data collection and analysis, research, inventory, budget management, personnel administration, and funds collections or expenditures.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET

<http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Virginia Employment Commission

<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network

<http://www.vacrn.net/>