

***How does someone become town service officer? What would be his or her duties?***

Either the selectboard or the Commissioner of Social Welfare may appoint a service officer. A person may serve more than one town simultaneously, so there is no requirement that your town's service officer be a resident of town. A selectperson may act on behalf of the service officer in his or her absence. 33 V.S.A. § 2102(a).

The service officer may be an agent for the Department of Social Welfare, as described in 33 V.S.A. § 2102(b). More frequently, they will provide emergency services or support services to people in need. Under the statutes the service officer may find him or herself investigating an applicant's situation, furnishing transportation to remove the person out of state, providing relief for a person "found in a place other than a house, hospital or jail," or making burial arrangements for a transient who happened to die while in town.

Unofficially, many service officers probably act as good samaritans who see a problem and provide or arrange for whatever help is needed. They can be important but unsung town officers.

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