

CHILD DAY CARE PROGRAM SPECIALIST

This is administrative and consultative work involving the assessment and evaluation of subsidized childcare providers and facilities in an assigned geographical area of the State through the office of Day Care Services. Employees in this class investigate the administrative and programmatic components of multiple day care facilities in the assigned area and determine initial certification levels, compliance with established day care standards, or needs for sanctions or corrective action in cases of non-compliance. In monitoring providers' compliance with standards, employees provide on-going consultation and technical assistance in recommending solutions to problems, in suggesting appropriate alternatives to correct operational deficiencies, and in policy interpretation. Employees also provide technical assistance to potential providers who wish to open a day care facility or to existing providers seeking a higher level of certification. In assisting providers with corrective action to avoid sanctions or loss of certification, employees may refer critical problems to appropriate program development staff for supplemental or formal training. Work may include other related assignments as determined by management. Employees report to the Child Day Care Program Supervisor.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Employees are primarily responsible for conducting on-site assessments of public and private day care facilities providing subsidized services to infants and pre-school children. During investigative visits, employees determine providers' compliance with day care standards in areas of recordkeeping and administrative services, health and physical environments, nutrition, child/staff ratios, staff qualifications, curriculum planning, and transportation. Upon completion of on-site evaluations, employees convey findings to the facility operator but may include purchasing agency staff in cases where facilities fail to meet minimum standards. Other major areas of responsibility include the interpretation of administrative and program policies; provision-of consultation and-technical assistance particularly in preparing program budgets which are used to establish rates of payment for subsidized care; and assessing local staff training/continuing education needs.

Intricacy - Work requires strict applications of day care standards to ensure that subsidized providers comply with minimum expectations for the delivery of services. After a comprehensive review of a local day care program, employees decide levels of compliance and formulate recommendations for corrective action geared toward individual facilities' needs for assistance and development. Employees' conclusions result from an intensive review of the way facilities operate and reflect facilities' ability to care for young children in publicly subsidized and private day care programs.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires the application of accepted child development theories and practices in the evaluation of day care programs and in assessing providers' needs for technical assistance. Employees must have complete understanding of day care administrative and program policies, goals, and standards to ensure consistency in monitoring and evaluating day care programs.

Guidelines - Employees interpret and apply established program policies and standards which determine providers' certification or licensure levels, reimbursement rates, and quality of services delivered. Since most policies and procedures are developed primarily by the State Office of Day Care Services, there are few federal regulations and policies to administer.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Most daily and weekly work assignments are self-planned and generated in response to a pre-determined cycle for evaluating local day care providers. The Child Day Care Program Supervisor informs employees of broad policy or procedural changes which may affect individual work assignments and suggests appropriate revisions in work strategies.

Nature of Review - Since employees function independently in field settings, work is subject to infrequent administrative or technical review; however, employees' recommendations for imposing sanctions or terminating facilities' certification are subject to close review by higher level management.

Scope of Decisions - As initial evaluators of subsidized day care programs, employees' recommendations may directly affect reimbursement rates, levels of operation, and the overall quality of day care services provided in the assigned region.

Consequence of Decisions - Inappropriate technical advice, misinterpretations of policy, or incomplete on-site evaluations could result in the unnecessary termination of a facility's certification and right to receive public subsidy funds.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Employees interact primarily with service providers who operate various public and private day care facilities, staff of local departments of social services or other purchasing agencies, various civic and advocacy groups, local government officials, and industry representatives.

Nature and Purpose - The majority of contacts focus on explaining day care services, programs, policies, and standards and determining needs for corrective action, technical assistance, or program development. Interactions with community and civic groups, advocacy groups, and industry representatives focus on promoting day care services and stimulating interest among potential recipients.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Most work is typically conducted on-site in various day care facilities (homes, centers, or individual child care arrangements) or in standard office settings when working with purchasing agencies' staff.

Hazards - There are no significant dangers or threats inherent in the work which would jeopardize employees' safety or well being.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of general theories, practices and principles of child development as related to day care services to include the educational, social and cognitive needs of infants and pre-school children. Considerable knowledge of child day care organizations and their management. Skill in the interpretation, application and evaluation of day care programs, planning, and policies. Ability to interpret and apply rules, regulations, standards and policies regarding day care providers and purchasing agencies. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with day care providers, community resources, and interest groups. Ability to communicate effectively in oral and written form.

Minimum Education and Experience - Graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in child development, early childhood education, special education, social work, or related human services area and three years experience in a day care or related setting involving the coordination, evaluation, or administration of a comprehensive program of day care services or in the coordination or management of the day care component of a local social services program: Master's degree in one of the above areas and two years experience in a day care or related setting involving the coordination, evaluation, or administration of a comprehensive program of day care services, in the coordination or management of the day care component of a local social services program, or as an instructor or curriculum design specialist at the university or community college level; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.