

ADVOCACY SPECIALIST II

Position in this class provides advocacy and administrative services to the Director of an Advocacy Council. Employee functions as an Assistant to the Director to coordinate program areas and special projects. Work includes on-going legislative liaison and representing the Council, with a wide variety of Commissions, conferences, panels and meetings, for the Director; and some direct case and class advocacy services.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Work includes some direct investigation, consultation, and negotiating advocacy services, but the majority of responsibilities include research into status of programs and services for all children and youth, or the developmentally disabled or mentally ill; monitoring the development and need for legislation affecting the handicapped population, and acting as liaison with the legislative committees; and providing administrative support to the Director.

Intricacy - Within Federal, State, and local governments there are numerous laws and programs providing services and rights to the specific handicapped population. Laws and/or program policies can be prohibitive or discriminatory. Employee researches and compiles information on programs, analyzes the information, identifies program gaps and needs and the need for alteration/change in broad program policies or laws, and coordinates with the Legislature to ensure professional experts, appropriate consumer groups and/or commissions, etc. are supporting the changes with the Legislature.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires considerable knowledge of the agencies, programs, commissions, and consumer groups as well as the laws pertaining to the handicapped group and legislative processes.

Guidelines - Guides used are State and Federal statutes and pending legislation on, programs for handicapped and patients' rights, Attorney General's Office and opinions, and agency program standards and policies.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employee is assigned areas-of responsibility and plans work on short-term basis with general administrative directives for new or special projects as necessary.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed through periodic staff meetings, written reports on progress of projects or upon completion, and through successful liaison with the Legislature.

Scope of Decisions - Decisions and actions regarding program policies and/or laws can dictate changes for one or more agencies and the services to the handicapped group in one location or program statewide.

Consequence of Decisions - Identification of program gaps, overlaps, or discrimination and effecting changes in program policies or laws can mean new, additional, and improved services to the handicapped population as a whole. Individual or class action litigation through the courts can be pursued.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Work requires working with individuals, families, various agency officials including department secretaries, deputies and program administrators/managers, commission and council members, and legislators.

Nature and Purpose - Employee employs, educates, convinces, and negotiates with the various officials and groups to facilitate cooperative work and change.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Hazards - Generally, work does not present any major hazards to the individual employee.

Work Conditions - Employee works primarily in normal office conditions, but does require some travel to work with community agencies and officials.

V. JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of Federal and State patient rights laws relating to the handicapped; of broad agency program policies and service delivery systems for the handicapped; of the legislative process; considerable skill in consulting and negotiating with agency officials and legislators and the public; in analyzing information and interpreting information.

Minimum Education and Experience - Graduation from a four-year college or university with a major in a human services field and four years of experience in providing professional diagnostic and treatment or advocacy services to the developmentally disabled, mentally ill, or children and youth handicapped population as required for the job; or a master's degree in a human services field and three years of the above experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.