

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SPECIALIST

Work in this class involves the evaluation of children, establishment of rapport with families, planning and coordination of assessment and treatment services for children with developmental needs in a Developmental Evaluation Center (DEC). Employees are responsible for interviewing families and conducting various standardized and non-standardized tests of children suspected of having developmental disabilities in order to determine the kind, extent and degree of the problem. Employees serve as care coordinators, participating as members of an inter-disciplinary team and integrating the findings of this team into a clinical summary and treatment plan. Employees interpret assessment results to parents, guardians and other professionals to provide service coordination for intervention plans. Other employees in this class function as Infant-Toddler Specialists for a DEC catchment area. This involves working with County Health Departments by conducting intermediate assessments of pre-school age children to determine whether further in-depth assessments are necessary, educating health departments and other personnel, and serving as the child service coordinator for infants and toddlers. Employees may report to the Team Leaders, DEC Assistant Director or to the DEC Director.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Duties performed are basically routine in nature, with little variation in format. Tasks performed relate to a common goal of either care coordination or intermediate assessment.

Intricacy - Employees come into contact with a variety of presenting problems. Work requires recognizing and responding to particular physical, communicative, mental and social conditions. Work process may be adapted to respond to a particular case.

Subject Matter Complexity - Employees must have a thorough understanding of the developmental disabilities field in order to administer and interpret various tests and to comprehend and interpret recommendations made by an inter-disciplinary team. Employees must be extremely knowledgeable of services available both in and out of a DEC catchment area.

Guidelines - Employees generally work within established guidelines. Some flexibility is required due to the unpredictable nature of the clients served.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Work is performed independently according to established guidelines. Supervision is largely administrative in nature.

Nature of Review - Review of work may be received through the inter-disciplinary staffing process. Completed reports are usually reviewed by a higher-level supervisor for consistency in format.

Scope of Decisions - Decisions affect developmentally disabled children and their families, as well as other professionals at the DEC and human service agencies in the catchment area.

Consequence of Decisions - Decisions made can directly affect the immediate course of assessment or treatment that client will receive, affect a parent's understanding of child's condition and ultimately determine what services a child may receive.

III. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

Scope of Contacts - Contacts occur in the DEC, client homes, and at the offices of human services agencies. Contacts may occur in the context of required interagency meetings, Infant-Toddler consortia, smart start and pre-school transition and placement committee meetings. Frequent contact also occurs with families who are unfamiliar with developmental disabilities or unaccepting of a child's condition.

Nature and Purpose - Purpose of contacts is to explain and interpret assessments and to coordinate treatment services.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Hazards - Periodic exposure to violent children or children with contagious diseases. Employees may spend a good deal of time driving, exposing them to hazards of the road.

Work Conditions - Mostly good working conditions at a DEC or Health Department. Work in travel clinics or in clients' homes occurs under difficult conditions.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of at least one aspect (cognitive, communicative, behavioral, or adaptive/social) of developmental disabilities and the evaluative techniques to assess and plan intervention for amelioration of the problem. Considerable knowledge of types of developmental disabilities and the classification system with implication of bio-medical, mental and adaptive aspects. Considerable knowledge of governmental and private organizational structures. General knowledge of appropriate assessment techniques for evaluation of several aspects of developmental disabilities; basic standardized testing instruments, interviewing behavioral analysis, observation or time sampling Strong organizational skills to coordinate services for children in the community. Ability to describe observations articulately and generate hypotheses for treatment; and to prepare concise narrative summaries on findings.

Minimum Training and Experience - Master's degree in a human services area such as social work, special education, child development, psychology, guidance and counseling, or nursing; or a bachelor's degree in one of the above human services areas and two years of experience in working with developmentally disabled children and their families; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

Minimum Training and Experience for a Trainee Appointment - Graduation from a four-year college or university in a human services area such as guidance and counseling, social work, special education, child development, psychology or nursing.

Special Note - This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to identify essential functions per ADA. Examples of work are primarily essential functions of the majority of positions in this class, but may not be applicable to all positions.