

## LOW VISION SPECIALIST

### CLASS CONCEPT

Positions in this class provide specialized services to people who are blind or visually impaired. These positions include low vision therapists, children/student services, orientation and mobility specialists, and rehabilitation teachers.

### Low Vision Therapy

Employees are responsible for assessing adult clients' needs and determining their functional vision and how best to assist the client in using their residual devices. Work performed includes initial low vision interviews and preliminary clinical assessments, providing on-site functional low vision assessments, comprehensive non-optical device assessments, referrals and coordination of appropriate low vision client-support services, coordination and scheduling of clinical low vision activities and assessments, dissemination of all functional and clinical findings by providing them to the client, their family, direct service staff which includes classroom teachers, evaluators, orientation and mobility specialists, rehabilitation counselors, principals and center directors, and providing physical therapy to visually impaired clients. Employees provide direct client training to improve low vision device proficiency; provide field expansion/expansion device training, and training for the maintenance of low vision clinic equipment and materials. Employees also provide training to the Division of Services of the Blind. Work also includes developing low vision policies and procedures. Employees in this role use a variety of low vision optic and non-optic devices including Low Vision Near/Distance Acuity Charts; Contrast Sensitivity Charts, Tangent Screen, Amsler Grid, Farnsworth D-15; Pepper Test; Transiluminator; Lonesometer; Frensel Prisms, functional magnifiers, telescopes, close circuit televisions, special lighting devices, light absorption lenses, reading stands, etc.

### Children/Student Services

Employees are responsible for completing a functional low vision evaluation that identifies visual impairments related to performance of developmentally appropriate activities of daily living including dressing appropriately, personal health care and grooming, safe movement, care of orthotic, prosthetic and other health care devices. Work performed includes assessing client needs and instruction of daily living skills including care of self, effective literacy and communication, health management, home management, meal preparation, safety awareness training and shopping. Work performed includes assessing goals of students and their educational pursuits including life-long learning, vocational pursuits including readiness for future employment and the performance of leisure and social activities. Employee will access and participate in community programs and events. Work performed includes assessing the coping ability of the student with low vision and the impact of the vision disability on significant others and to educate them in understanding the functional implications of vision changes, how the student with low vision is expected to progress through environmental modifications, that will be helpful for enhanced function, coaching for home/school/leisure exercises and adaptation to change when feasible.

### Orientation and Mobility

Employees provide individualized orientation and mobility assessments and training for consumers who are blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind. Some Specialists provide instruction in specialized skill areas that will enable the consumers to achieve their independent living, travel, and employment goals. Work performed includes assessing clients needs, goals, readiness and motivation to learn orientation and mobility skills; determining client's understanding of spatial and directional concepts; providing one-on-one instruction including concepts and techniques such as sensory/concept development, pre-cane skills, sighted guide, cane techniques, route planning/travel in a variety of situations, soliciting situations, use of public transportation, use of residual vision/low vision aids, orientation to electronic travel aids, preparation for travel.

### Rehabilitation Teachers

Employees are responsible for areas of instruction in Braille, cooking, techniques of daily living skills, consumer education, college prep, and basic technology. Work performed includes direct instruction of students in classes; participating in staffings related to consumers who are in instruction or evaluation to report on progress toward goals, etc.; and providing written documentation.

The decisions made by the Low Vision Specialists can have a direct impact on the safety of the client, staff, and others. Employees have contact with clients, optometrists, staff members, and other low vision specialists. The contact is for the purpose of providing assessments, consultation, and training.

#### SUPERVISORY/MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS

This classification does not have administrative or supervisory responsibilities.

#### RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

##### Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities -

Low vision therapy and children/student services requires considerable knowledge of low vision assessment tools and techniques such as optic and non-optic devices including magnifiers, telescopes, close circuit televisions, special lighting devices, light absorption lenses, reading stands, etc.; the ability to adapt and communicate with a variety of consumers, families, teachers, rehabilitation counselors, rehabilitation engineers, medical personnel, and other human service providers.

Orientation and Mobility and Rehabilitation Teachers require considerable knowledge of the restrictive effects of visual impairments; considerable knowledge of mobility theories, techniques and methodologies; the techniques used to teach consumers of all ages; an understanding of the unique needs of the various age ranges; an understanding of the variety of orientation and mobility devices; skill in the use of mobility equipment; the ability to motivate clients; and the ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally.

#### Minimum Training and Experience Requirements

**Low Vision Specialist:** Bachelor's degree in visual impairment or related field from an appropriately accredited institution and certification by the Academy for Certification of Education and Rehabilitation Professionals (ACVREP) as a Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT); or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Applicants who do not possess certification are required to obtain certification within the first year of employment.

**Orientation and Mobility Specialist:** Bachelor's degree in orientation and mobility from an appropriately accredited institution and certification granted by the Academy for Certification of Education and Rehabilitation Professionals (ACVREP) as a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS); or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

**Vision Rehabilitation Therapist:** Bachelor's degree in visual impairment or related field from an appropriately accredited institution and certification by the Academy for Certification of Education and Rehabilitation Professionals (ACVREP) as a Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (CVRT); or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Applicants who do not possess certification are required to obtain certification within the first year of employment.

#### 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, but may not be applicable to all positions