

## REHABILITATION THERAPY ASSISTANT

Work in this class involves providing advanced paraprofessional rehabilitative/ habilitative services in a State institution or local mental health program to clients (patients or residents) who have mental, social, physical and/or emotional disabilities through the use of rehabilitation, recreation, activity or industrial therapy.

Primary responsibilities vary according to the setting; however, the level of work is based upon factors such as the scope and type of population served, treatment modality, and independence and/or accountability for program decisions. Characteristics which distinguish this level of work from lower levels include responsibilities such as: writing goaled and non-goaled programs based upon standardized assessments; planning, scheduling and implementing activities for a unit or program in coordination with other program staff; representing rehabilitation/recreation services on a treatment team; providing coordination and liaison with other units or programs. Employees may be responsible for monitoring expenditures for the unit or program or for providing one to one supportive counseling as part of the treatment model. In some situations, employees may be involved in some of the basic functions reflected in the Rehabilitation Therapist class; however, factors such as independence and accountability with which assessments and program decisions are carried out, the complexity of assessments, and the overall amount of time spent in the assessment function impact at this level. Work may include other related assignments as determined by appropriate management. Employees may report to a higher level therapist or clinician or to a Rehabilitation Therapy supervisor or Director.

### I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Employees complete assessments that range from limited generalized to standardized assessments with some judgments required. Employees plan and carry out structured goal plans of both leisure and therapeutic activities. In settings in which the employees are completing more complex assessments and developing the more structured programs, a higher level therapist may be providing clinical supervision throughout the process. Employees are responsible for writing monthly progress notes and annually evaluating each client. Employees represent their discipline on the interdisciplinary team and may serve as liaison with other units and agencies. Employees may provide one to one supportive counseling as part of the treatment model.

Guidelines - Broad goals are determined by the interdisciplinary team. Based upon these broad goals, employees write the specific program or treatment plan that may require some judgment in determining specific activities. The program guidelines are specific; however, parameters for individual interaction are broader, requiring more judgment. In some settings, there are specific guides for determining wage rates and job placement.

### II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Work may be carried out within one particular program or unit, or throughout the entire institution or facility and may involve some external community contacts. In most situations employees are responsible for assessments, development and implementation of programs, and progress notes. The interdisciplinary team makes the decision on areas to be worked on and goals to be established. The extent of involvement from a higher level therapist or Therapeutic Recreation Specialist will vary depending on the complexity of the assessments and program development required.

Consequence of Action - Employees' decisions affect progress toward achievement of treatment goals.

Review - Work may be reviewed occasionally while in progress and through review of clients' records and periodic reports and conferences.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject Matter - Employees have input into the interdisciplinary team regarding observations and recommendations concerning clients' needs and abilities. The functioning level of the clients makes comprehension difficult that requires considerable creativity and repetition.

Purpose - The employees input into the team is for the purpose of giving and receiving information regarding clients' abilities, needs, and progress. Employees instruct and encourage clients to help them achieve a specific skill or behavior, often employing techniques of behavior modification and one-to-one supportive counseling.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Nature of Working Conditions - Employees work in settings which range from modern mental health facilities or offices to institutional living units in which odors and noise are prevalent due to the functioning level of the client.

Nature and Potential of Personal Hazards - Behavioral problems such as aggression of clients and/or lifting could cause bodily injury for employees in some settings.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of the practical application of task analysis and goal writing. Considerable knowledge of the practical application of behavior management techniques. General knowledge of population served and of the medium area when required for the particular job. Skill in writing goals and programs, and developing activities to carry them out. Ability to develop supportive counseling techniques. Ability to establish rapport and relate to population served; to comprehend, record, and utilize behavioral concepts; to evaluate client progress, observe behavior, communicate observations and recommendations effectively in oral and written form. Ability to establish rapport and relate to families, community agencies and groups, and a variety of service disciplines (social workers, physicians, psychologists, teachers, nurses).

Minimum Education and Experience - Completion of a two-year associate degree program in recreation or a human services field which includes a practicum or internship in a similar setting (one year of the above experience may be substituted for the practicum) and one year of experience in providing to a population typically found in a psychiatric or mental retardation setting support services or instruction which requires development of goals and integration of activities to meet program plans; or graduation from high school or equivalent and three years of experience in providing support services or instruction to population typically found in a psychiatric or mental retardation setting, two of which must have been at a level which requires development of goals and integration of activities to meet program plans; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Administering the Class - Applicants with a four-degree in a human services area may enter at the minimum of the class. Applicants with two or more years of college and two years of the above experience may enter at the minimum of the class.