

REHABILITATION THERAPIST

Work in this class involves providing beginning level professional 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 or activity therapy. Employees are independently responsible for planning, developing, and implementing individualized and generalized programs for a unit or program component which involves completing standardized assessments requiring judgments, writing goaled and non-goaled programs, and evaluating and documenting progress. Employees are responsible for independently planning and integrating rehabilitation/recreation services into the total unit or program.

The primary distinction between this and lower level classes is the extent of independent involvement in assessments and program development. Work at this level is also distinguished by the complexity of the evaluation and content of the documentation process. Employees may be responsible for coordination or supervision of other staff who are assigned to these programs. In some settings, employees may be serving clients throughout an entire institution or facility by providing specialized services such as aquatics or may be accountable for the planning and coordination of facility wide special functions. Work may include other related assignments as determined by appropriate management. Employees usually report to a rehabilitation or recreation therapy coordinator or supervisor or to another program supervisor.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Employees independently complete standardized assessments, plan and write goaled and non-goaled programs, evaluate progress and write progress notes. Employees serve as a member of the interdisciplinary team and make recommendations regarding programs. Employees may serve as a lead therapist for a division which involves providing training to lower level support staff. Employees may be responsible for coordinating facility-wide programs and activities such as swimming, camping, parades, fairs, special olympics, etc.

Intricacy - Assessments are based on standardized formats; however, employees utilize judgment to determine which areas require further evaluation. Individual goals are developed from the assessments. Programs include leisure activities and therapeutic goals. Employees analyze needs of clients and incorporate individual needs into the total program. Based upon the evaluations, employees make recommendations to the treatment team regarding changes in goals and programs. Employees may coordinate or supervise other staff which requires ensuring that the activities conducted are consistent with acceptable techniques and procedures.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires knowledge of the population being served and principles and techniques of recreation or rehabilitation in a therapeutic setting.

Guidelines - Guidelines include standardized assessments, professional reference materials, and professional standards. Guidelines for programs and goals are also provided through doctors' referrals and interdisciplinary team conferences.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - The interdisciplinary team provides the overall direction for the treatment plan. General administrative and clinical guidance comes from a recreation or rehabilitation therapy supervisor or Therapeutic Recreation Specialist.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed through submission of periodic reports, spot check of written documentation and routine conferences with supervisor. In situations involving nonprecedented or more complex cases or issues, more frequent discussions may occur.

Consequence of Decisions - Decisions regarding assessments and goals can affect the appropriateness of the program and clients' progress toward proper behavior and developmental and socialization skills.

II. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contact - Work requires contact with clients, a variety of professional disciplines, and community resources.

Nature and Purpose - Employees work with clients and members of the interdisciplinary team to develop and implement a treatment plan which will assist in habilitation and rehabilitation. Employees contact community resources to schedule activities. Employees may be responsible for training and monitoring subordinate staff.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

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

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 fundamental principles, techniques, and methods of the rehabilitation therapy field to include assessments, evaluations, development of goals and activities. Considerable knowledge of behavior management techniques. Working knowledge of the population served and of the medium area when required for the particular job. Skill in writing goals and programs. Ability to plan and conduct a program of leisure/therapeutic activities. Ability to evaluate and document progress and present to the treatment team. Ability to coordinate and instruct support staff in carrying out methods and techniques utilized in the Rehabilitation Therapy field. Ability to establish rapport and relate to population served, families, community agencies and groups, and a variety of service disciplines.

Minimum Education and Experience - Graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in recreation, physical education, or a human services field; or graduation from a four-year college or university and one year of experience in providing support services or instruction to population typically found in a rehabilitative/habilitative setting which required development of goals and integration of activities to meet program plans; or completion of a two-year associate degree program in recreation or human services field which includes a practicum/internship in a similar setting and two years of experience in providing support services or instruction to population typically found in a rehabilitative/habilitative setting which required development of goals and integration of activities to meet program plans; or graduation from high school or equivalent and four years of experience in providing support services or instruction to population typically found in a rehabilitative/habilitative setting, two of which must have been at a level which required development of goals and integration of activities to meet program plans; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Minimum Education and Experience for Trainee - Completion of a two-year associate degree program in recreation or human services field which includes a practicum/internship in a similar setting and one year of experience in providing support services or instruction to population typically found in a rehabilitative/habilitative setting which required 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 service, or instruction to population typically found in a rehabilitative/habilitative setting, two of which must have been at a level which required development of goals and integration of activities to meet program goals; or graduation from a four-year college or university; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.