

HABILITATION SPECIALIST I

This is beginning level professional work involving the provision of services to developmentally disabled clients in area MH/DD/SAS agencies. In a residential setting, employees are responsible for management of facility on a 24-hour, 7-day a week basis which involves the supervision of lower-level staff. Direct service duties include developing basic goal plans for clients which include instruction in daily living skills, socialization and other related areas, developing and implementing behavior modification programs, preparing progress notes and/or reviewing notes prepared by lower level staff, and the selecting and coordinating leisure and/or recreational activities. Work also includes recommending residential facility's budget and monitoring expenditures; maintaining client records; dispensing medications; participating in the selection, performance evaluation and disciplining of lower level staff; and providing limited case management for clients in the facility. Employees also have limited responsibility in area of program evaluation. Work in this class also involves providing basic case management for developmentally disabled clients which includes obtaining social, medical, developmental, and financial histories; performing initial assessment; explaining available services and programs; making referrals for appropriate services; coordinating services with community agencies; providing client tracking and follow-up. Employees are also responsible for data collection for use in programming and for providing supportive counseling to clients and their families. Employees report to a higher level professional or program manager.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - In a residential setting, employees independently screen clients, perform standardized assessments, develop basic goal plans dealing with daily living skills, socialization, and behavior management. Employees direct and coordinate activities of the residential facility, administer facility budget including purchase of supplies and monitoring of expenditures, participate in the selection, evaluation, and recommendation of disciplinary action of employees, along with supervising a limited number of support staff. Work also requires the employees to have responsibility for maintenance of facility and grounds. Employees spend the remaining time in direct client services. In the case manager role, employees obtain complete client histories, perform initial assessment, explain available services and programs, and refer clients to appropriate agencies for services. Employees also provide client tracking and data collection.

Intricacy - In a residential setting, employees utilize a variety of basic assessment tools and develop a habilitation plan for each client. In the case management role, employees obtain medical, financial, social, and developmental histories and determine client needs. Clients usually have multiple developmental, physical, or behavioral problems.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires knowledge of developmental disabilities and developmental programs, knowledge of basic assessment tools, how to develop habilitation plans and to plan activities around them.

Guidelines - Division of MH/DD/SAS standards outline the basic components of program and service to be provided. Agency policies and procedures and professional resource materials are also utilized.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - In a residential setting, assessments and planning of daily program activities are carried out independently. In the case management role, work is performed independently according to established procedures.

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

Scope of Decisions - Decisions regarding assessments and goals affect individual clients and programming for the residential facility; employees provide supervision for other staff in the residential setting. In the case management role, decisions regarding assessments and referrals affect individual clients and their families.

Consequence of Decisions - Decisions regarding assessments, goals, and referrals can affect the client's progress toward appropriate behavior, socialization, and independent living skills.

II. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Work requires contact with clients, family members, and other professional disciplines and service agencies.

Nature and Purpose - Contacts are for the purpose of teaching appropriate skills, and behavior and ensuring that clients and families receive appropriate services. Employees also work with other staff in providing technical assistance.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - In the residential setting employees' workstation is usually a home-like environment. Odors and noise are often present due to the functioning level of the client. Work may require lifting of clients. In the case management-role, work is usually in an office setting.

Hazards - Behavior problems of clients, such as aggression, or lifting could cause bodily injury for employees in some settings.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Working knowledge of fundamental principles, techniques, and methods in developmental disability field to include assessments, development of goals and activities. Working knowledge of behavior management techniques. Working knowledge of population served. Ability to coordinate and instruct support staff in carrying out methods and techniques utilized in mental retardation field. Ability to communicate effectively in oral and written form. Ability to establish rapport and maintain effective working relationships with families and other professional disciplines, community agencies and groups. Ability to supervise others.

Minimum Training and Experience - Graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in a human services field and one year experience working with developmentally disabled clients; or graduation from a two-year associate program designed to prepare support personnel for human services agencies and two years of experience working with developmentally disabled clients; or graduation from high school and four years of experience in providing services to mentally retarded clients; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

Minimum Training and Experience for Trainee - Graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in a human services field; or graduation from a two-year associate program designed to prepare support personnel for human services agencies and one year of experience working with developmentally disabled clients; or Graduation from high school and 3 years of experience in providing services to developmentally disabled clients; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.