

COUNTY OF SOLANO

GROUP COUNSELOR

DEFINITION

Supervises and counsels juvenile offenders detained in, committed to or sheltered in a County institution; maintains order and structure within the assigned group on a daily basis; teaches classes, provides counseling and assists groups participants in utilizing other resources and opportunities.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the journey level class in the Group Counselor series. Incumbents are expected to perform the full range of duties independently within laws, policies and procedures. Employees provide care and control of juveniles in an institutional setting or under constructive custody of the juvenile court. This class is distinguished from Group Counselor (Senior) in that the latter has lead responsibility for Group Counselors during a designated shift and/or performs the more complex work assigned to the classification series.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Supervising Group Counselor. May receive technical and/or functional oversight from a Senior Groups Counselor.

Provides technical and functional oversight and training to lower level Group Counselors and direction to assigned juvenile group.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES *-Duties may include but are not limited to the following:*

Ensures security, daily care and custody of the wards in a unit including counseling wards, mediating disputes, conducting searches of rooms and wards, overseeing contact visits, conducting security checks, and assisting in emergency situations, serving meals and overseeing laundry care and distribution, and performing other duties to oversee the health and safety of those in custody.

Provides crisis intervention counseling for wards going through stressful periods and suicide prevention counseling for wards in states of depression; provides general counseling to give support or to modify juveniles' behavior; may give personal guidance and counseling to reduce anxiety and tension of juveniles who are confined.

Manages assaultive behavior of emotionally disturbed juveniles; prepares behavior summaries and written daily observations, including special incident reports for wards on a daily basis or as needed; enforces the disciplinary policies of the institution.

Processes the intake and release of wards including searches, screening for medical needs, processing and entering information onto a variety of documents, forms and logs, inventorying possessions, providing information to relevant personnel, parents, and agencies as to ward status, etc.; orients all wards to the facility setting and to staff expectations; instructs wards in personal hygiene, grooming, accepted social customs and behavior, and other skills for independent living.

Plans recreation for medium to large groups of juveniles of varying ages, ability and sophistication.

Monitor group behavior and attitude to avoid overt conflicts; maintains constant observation and security checks; supervises work, study, mealtime, cleanup and visits of wards; documents the behavior of individuals by writing timely reports and keeping accurate records.

Transports wards to medical, dental, court or other mandatory appointments including applying appropriate restraints for transport; ensures that vehicles are void of contraband, and coordinates vehicle repair; provides emergency medical First Aid treatment as needed; logs and dispenses medications as prescribed by medical staff.

Attends and participates in meetings, trainings, classes and seminars; facilitates conferences with families and assigned personnel; assists in training new and lower level personnel.

Home Supervision Assignments:

In addition to some or all of the duties outlined above:

Becomes familiar with juveniles' circumstances by interviewing families, agencies, relatives, employers, schools officials and the probationers; reviews files; sets goals for conduct; explains the nature and conditions of release; arranges for referral to other agencies; makes follow-up contacts with various legal representatives, social services, school and other agencies.

Supervises the conducts and welfare of juveniles; monitors compliance with conditions of release and evaluates adjustments to home, school, and community; modifies status as necessary; counsels probationers and families.

Prepares case reports with recommendations for continuations, modifications or termination of status; maintains logs, cases, files and records.

May appear in court to answer questions or act as a witness.

New Foundation Assignments:

In addition to some or all of the duties outlined in the first section:

Assists in providing treatment in a community based program; assists in rehabilitation by facilitating an integrated system of care, utilizing the expertise of other agencies and personnel; liaisons with and supports families; provides vocational assessments and educational support.

Facilitates substance abuse groups and drug testing.

Provides personal care services such as food, laundry, and transportation.

JOB RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

Facility rules and policies, laws and regulations as they pertain to wards assigned to the facility; juvenile problems and development.

Groups and individual counseling techniques.

Theory and application.

Crisis intervention methods.

Teamwork concepts.

Management of assaultive and violent behavior.

Basic First Aid.

Penal Code, Youthful Offenders Code, Health and Safety Code, Vehicle Code, Welfare and Institutions Code.

Laws, rules and procedures of the juvenile justice system.

Skills to:

Utilize basic office equipment, hand tools, and communication radios.

Apply physical restraints as necessary.

Drive a motor vehicle.

Ability to:

Understand and apply regulations and policies governing juvenile detention program operations.

Make decisions and independent judgments.

Communicate effectively both verbally and in writing.

Communicate effectively with people, especially teenagers, of diverse socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments.

Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships.

Determine the appropriate course of action in emergency or stressful situations.

Understand program objectives in relation to departmental goals and procedures.

Prepare narrative and statistical reports.

Comply with laws, regulations and professional practices governing juvenile detention program services and operations.

Deal firmly and fairly with clients of various socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments.

Maintain accurate records and document actions taken.

Interview people to ascertain motives or personal problems.

Remember faces, incidents and location of assigned wards at all time.

Experience and Education/Training

Experience:

One year of related experience supervising groups in a detention facility equivalent to Group Counselor (Entry) in Solano County.

Education/Training:

Completion of fifteen (15) semester **is required** units from an accredited college or university preferably in criminology, social work, psychology, sociology or a closely related field.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Possession of or ability to obtain a valid Class C California driver's license is required.

The probation period for this classification is six months.

Possession of a valid American National Red Cross Standard First Aid and Personal Safety certificate is required. Evidence of successful completion of training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation is required.

Must complete the Juvenile Counselor Core Course certified by the California Board of Corrections Standards and Training for Correctional Programs within one year of job hire.

Successful completion of training under Section 832 of the California Penal Code is required.

Peace Officers must meet minimum standards concerning citizenship, age, character, education and physical/mental condition as set forth in Section 1031 of the California Government Code.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Independent travel is required.

Successful completion of 24 hours of training annually in accordance with Title 15, Division 1 of the California Administrative Code.

Some positions in this class are located at Fouts Springs Boys' Ranch, which is an extremely isolated, national wilderness preservation areas. It is located in Colusa County, approximately a 2 1/2-hour drive from Fairfield. The nearest town (and emergency response team) is 50 miles away and access to the Ranch is a nine mile narrow mountain road. Incumbents may be assigned duties inconsistent with this concept due to the remoteness of the facility.

Positions allocated to this class may require bilingual skills.

ADA COMPLIANCE

Physical Ability: Tasks involve the ability to moderate physical effort involving lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of objects and materials of moderate weight (12-20 pounds). Tasks may involve extended periods of time at an assigned work area. Occasionally may require physical restraint of wards including lifting and holding in excess of 100 pounds with assistance.

Sensory Requirements: Some tasks require visual perception and discrimination. Some tasks require oral communications ability.

Environmental Factors: Incumbents must be able to work in an environment that may include exposure to adverse or violent situations and exposure to disease and illness. Incumbents must be able to work in a restricted, sometimes hostile environment.

Director of Human Resources

Established Date: September 1986

Revised Date: November 2002

BOS Date: June 30, 2003