

COUNTY OF SOLANO

MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST (SUPERVISING)

Rev. 10/00

Under administrative direction and technical direction of licensed staff, supervises and participates in the work of a psychiatric crisis intervention unit; serves as a technical resource to staff, clients, and the community in the absence of management staff; and performs related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Supervising Mental Health Specialist is the supervisory level in this class series. Incumbents work under the direction of management staff to supervise a unit and participate in the performance of casework duties in providing crisis intervention, initial support counseling, identifying client problems, including psychiatric and drug and alcohol dependence, determining need for hospitalization, using community resources, assisting clients with immediate problems, and in client advocacy. Final disposition of cases is subject to review and approval by licensed supervisory and professional staff.

The Supervising Mental Health Specialist class is distinguished from the Crisis Specialist class in the responsibility for supervisory duties. The Supervising Mental Health Specialist class is further distinguished from the Supervising Mental Health Clinician class in that the latter class is licensed and supervises both licensed and unlicensed counseling and clinician staff.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

1. Plans, assigns, supervises, reviews, and evaluates the work of staff assigned to a psychiatric intervention unit; assists in selection, training and formal evaluation of staff.
2. Consults with individual staff to review assignments, work progress, case management, and problem resolution; makes recommendations regarding methods of treatment and the provision of services to meet client needs.
3. Coordinates the provision of services with other program elements, related community mental health service agencies, private care providers and treatment facilities.
4. Participates in developing procedure manuals and instructional materials and assists in developing and implementing program goals; assists management in evaluating program needs and in the development of effective program delivery.
5. Provides consultation services to the community and related agencies; meets with community organizations, private individuals, agency administrators, and professional staff to gain cooperation in achieving program goals; serves as liaison to community organizations.
6. Assists in planning and conducting unit meetings.
7. For those positions requiring a Psychiatric Technician license, provides general and psychiatric nursing care authorized under the license, including the administration of medication under the supervision of a physician.
8. May perform any of the duties typically assigned to the Crisis Specialist.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Sit for extended periods; frequently stand and walk; sufficient manual dexterity to perform repetitive motion in various duties such as: keyboarding, writing, filing, reaching and grasping above shoulder level; normal eye-hand coordination; body strength sufficient to lift and carry case files; corrected vision to normal range to read fine print and computer screen; corrected hearing to speak and hear sufficiently to communicate clearly over the telephone and in person; ability to use office equipment including telephones, calculators, copiers, facsimile, computers, and other related peripheral equipment such as printers and scanners. Some assignments may require strength to lift and move clients with appropriate assistance and color vision to distinguish medications and laboratory results.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed in a variety of office, clinic and field environments and includes continuous contact with staff and the public; may be required to enter private homes to make family home visits for purpose of investigation; work involves stressful situations and includes dealing with erratic and sometimes threatening behavior; may travel to community areas that are potentially dangerous where there is exposure to potential bodily injury, infections which may cause chronic disease or death; offensive odors; high noise levels; insect bites; dust and pollens.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Supervisory principles and practices including work planning, assignment, work review, employee development and evaluation.
- Administrative principles and practices including basic budgeting, program planning and evaluation.
- Practices and administrative procedures of unit and shift coordination, including admissions criteria and procedures.
- Social and psychological needs, problems, attitudes, behavior patterns, and basic counseling methods for children, adults, older adults with emotional disorders, or psychiatric disabilities and drug and/or alcohol or drug dependence.
- Dynamics of human behavior.
- Federal, State and local laws pertaining to mental health treatment.
- Availability of, and procedures for obtaining, a wide variety of community and governmental services and resources.
- Methods and techniques of interviewing and crisis intervention.
- Principles and concepts of counseling including group leader functions.
- Fundamental understanding of psychiatric and psycho-social treatment plan development and implementation.
- Basic medications and psychotropic drugs.
- Services and activities of public and private health and welfare agencies including referral sources and community resources.
- Use of automated equipment and standard office support applications software related to the work.
- Drug and alcohol dependence and impact on psychiatric conditions.
- Impact of cultural, gender or socio-economical status on manifestations of emotional distress and mental illness.

Ability to:

- Plan, assign, supervise, review, and evaluate the work of assigned staff.
- Train staff in crisis intervention work.
- Participate in program and budget planning and program evaluation.
- Identify program needs and establish priorities for the delivery of services.
- Assess client immediate psychiatric and psychosocial needs; and insure client's receipt of needed services.
- Interview a variety of people with diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, temperaments, and mental capabilities.
- Recognize factors causing reaction or changes in client's condition or behavior.
- Make referrals to other providers of mental health services.
- Assist in the development and implementation of service plans and in the provision of rehabilitative services.
- Prepare appropriate case files, legal and clinical documentation.
- Work in stressful, emotional and confrontational situations; respond appropriately in crisis situations.
- Understand, interpret and apply complex mental health technical materials and applicable laws, codes, and regulations.
- Prepare complex and detailed reports and records and maintain confidentiality of information.
- Communicate orally and in written format and interact in situations requiring instructional, persuasive, consultative, counseling and motivational skills.
- Assist in physically containing violent and/or combative clients.
- Effectively interact with clients of various ages and socio-economic and cultural groups including those with physical and/or emotional problems.
- Work collaboratively as a member of a multi-disciplinary mental health treatment team.
- Recognize and respect limits of authority and responsibility.
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with co-workers, clients, children, representatives or the community served, employees of County departments, outside professional staff, and other agencies and the public.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Two years of experience equivalent to the Mental Health or Crisis Specialist in Solano County.

OR

Four years of experience in a private or governmental agency providing direct mental health related services to clients, which included crisis intake, screening, identifying client mental health needs, and participation in initial treatment plan development.

Completion of 60 semester units from an accredited college or university preferably in social work, rehabilitation counseling, psychology, counseling, or pastoral counseling may be substituted for up to one year of the required experience.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE, Continued

Current licensure by the State of California Board of Vocational Nurse and Psychiatric Technician Examiners as a Psychiatric Technician (PT) is required for some positions.

Note: Failure to maintain such required license may be cause for disciplinary action in accordance with Civil Service Commission rules.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Driver's License: Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Class C Driver's License may be required at the time of appointment. Loss of the Class C Driver's License is a cause for discipline. Individuals who do not meet this driver's license requirement due to a physical disability will be considered for accommodation on a case-by-case basis.

Assignment Requirements: Some positions in these classes may require work in an out-station location or in a setting with other professionals integrated as a team.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

General & Psychiatric Nursing Care: Incumbents provide general and psychiatric nursing care to clients in accordance with State law and regulation in as individual licensing permits.

Travel: Independent travel may be required to various work sites and client residences.

Background Investigation: Candidates for some positions in this class will be required to pass a background investigation in accordance with applicable law, regulation, and/or policy.

Compliance Agreements: Selectees for employment must, as a condition of employment, sign a statement agreeing to comply with mandatory child and elder abuse reporting, drug free workforce, and confidentiality.