### **COUNTY OF SOLANO**

#### SUBSTANCE ABUSE SPECIALIST

Rev. 10/00

Under administrative supervision and technical direction of licensed staff and in a learning capacity, learns to conduct initial assessments, provide group and family substance abuse counseling to clients, assist in developing and implementing substance abuse prevention, intervention, treatment and rehabilitation; manage casework, and provide outreach services in a variety of substance abuse prevention, recognition and treatment programs; and perform related duties as required.

### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

The Substance Abuse Specialist is the entry level in this class series. All work is performed within the limits of licensing and professional standards. Incumbents work in a trainee capacity learning to apply current substance abuse philosophy and strategies in the provision of substance abuse services.

The work is characterized by the performance of substance abuse casework of limited scope, difficulty, and complexity. Incumbents are expected to acquire greater independence and demonstrate proficiency in the full range of duties required for promotion to the Substance Abuse Counselor. The Substance Abuse Specialist class is distinguished from the Substance Abuse Counselor class in that the latter class requires independence of action, performance of the full range of duties, in-depth counseling, and broader participation in treatment team consultations.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES**

- 1. In accordance with established procedures and format, learns to conduct initial screening and assessment interviews with clients and significant others to obtain and record information concerning medical, social history, and client's substance abuse problems.
- 2. Learns program policies and procedures.
- 3. Learns to orient new clients on legal issues and program requirements.
- 4. Under supervision, conducts individual, group, and family counseling to facilitate and motivate behavior change; discusses individual and significant others behavioral, social and psychological issues.
- 5. Learns how to implement treatment plans; observe and record client's behavior to assure effectiveness of plan; perform case management; make appropriate referrals and monitor client progress toward attainment of goals.
- 6. Learns how to refer, or informs client of, community services available and contacts these organizations on client's behalf.
- 7. Learns how to advocate on behalf of client, act as liaison between relatives, guardians, employers, physicians, and other service providers
- 8. Based on pre-determined guidelines, learns to assess and report adequacy of services provided by other entities.
- 9. Participates in treatment team conferences to assist in the development of treatment plans and in the provision of services.
- 10. Learns how to make informational presentations to schools and community organizations concerning substance abuse; assists in development and instructional materials.
- 11. Assists in the development and implementation of special activity projects for clients.
- 12. Assists in the preparation and revision of reports and correspondence and maintains a variety of documentation, such as charting observed behaviors, treatment plan objectives, progress reports, and other data.

## **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES, Continued**

- 13. Attends and participates in a variety of internal and external meetings such as daily treatment team report, clinical meetings, interdisciplinary case conferences, inter-agency meetings, etc.
- 14. Coordinates with other caseworkers, probation officers, community and support services, and makes appropriate referrals for clients upon attainment of treatment goals; works with other agencies to obtain information, coordinate services, determine appropriate venue for service, provide training about substance abuse, and related matters.
- 15. Recognizes and respects limits of authority and responsibility; maintains confidentiality of information.
- 16. Assists clients with paperwork and enrollment procedures for various treatment and social support programs.
- 17. May operate vehicles to transport clients between facilities or to perform field duties of monitoring service provision, working with clients at other sites, and/or to coordinate with other agencies.

#### 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:

- Social and psychological needs, problems, attitudes, behavior patterns, and treatment methods of substance abuse clients.
- Dynamics of human behavior.
- Availability of and procedures for obtaining a wide variety of community and governmental services and resources.
- Methods and techniques of interviewing including crisis intervention.
- Principles of counseling including group leader functions.
- Fundamental understanding of substance abuse treatment plan development and implementation.

## Substance Abuse Specialist

## Knowledge of: (Continued)

- Terminology of substance abuse counseling.
- Services and activities of public and private health and welfare agencies including referral sources and community resources.
- Basic techniques of supervision and training.
- Use of automated equipment and standard office support applications software related to the work.

## Ability to:

- Screen and assess client needs and insure client's receipt of needed services.
- Interview a variety of people with diverse socio-economic backgrounds, temperaments, and mental capabilities.
- Formulate, promote and implement a variety of educational and informational programs regarding substance abuse problems.
- Recognize factors causing reaction or changes in client's condition or behavior.
- Make referrals to other providers of substance abuse, health and social services.
- Work in stressful, emotional and confrontational situations; respond appropriately in crisis situations.
- Understand and apply substance abuse technical materials and applicable laws, codes and regulations.
- Prepare reports and records and maintain confidentiality of information.
- Prepare appropriate case files, progress reports and casework documentation.
- Communicate orally and in written format and interact in situations requiring instructional, persuasive, consultative, counseling and motivational skills.
- Deal effectively with clients of various ages and socio-economic and cultural groups including those with physical and/or emotional problems.
- Work as a member of a multi-disciplinary substance abuse treatment team.
- Recognize and respect limits of authority and responsibility.
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with clients, children, representatives or the community served, employees of County departments, professional staff, and other agencies and the public.

# **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

One year of work experience in a substance abuse program within a mental health agency or community based organization involved in the recognition and treatment of substance abuse problems.

#### AND

Completion of thirty (30) semester hours at an accredited college or university preferably in psychology, sociology, social science, counseling, chemical dependency, or a closely related behavioral science field.

#### OR

Completion of a certificate program from an accredited educational institution in chemical dependency abuse program which included substance abuse needs assessment and counseling.

### SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

<u>Driver's License</u>: 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

<u>Travel</u>: Independent travel may be required to various work sites and client residences.

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

<u>Compliance Agreements:</u> 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.

Yolanda Irigon

Date

Director of Human Resources

Rev. 10/00

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