

MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY ADVOCACY WORKER

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: The primary responsibility of the incumbent of this position is to provide advocacy services as a compliment to traditional mental health treatment programs for seriously and persistently mentally ill adults, children or family members, intended to promote clients rights and access to mental health, health, social service, residential and other support service programs. Activities may include efforts to increase the availability, quality and appropriateness of mental health services, to encourage non-mental health agencies to develop programs which recognize and serve needs of mentally ill individuals, and to ensure fair and equal treatment under entitlement programs. Work is performed under general supervision. The work requires close consultation and cooperation with other mental health department staff and service providers in other agencies. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative Only) Interviews client, family, friends, service providers and referral source, etc. to determine services being provided and background information; If necessary completes situational assessments in certain areas of activities of daily living, socialization, recreation, interpersonal communications, vocational employment needs to provide a complete profile of the client; Compiles case files; Consults with Mental Health Department staff and service providers at other agencies in deciding what services should be provided; Determine what resources are available that would best meet the needs of the client and links the client to these resources; Develops and maintains a continuous relationship with the client, service providers and significant others; Provides advocacy services intended to ensure service continuity and coordination for each client; Monitors and evaluates client's progress and writes periodic progress reports and submits them to appropriate agencies involved with the client; Participate in treatment plans, evaluations, reviews, etc. for clients; May, as required, provide support/counsel to client to assist him/her in acquiring independent living skills in areas of activities of daily living, vocational adjustment, interpersonal skills, social/recreational, and leisure activities to build client's abilities to maintain him/herself in the community; Maintains a variety of records and reports of program activities.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Good knowledge of social casework principles and practices; Good ability to advocate on behalf of client/family; Good knowledge of economic, emotional, social and environmental factors that effect clients and their families; Good knowledge of community services providers; Good knowledge of interviewing, principles and techniques; Ability to establish and maintain effective helping relationships with service providers, clients and families; Good powers of observation; Ability to analyze human problems and to formulate and carry out plans to resolve these problems; Good knowledge of consultation strategies; Good judgment; Good oral and written communication skills; Ability to work independently; Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Either:

- A. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a bachelor's degree in the behavioral sciences or related field; OR
- B. (1) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a bachelor's degree in any area other than the behavioral sciences or related fields and (2) one year of full-time paid, or its part-time equivalent, social casework or social work experience; OR
- C. An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of A and B.

Adopted 4/10/98

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