

## **SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM SPECIALIST**

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:** The work involves the intake and on-going case management of applicants for and recipients of a variety of services provided by a local Social Services district. The case management activities performed by a Program Specialist are program oriented and normally do not include social casework and social work activities performed by a caseworker. Dependent on the organizational structure and needs of the agency, incumbents may perform a wide variety or a limited number of activities involving initial and on-going needs assessment program eligibility and benefit determination and monitoring recipient compliance with program regulations. The work is performed under direct supervision with considerable leeway allowed in carrying out the details of the work. Does related work as required.

### **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative Only)**

**Intake Activities:** Conducts an initial intake interview with applicants to obtain a wide variety of information required to assess an applicants needs, eligibility for services offered and related matters. Reviews forms completed by an applicant to ensure that they are complete and consistent. Where necessary, requests additional information from the applicant and others regarding incomplete forms and to clarify any discrepancies and/or inconsistencies noted in information submitted. Provides applicants with an overview of the services and programs available through the agency including the purposes and requirements of such services and programs. Advises applicants of services provided by other agencies. Makes initial assessments of an applicant's needs including but not limited to emergency needs in the areas of housing, food, finances, etc., non-emergency needs in the areas of child care, health care, education, employment, etc. Evaluates and/or screens applicants in the areas of identity and citizenship documentation, potential for fraudulent claims, substance abuse, domestic violence, child support enforcement, etc. Makes referrals as necessary to fraud investigations unit, child support enforcement and others. **May be required to do outreach activities throughout the County.**

**On-Going Case Management Activities:** Opens and closes temporary assistance and Medicaid cases. Computes and issues home energy, Medicaid and family assistance grants, Food stamp allotments, vendor/voucher and child care assistance. Assesses the applicants/recipients education, experience, aptitudes and interests to determine appropriate job placement. Assists recipients in obtaining employment by contacting potential employers, and performing job bank searches. Conducts and arranges for on-going training related to securing and maintaining employment on a group or individual basis including such things as preparation of resumes, completion of job applications, preparation for and conduct during job interviews. Monitors compliance with employment requirements by verifying recipient contacts with employers and employment agencies. Monitors recipient progress in completing education and occupational training and on-the-job work performance. Works with recipients to resolve problems that hinder continued employment such as lack of transportation, child care, etc. Monitors recipient compliance with a variety of program regulations to detect and prevent fraud. Conducts periodic on-going group and/or individual face to face recertification of recipient's eligibility for various programs. Reviews on-going payments to determine if any over or under payments have been made and takes appropriate corrective action. Prepares and presents and/or assists in the preparation and presentation of administrative fair hearings and employment conciliations. Operates a personal computer and/or mainframe terminal.

**FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL**

**CHARACTERISTICS:** Good knowledge of Federal, State and local rules, regulations and laws that govern applicant/recipient eligibility for social services financial assistance and employability requirements; Working knowledge of programs that relate to eligibility for social services programs such as Workers compensation, Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, etc.; Working knowledge of agencies that provide employment services and occupational training; Working knowledge of employment recruitment, screening and placement principles and techniques; Working knowledge of methods of using computerized information processing systems; Ability to operate a personal computer and/or mainframe terminal; Ability to gather and analyze eligibility information and compare to eligibility criterion and make correct decisions regarding eligibility; Ability to evaluate applicant/recipient education, experience, aptitude and interest to determine appropriate job placement and occupational training; Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with others; Good powers of observation and perception; Good judgement; Emotional maturity; Initiative; Tact; Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** Either:

**PROMOTION:** One year as a Social Services Program Specialist Trainee.

**OPEN COMPETITIVE:** Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma and either:

- A. One year experience in a New York State Social Services Department in a position involving duties and training comparable to those required of a Social Services Program Specialist.
- B. Two years experience in examining, investigating or evaluating claims for assistance, veterans or unemployment benefits, insurance or a similar program operating under established criteria for eligibility; OR
- C. Three years experience in interviewing, collecting and compiling data, account keeping or related work; OR
- D. An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of A, B or C

NOTE: Study in a regionally accredited college or university or one registered by New York State or a business school registered by New York State may be substituted for the experience on a year for year basis.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:** Appointees will be required to possess a valid New York State motor vehicle operator's license or otherwise demonstrate a capacity to meet the transportation needs of the class to perform field work responsibilities.

Adopted 6/26/98

Revised 9/22/98, 7/27/99, 4/9/01, 10/25/02

Reviewed 9/7/04, 10/10/07