



## **MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST**

Classification specifications are only intended to present a descriptive summary of the range of duties and responsibilities associated with specified positions. Therefore, specifications *may not include all* duties performed by individuals within a classification. In addition, specifications are intended to outline the *minimum* qualifications necessary for entry into the class and do not necessarily convey the qualifications of incumbents within the position.

**FLSA STATUS:** Non-Exempt

### **DEFINITION:**

Under supervision, to plan and provide a variety of mental health support services to mentally ill and emotionally disturbed persons to attain, restore, or improve individual physical, mental, or emotional functioning; provide assistance to clinical staff; participate in group and perform individual support in programs; serve as a participant advocate; and provide case management services. Perform other duties as required.

### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

Mental Health Specialist is the unlicensed experienced professional classification level in the Tri-City Mental Health Services system of care. Incumbents in this class series work with seriously and persistently mentally ill persons or seriously emotionally disturbed children and adolescents in various settings; provide a variety of supportive services designed to facilitate families' linkage and access to, and utilization of the program, other social services and stable housing; utilize available services to empower clients and to help them avoid the continuation or escalation of behaviors that could result in placement (or prolonged placement) in a higher level of care; assist in development of necessary daily living skills and competencies required for safe and successful residency in the community; outreach, communicate and coordinate with those responsible to provide housing in the service area. The incumbents report to the supervisor in the Department/Program assigned.

**EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL DUTIES:** Essential duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Evaluate the needs of mentally ill and emotionally disturbed participants; plan, develop and implement individual and group treatment activities under the guidance of licensed, professional staff; as assigned, be responsible to develop/implement specific mental health group activities.
- Participate in staff conferences with other disciplines to link clients with housing, providers, outside agencies, organizations, or departments as appropriate. Be assigned as the client's primary case manager. Perform crisis intervention counseling at a level not requiring licensure as a mental health professional; and assist professional staff in planning the range of care needed to deal with participant's care.
- Develop and determine appropriate referrals for the continuation of care.
- Document and maintain records as required and as credentialed, include attendance records, daily visit logs, daily and/or weekly interdisciplinary notes.



- As needed, document participation in consultation with outside agencies, housing providers and other services providers.
- Validate and process service requests for entry into mental health programs.
- Ensure records are in compliance with Federal, State, Local and Agency regulations for records including Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act, Public Law 111-005 (“HITECH Act”).
- Transport participants as necessary or assigned.
- Provide advocacy for participants as needed to ensure inclusion in all aspects of the community including education, socialization, employment and housing.
- Plan, implement and facilitate groups and individual sessions.
- Perform janitorial and reception duties as needed and assigned.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

Any combination of education, training, and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential duties of the position is qualifying. Incumbents will possess the most desirable combination of education, training, skills, and experience, as demonstrated in their past and current employment history. A typical example includes:

#### **Education, Training, and Experience:**

Bachelor’s degree in psychology, sociology, social work, criminal justice, or similar human service oriented degree.

OR

Associates degree with 2 years of experience working in the mental health field as a specialist in behavioral modification, physical restoration, social adjustment, or vocational adjustment.

OR

4 years of experience working in the mental health field as a specialist in the fields of behavioral modification, physical restoration, social adjustment, or vocational adjustment.

#### **Language Skills:**

Bilingual fluency in English/Spanish strongly preferred.

#### **Knowledge of:**

- Needs assessment and crisis intervention techniques.
- Case management techniques.
- Interviewing techniques.
- Fundamental psychiatric care.
- Laws, rules, and regulations relevant to the delivery of mental health services/activities.



- Principles, procedures, techniques, and trends of providing mental health services for mentally ill and emotionally disturbed participants.
- Behavioral characteristics of the mentally ill and emotionally disturbed.
- Various rehabilitation and educational activities useful when working with the mentally ill in a group setting.
- Principles and techniques of case management.
- Cultural and social-economic factors and influences affecting mental health.
- Family and group dynamics.
- Techniques of crisis intervention.
- Socio-economic conditions and trends of mental illnesses and the impact on family and community.
- Mental Health symptoms and behavior and hygiene principles.
- Techniques in care and treatment of individuals or groups of mentally ill participants.
- Principles and practices of record keeping.
- Community resources, including other mental health and social service agencies.

**Ability to:**

- Recognize crisis situations accurately and take effective action.
- Understand, interpret, and apply the laws, rules, and regulations governing the Agency and rehabilitation services.
- Communicate and interact effectively in group situations requiring instruction or motivation of others.
- Keep complete and accurate records.
- Communicate clearly, both verbally and in writing in group settings.
- Understand and follow verbal and written instructions.
- Establish and maintain effective professional relationships with participants, families, physicians, social agencies, and others.
- Work effectively with staff, participants, families, community agencies, and the public.
- Relate to participants with diverse cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Operate a computer and utilize a variety of software programs.
- Handle confidential matters with discretion.

**Special Requirements:**

- Possess a current valid Driver's License, a satisfactory driving record and meet the Agency's vehicle insurance standards.
- Receive satisfactory results from a background investigation, which includes fingerprinting; a pre-employment physical examination, which includes a drug/alcohol test and an administrative review.
- In accordance with California Government Code Section 3100, Tri-City Mental Health Center employees, in the event of a disaster, are considered disaster service workers and may be asked to protect the health, safety, lives, and property of the people of the State.



**PHYSICAL STANDARDS:**

The position requires prolonged sitting, reaching, twisting, turning, bending, stooping, lifting, and carrying paper and documents weighing up to 15 pounds in the performance of daily activities; body mobility to move from one work area to another, and operate a vehicle; grasping, repetitive hand movement and fine coordination in recording information, preparing reports and data, and using a computer keyboard; near and far vision in observing activities, reading correspondence and reports, statistical data, and using a computer; and communicating with others on the phone, in person, and in meetings.