



PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIAN I/II

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 immediate (Psychiatric Technician I) or general (Psychiatric Technician II) supervision, provides medication monitoring, support, and education to an assigned caseload of clients in the office and in the field; distributes and administers oral and injectable medications in accordance with psychiatrist orders; observes, assesses, and reports on clients' behavior, symptoms, and reactions; performs crisis assessment and intervention; provides linkage and referrals to additional community resources and services; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:

Receives immediate (Psychiatric Technician I) or general (Psychiatric Technician II) supervision from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

Psychiatric Technician I: This is the entry-level classification in the Psychiatric Technician series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents learn and perform routine medication monitoring, administration, and support, while learning Authority policies and procedures. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied, complex, and difficult; close supervision and frequent review of work lessen as an incumbent demonstrates skill to perform the work independently. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the Psychiatric Technician II level but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise.

Psychiatric Technician II: This is the journey-level classification in the Psychiatric Technician series. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Psychiatric Technician I by the performance of the full range of duties as assigned, working independently, and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit.

Positions in the Psychiatric Technician series are flexibly staffed; positions at the Psychiatric Technician II level are normally filled by advancement from the Psychiatric Technician I level; progression to the Psychiatric Technician II level is dependent on (i) management affirmation that

the position is performing the full range of duties assigned to the classification; (ii) satisfactory work performance; (iii) the incumbent meeting the minimum qualifications for the classification including any licenses and certifications; and (iv) management approval for progression to the Psychiatric Technician II level.

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

Positions at the Psychiatric Technician I level may perform some of these duties and responsibilities in a learning capacity.

- Under the direction of clinical staff, provides medication management services to a caseload of clients in the office and in the field; ensures the proper acquisition and administration of medication.
- Provides education and training to clients, their families, and/or staff on the proper care and use of medications, including symptoms of, reactions to, or side effects of, specific medications; informs clients of the impact of abuse and/or misuse of medications.
- Conducts home/field visits to evaluate client's physical environment and behavior such as anxiety, withdrawals, and behavioral health progression/regression.
- Takes and records measures of clients' vital signs, physical condition, and behaviors; assists and observes clients self-dispense medication as prescribed by a psychiatrist and administers scheduled injections.
- Conducts medication checks on clients to assess their overall medication management capabilities; takes appropriate action if client poses danger with respect to the use or abuse of medication; observes, evaluates, records, and reports to professional staff changes in client's condition.
- Motivates clients to develop self-reliance in daily living; encourages clients to participate in group and/or individual therapy/program activities.
- As a member of a multidisciplinary treatment team, provides information and updates on medication changes, concerns, side effects, and other important client information; keeps clients stable and medication compliant with the treatment goal of improving overall life functionality.
- Performs crisis intervention for clients and walk-in non-clients; evaluates individuals to identify level of stable behavior; provides support and assistance in problem resolution; coordinates or arranges for the provision of appropriate care services; and places holds, as necessary.
- Refers clients for proper treatment and placement in properly licensed facilities.
- Maintains accurate, detailed, and thorough documentation, case records, and notes of all billable and non-billable activities and services related to client care; completes necessary documentation for billing purposes.

- Maintains client confidentiality in compliance with all Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) regulations.
- Observes and complies with all Authority and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols.
- Responds to 5150 evaluation requests from area police departments and other organizations contracting with the Authority for such services.
- Performs related duties as required.

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. The 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 and Experience

Education:

- Psychiatric Technician I/II: Equivalent to a level of education and course of study, which would qualify as an accredited program for incumbents to obtain licensure as a Psychiatric Technician in the State of California.

Experience:

- Psychiatric Technician I: None.
- Psychiatric Technician II: Two (2) years of experience performing medication management and support duties for behavioral health clients.

Licenses and Certifications

- Possession of a valid Psychiatric Technician licensure issued by the California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians, to be maintained throughout employment.
- Possession of a valid California Driver's License, a satisfactory driving record, and a properly registered and insured vehicle, to be maintained throughout employment.
- Psychiatric Technician II: Possession of a valid Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) designation, to be maintained throughout employment.

Knowledge of:

Positions at the Psychiatric Technician I level may exercise some of these knowledge and abilities statements in a learning capacity.

- Medications administered to psychiatric clients and their possible side effects.
- Patient behavior and mental health principles and techniques involved in the care and treatment of individuals or groups of mentally ill and emotionally disturbed patients.

- Methods and techniques of observing clients for negative reactions to medications, or addictive/dependency outcomes, and courses of action to treat same.
- Behavior patterns of psychiatric clients with symptoms of emotional disturbance and behavioral illness.
- Medical and psychiatric terminology.
- Crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques.
- Principles and practices of case management for behavioral health clients, including client charting and process documentation.
- Cultural, social, and environmental factors and influences affecting behavioral health.
- Community and governmental services and resources.
- Basic needs and challenges for individuals and families accessing behavioral health services, including cultural barriers.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations as well as industry standards and best practices pertinent to the assigned area of responsibility, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Authority and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service, interacting and effectively dealing with the public, community-based organizations and service providers, stakeholders, and Authority staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Provide medication management services to a diverse range of clients with varying degrees of behavioral health issues and disorders.
- Administer medications and observe, record, and report their effects.
- Skillfully perform the full range of nursing duties and responsibilities.
- Work collaboratively with medical professionals, pharmacies, and insurance companies to obtain needed client medications.
- Observe client behavior to determine whether intervention is needed, or to identify negative reactions to medications.
- Interpret Authority programs and policies to clients, the general public, and outside agencies/organizations.
- Establish and maintain the confidence of clients and family/caregivers with diverse cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Understand scope of authority in making independent decisions.
- Effectively utilize community resources to assist clients.
- Listen attentively to clients and address their needs and issues fairly and professionally.
- Work well with and provide services to a variety of clients in various stages of behavioral health illness/treatment; maintain appropriate boundaries, identify and nurture strengths, and support their right to make independent decisions as appropriate.
- Perform crisis intervention, respond promptly to client emergency situations and take effective action within scope of authority.
- Prepare clear and concise correspondence, client case documentation, and other written materials.

- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and procedural guidelines.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Maintain the confidentiality of client information.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with clients, their families, Authority staff, and the behavioral health community.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS (ADA)

When assigned to an office environment, must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone; ability to stand and walk between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information.

When performing field work, must possess mobility to work in changing site conditions; to sit, stand, and walk on level, uneven, or slippery surfaces; to reach, twist, turn, kneel, and bend; and to operate a motor vehicle and visit various sites throughout the Tri-Cities; vision to observe client behavior, signs of illness, and potential hazards. The job involves frequent walking to locate, assist, and deliver services to clients, with exposure to hazardous materials and waste in some locations. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects averaging a weight of 15 pounds, or heavier weights, in all cases with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees also work in the field and are exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, and may be exposed to blood and bodily fluids, and other hazardous physical substances and fumes. Employees interact with clients with behavioral disorders who may display erratic and assaultive behavior, including those who require emergency crisis intervention. Employees may also interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

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.

Employees serve as members of the Authority's on-call crisis intervention team and may be required to be available and respond to crisis situation 24/7 during on-call rotation.

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.