

SOCIAL SERVICES CLIENT ASSISTANT (SUBSTANCE ABUSE)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is specialized social services work that involves responsibility for performing a variety of client support activities, including but not limited to reviewing and evaluating eligibility for programs and services and ensuring placement in programs, as appropriate. The work differs from that of a Social Services Client Assistant in the focus on the special needs of alcoholic and/or chemically dependent clients and liaison work with the court system. The work is performed under the direct supervision of a professional and in accordance with New York State guidelines, regulations, and departmental policies and procedures. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Gathers information from applicants, reviews documents for completeness and accuracy, evaluates resources, and provides preliminary determinations regarding eligibility;

Interviews clients and their families, as needed, in order to identify needs, determine appropriate placements in programs, and assess progress;

Makes referrals to community resources and programs, including those that pertain to treatment and services for substance abuse, and contacts service providers to facilitate smooth transitions into programs;

Provides paraprofessional assistance in treatment by meeting with clients and providing support and/or recommendations related to concrete services and problems identified by a therapeutic team and/or professional-level treatment staff;

Provides routine guidance and assistance to clients in order to ensure their understanding of programs, service, and requirements, and to facilitate cooperation and participation in programs;

Assists in planning, organizing, and implementing special projects by gathering and organizing information, making recommendations regarding procedures, developing or revising forms, initiating contacts with outside agencies and community agencies, etc.;

Acts as liaison to community agencies in order to discuss client progress, coordinate services, etc. when appropriate;

Identifies, contacts, and gathers information regarding public/community and private resources and evaluates their potential for meeting the needs of clients;

Prepares a variety of reports, as assigned;

Uses computer applications or other automated systems such as spreadsheets, word processing, database software, etc. in performing work assignments.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Good knowledge of Federal, New York State, and local social services laws, regulations, and programs, especially as they affect eligibility for various Department of Social Services programs, including financial assistance*; working knowledge of basic drug and alcohol abuse problems; working knowledge of paraprofessional techniques used in drug and alcohol abuse treatment programs; working knowledge of common terms and concepts relative to substance abuse; working knowledge of Rockland County public and private programs and resources*; ability to collect and organize basic data; ability to maintain a variety of records and prepare reports; ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing; ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with others; ability to use computer applications such as spreadsheets, word processing, email and database software*; ability to conduct basic interviews in order to gather information.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: An Associate's degree or higher and two (2) years of work experience that substantially involved the provision of services to individuals or clients in a human services setting**, at least one (1) year of which must have included the direct provision of services (e.g., interviewing clients or patients, arranging for services, counseling) to alcoholic and/or chemically dependent clients.

(over)

NOTES:

1. Credentialing as an Alcoholism/Substance Abuse Counselor by the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services may be substituted for the Associate's degree.
2. A minimum of 150 training*** clock hours**** in Alcohol/Substance Abuse-specific counseling from an accredited institute of learning or a NYS OASAS Certified Education and Training Provider may be substituted for the Associate's degree.

*To be demonstrated during the probationary period.

**Human services setting shall be defined as a public or private organization in which human services are provided, generally to prevent as well as resolve problems and to assist individuals in functioning as effectively as possible; services include but are not limited to social, economic, psychological, and/or emotional support services that are provided to clients or individuals (services are generally related to public assistance, social services, mental health, substance abuse, aging, special need children, etc.). Human services experience involves direct contact with clients and such contact requires judgment on the part of the human services provider in interacting with or responding to clients.

***Training in Alcohol/Substance Abuse-specific counseling must have been: (i) in accordance with the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services training requirements (e.g., the NYS OASAS Training Catalog); and (ii) as provided by a NYS OASAS Certified Education and Training Provider or (iii) alcoholism and substance abuse-related courses at an accredited college or university.

****Pursuant to the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, "clock hours" equals the actual number of hours documented for education and training received (e.g., 9:00 am to 11:30 am = 2.5 clock hours). "Clock hours" is also equal to credits awarded after successful completion of an academic course; one college credit hour (undergraduate or graduate) equals 15 "clock hours" (e.g., 3 college credits equals 45 clock hours).