

CLASSIFICATION: FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST I

Class Code: 4311-17

Date Established: 08-13-02

Occupational Code: 7-7-7

Date of Last Revision: 7-17-15

Exempt Status: Non-Exempt

BASIC PURPOSE: To provide professional, whole-person needs assessment, information, and referral services in determining and certifying eligibility for programs of assistance. To act as a liaison between clients and partner agencies, and to assist recipients in progress toward self-sufficiency.

CHARACTERISTIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assesses whole-person service needs and refers clients to other social service, employment, education, health, or vocational rehabilitation agencies, inside and outside DHHS, ensuring that needs are met.
- Assists clients with emergencies and makes necessary referrals for assistance in areas such as homelessness, loss of utilities, and lack of childcare.
- Interviews clients, in person or on the phone, and in a variety of community locations, obtaining pertinent information utilizing an interactive interviewing process, and determining and certifying eligibility for programs of assistance.
- Evaluates case information, determining if all data is available to make an accurate determination of eligibility across all programs and services of application.
- Identifies and gathers additional case data by contacting multiple sources to verify and evaluate information, accessing automated databases and cross-matches, via web-based software applications, and via other resources as required.
- Applies complex and changing federal and state policy in addition to the consistent and accurate application of rules and regulations.
- Reviews and verifies asset history submitted by applicants, recipients, legal counsel, and authorized representatives, identifying improper asset transfers and determining the penalty period when appropriate; initiates collateral communications with financial institutions and follow-up contacts with clients, clarifying or requesting additional information.
- Processes complex multi-program cases, and complex case activities with minimal supervisory oversight.
- Communicates effectively with a diverse client population in person, on the phone, or online, assessing whole-person needs, providing eligibility services, answering questions, providing program and service information, explaining program criteria, and completing referrals.
- Documents case files and update automated eligibility system to ensure timeliness and accuracy of eligibility and referral information; determines if fraud or over issuance of benefits is present and makes referrals for investigation.
- Testifies at Administrative Appeal Hearings and/or court proceeding, providing testimony regarding client cases.
- Assists Family Services Specialist Trainees with workload assignments, interpretation of policy, and responding to client questions.

DISTINGUISHING FACTORS:

Skill: Requires skill in recommending routine changes in standardized operating procedures OR in retrieving, compiling, and reporting data according to established procedures OR in operating complex machines.

Knowledge: Requires logical or scientific understanding to analyze problems of a specialized or professional nature in a particular field.

Impact: Requires responsibility for contributing to immediate, ongoing agency objectives by facilitating the direct provision of services to the public or other state agencies. Errors at this level result in inaccurate reports or invalid test results and require a significant investment of time and resources to detect.

Supervision: Requires no supervision of employees or functions.

Working Conditions: Requires performing regular job functions in a controlled environment with minimal exposure to disagreeable job elements and little risk of hazard to physical or mental health.

Physical Demands: Requires light work, including continuous walking or operating simple equipment for extended periods of time as well as occasional strenuous activities such as reaching or bending.

Communication: Requires explaining facts, interpreting situations, or advising individuals of alternative or appropriate courses of action. This level also requires interviewing or eliciting information from state employees or members of the general public.

Complexity: Requires coordinating a combination of diverse job functions in order to integrate professional and technical agency goals. This level also requires considerable judgment to implement a sequence of operations or actions.

Independent Action: Requires a range of choice in applying a number of technical or administrative policies under general direction and making routine decisions or in recommending modifications in work procedures for approval by supervisor.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Education: Bachelor's degree or four years of education at a recognized college or university. Each additional year of approved formal education may be substituted for one year of required work experience.

Experience: Two years of experience in: client or customer service-related work; explaining rules or regulations; interviewing; claims examination or similar audit and verification activities; direct social service delivery; implementing technical instructions; related work in fields such as banking, accounting, finance, auditing, insurance, customer service, marketing, or social services; or other related work. Work in positions such as Family Services Specialist Trainee, Social Worker, Case Manager, Counselor, Case Technician, or Fiscal Services Specialist will be considered as related experience. Each additional year of approved work experience may be substituted for one year of required formal education.

License/Certifications: Must possess a valid driver's license and/or have access to transportation for statewide travel.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

In keeping with the goal of the Department of Health and Human Services to utilize a "whole person" client service model, all Family Services Specialists (FSS) will be required to develop and maintain knowledge and understanding of the full range of all DHHS programs of assistance. The successful candidate must also possess: strong verbal and written communication skills; the ability to work effectively with a wide range of clients and community stakeholders; and proficiency in computer skills, including keyboarding, Microsoft Word or similar word processing software, Internet, and e-mail systems

For appointment consideration, FSS I applicants:

1. Must be able to travel to District Offices and/or other work locations up to 50 miles away from assigned work location for temporary assignment or reassignment and/or to attend mandatory job training.
2. Must be able to work overtime when needed.

For promotion from FSS Trainee to FSS I, employees:

1. Must have successfully completed the Family Services Specialist New Hire Training and all supplemental curricula.
2. Must have attained a minimum of 80% in a policy and procedures examination.
3. Must attain a satisfactory performance evaluation as an FSS Trainee, be in good standing, and receive a performance based recommendation for promotion to the level of FSS I by the immediate Supervisor and a Regional Manager or Administrator after completion of 12 months of employment as an FSS Trainee.

For hires directly into the FSS I level, employees:

1. Must successfully complete the Family Services Specialist New Hire Training and all supplemental curricula within the first 12 months of employment.
2. Must attain a minimum of 80% in a policy and procedures examination within the first 12 months of employment.

RECOMMENDED WORK TRAITS: Knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the Department or Division program(s). Knowledge of the procedures and practices of interviewing, including interviewing in difficult client situations . Knowledge of the principles and methods of assessment. Knowledge of the regulations pertaining to departmental programs. Knowledge of the social service agencies available in the geographic area. Ability to exercise judgment and to work on assignments independently. Ability to follow specific instructions in gathering facts, data, or resources in abstracting and organizing required information. Ability to evaluate client situations to determine service needs. Ability to analyze and evaluate data and information to make decisions based upon fact-finding interviews within the parameters of the rules and regulations of the agency. Ability to communicate effectively with a diverse, sometimes difficult, client base with varied and complex service needs. Ability to operate a variety of automated systems. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with co-workers, clients and the public. Must be willing to maintain appearance appropriate to assigned duties and responsibilities as determined by the agency appointing authority.

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT: This class specification is descriptive of general duties and is not intended to list every specific function of this class title.