



## **MENTAL HEALTH WORKER I/II**

### **DEFINITION**

Under immediate or general supervision, assists in planning, developing and evaluating mental health services for individuals and groups; provides liaison support between clients and service providers; and performs related duties as assigned.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives immediate or general supervision from assigned supervisory or management staff. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

*Mental Health Worker I:* This is the entry-level class in the Mental Health Worker series. Initially under immediate supervision, incumbents perform the more routine duties while learning departmental and treatment policies and procedures. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence. Positions at the I-level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the 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.

*Mental Health Worker II:* This is the fully qualified journey-level classification in the Mental Health Worker series. Positions at this level are distinguished from the I-level 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.

This class is distinguished from Mental Health Clinician and Psychiatric Technician classes in that the latter are certified classes providing professional clinical patient support.

Positions in the Mental Health Worker class series are flexibly staffed and positions at the II-level are normally filled by advancement from the I-level, after gaining the knowledge, skill, and experience which meet the qualifications for and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work of the higher-level class.

### **EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)**

- Assists licensed professional staff members in assessing the mental status of clients.
- Interviews and screens prospective clients and prepares written observations of their behavior.
- Refers clients and prospective clients to appropriate treatment sources.
- Initiates immediate action in case of emergency problems and expedites obtaining needed services.
- Receives and responds to crisis intervention and other urgent service requests in the office, correctional facilities, and community.
- Provides supportive services in a psychiatric health facility or a day treatment center including individual, group or family counseling. Develops communications with agencies specifically related to aftercare on an as-needed and where-needed basis.

- Provides client advocacy and leadership for the integration and mobilization of community resources and community organization efforts to improve community services for the mentally handicapped.
- Develops community re-entry plans for mental health patients; organizes and develops family support groups for the relatives of patients.
- Monitors in- and out-patient treatment stages to ensure movement to the community level for individual clients, (i.e., psychiatric facility, protective living, outpatient care, independent living).
- Prepares a variety of reports and documentation including progress notes on client behavior; maintains accurate records and files; charts client histories and treatment information.
- Confers with medical, mental health and inter-agency staff regarding client needs and ways of improving staff's ability to impact on clients; confers with board and care staff regarding suitability of client placement.
- Monitors client vital signs in an inpatient facility; participates in and leads various group activities such as exercise and art.
- Performs driving, facility or house cleaning, cooking and other household living tasks for mental health clients.
- Coordinates food ordering and record keeping for clients.
- Performs standard office support work such as answering telephones, maintaining files, and operating computer terminals and standard office equipment.
- Attendance and punctuality that is observant of scheduled hours on a regular basis.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

*Some knowledge and abilities may be performed by positions at the entry (I) level in a learning capacity.*

#### **Knowledge of:**

- Principles and techniques related to care and treatment of the mentally disabled.
- Basic concepts of mental and emotional disturbances and mental disabilities.
- Medical terminology and concepts related to basic mental health care.
- Community resources aiding in assistance to the mentally disabled.
- Principles and practices of note taking and report writing.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations.
- Standard office practices and procedures, including the use of standard office equipment and computers.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County 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.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

#### **Ability to:**

- Observe and accurately describe client behavior and activities.
- Counsel and act as advocate for the mentally disabled.
- Perform crisis intervention and respond promptly to client emergency situations.
- Take effective action to control potentially violent incidents.
- Exercise sound independent judgment within established guidelines.
- Maintain accurate records and files.

- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence and other written materials.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and procedural guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

### **Education and Experience:**

*A combination of the required experience, education, and training that would provide the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying; however, education may not solely substitute for the required experience.*

*Mental Health Worker I:* Two years of experience in a mental health or related setting. College level course work in psychology or a related subject may be substituted for the experience requirement on a year for year basis.

*Mental Health Worker II:* In addition to the above, two years of experience in providing direct client care and treatment at a level equivalent to the County's class of Mental Health Worker I.

### **Licenses and Certifications:**

- Possession of, or ability to obtain and maintain, a valid California or Nevada Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer, and to operate a motor vehicle to visit various County and service sites; vision to observe client behavior, read printed material and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. Standing in and walking between work areas is frequently 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 frequently bend, stoop, kneel, and reach to perform assigned duties, as well as push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds with the use of proper equipment. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

Employees work is primarily performed indoors, which may include a hospital, mental health facility, correctional facility with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may work in the field and may be exposed to loud noise levels and cold and/or hot temperatures. Employees may interact with clients with behavioral disorders under emotional duress including those which require emergency crisis intervention. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

Must be willing to work after hours, weekends, and holidays as needed.