



SOCIAL WORKER IV

DEFINITION

Under general direction, this master's degree level performs casework of an advanced nature dealing with complex individual and family problems; undertakes intensive treatment plans and counseling requiring professional knowledge and training; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from an assigned Social Worker Supervisor II or other higher-level supervisor or manager pursuant to California Department of Social Services Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Division 31 regulations (31.070). Given an approved waiver from the State of California, the supervisory structure could be adjusted in the South Lake Tahoe Office. Exercises technical and functional direction over and provides training to lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the highest non-supervisory level classification in the Social Worker class series. Incumbents are required to have a master's degree and perform casework requiring the application of high level and sophisticated social services expertise and techniques, generally assigned to areas such as adult and child protective services. Performance of the work requires the use of considerable independence, initiative, and discretion within established guidelines.

This class is distinguished from the next higher class of Social Worker Supervisor I in that the latter is the first supervisory-level.

This class is further distinguished from Social Worker III in that the latter does not require a master's degree.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Performs case studies for the purpose of assessing problems and determining appropriate types and methods of treatment.
- Carries a caseload of more difficult types of social services cases requiring a high degree of technical competence, such as situations where environmental forces affect family life.
- Receives and responds to reports of suspected abuse; obtains information from reporters; personally investigates and assesses situations to protect vulnerable adults and children, and recommends alternate placement; may provide information to law enforcement or district attorneys; may be required to work on-call; may testify in court.
- Develops intensive long- or short-term treatment plans, which require a comprehensive fund of professional knowledge with the aim of improving or restoring individual or family functioning.
- Ensures all services are delivered in a respectful, culturally sensitive, and appropriate manner and in conformance with agency, state, and federal requirements.
- Acts as a casework consultant to staff members without professional training.
- May perform specific types of counseling and support to clients with complex or specialized needs incapable of self-care.

- Receives reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation regarding children and/or older and dependent adults; investigates allegations by conducting interviews with victims and others; assesses situations to protect vulnerable adults and children and recommends, implements, and monitors alternate placement; may remove children from unsafe situations.
- Coordinates and directly monitors family visitations to assess progress toward the case plan goals.
- Interprets and explains rules, regulations, and policies to clients and applicants.
- Makes home visits in connection with casework assignments.
- Counsels or provides guidance and support to individuals and/or families with more complex or specialized needs including adult protective services, crisis intervention, special medical or legal needs, and other social services.
- Assesses prospective foster and adoptive parents; matches children with adoptive/foster parents, and counsels foster and adoptive families.
- Refers clients to other staff members or to community resources for direct and intensive services and specialized counseling; advocates on clients behalf for most appropriate services including enabling services.
- Maintains casework records and handles relevant correspondence.
- Develops and prepares court reports, case plans, case narratives, and safety plans in automated computer systems.
- Enters and retrieves data and narratives from automated computer systems.
- Prepares and maintains case records and databases; communicates decisions, timelines, recommendations, and case plans to clients, families, and service providers.
- Analyzes data; interprets directions, procedures, and regulations, and develops appropriate responses.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Advanced principles of public assistance policies and programs.
- Socioeconomic conditions and trends.
- Advanced principles of individual and group behavior.
- Applicable laws, rules, and regulations governing the operation of the public welfare agency and the role and responsibilities of a social worker.
- Principles and practices of counseling, bio-psychosocial assessments, and therapy.
- Physical and mental health principles and the impact on the personality.
- Local socioeconomic conditions, trends, and current problems and methodology in the field of public social services.
- Advanced principles and techniques of interviewing and recording the social casework.
- Principles and practices of organization, workload management, and time management.
- Principles and practices of note taking and report writing.
- Phone etiquette and interview techniques.
- Community organizations and social problems calling for the use of public and private community resources.
- Advanced principles involved in the nature, growth, and development of personality; and in-group processes.
- Medical, legal, economic, and social management needs of individuals and families.
- Strategies and protocols surrounding crisis intervention techniques.
- Psychopathology, the different types of mental illness diagnoses, how mental illness affects human behavior, and mental health services and treatments utilized by clients.
- Signs, stages, and dynamics of abuse, and the effects of abuse on child/adult development and behavior.
- Signs and symptoms of alcohol and drug use/abuse in adults and children and the effects on families.

- Standards for maintaining clients safely in home; options for placement; effects of removing clients from unsafe situations.
- Current issues in the field of social welfare.
- Principles of analysis and problem-solving methodology.
- 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:

- Apply the principles of child psychology and family relationships.
- Evaluate personal psychological factors in the child and/or family's situation.
- Recognize signs of abuse for children, the elderly, and dependent adults; assess risk factors and potential dangers to clients.
- Act effectively in stressful situations.
- Demonstrate skill in the more difficult casework areas.
- Analyze data; interpret directions, procedures, and regulations; and develop appropriate responses or actions.
- Perform job duties under stressful conditions and respond appropriately to situations.
- Apply existing laws, rules, and regulations to welfare department operations and interpret and explain to the applicant, recipient, or others public social services programs, policies, rules, and regulations.
- Work with difficult or complex cases/clients including clients with dual diagnoses, potentially dangerous clients, or legally complex cases.
- Interact professionally and respectfully with clients, including difficult, hostile, or distressed clients.
- Work constructively within a community setting and effectively use appropriate resources and services.
- Perform all duties in conformance with the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.
- Obtain and recognize relevant and significant facts.
- Organize and maintain work detail.
- Establish and maintain client rapport on an individual basis.
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with legal standards and/or county regulations.
- Effectively represent the department and the County in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- 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, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

A master's degree in Social Work from an accredited college or university;

OR

A master's degree from an accredited two (2) year counseling program*;

OR

One (1) year of full-time experience performing advanced journey-level social work case management equivalent to the County's class of Social Worker III in a public or private agency; and

A master's degree in social or behavioral science, psychology, anthropology, sociology, or counseling education.

*Qualifying counseling degrees from a two (2) year counseling program includes: Marriage and Family Therapy, Clinical Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Addiction Counseling, Gerontology, or Counseling Psychology.

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 meeting sites; vision to 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 partially in an office environment with moderate noise levels and controlled temperature conditions and partially in the field when conducting home visits. As such, employees may have occasional exposure to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, and direct exposure to hazardous physical conditions. Employees may be subject to clients or members of the public afflicted with behavioral disorders or who are under emotionally stressful conditions. Employees may interact with upset individuals connected with the client, staff, and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

May be required to work evenings, weekends, holidays, and on-call. Performs job duties under stressful conditions and emergency situations.