

SOCIAL WORKER I

DEFINITION

Performs basic social services casework; identifies client needs for more intensive casework services and provides referrals; carries a caseload of moderately difficult cases; manages a caseload of increasingly difficult cases; and performs other related work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Working under close supervision, Social Worker I is the entry/trainee class in the professional Social Worker series. Employees in this class are learning casework methods, procedures, policies and carry a limited non-complex social services caseload under close supervision and receive in-service training; are given close and constant supervision while learning social work principles, social service programs, basic case work methods and techniques, and departmental rules, regulations and procedures. Typical assignments are within child welfare and adult services programs; however, at the agency's discretion positions may be assigned to employment services to perform social services case work for employment services clients as required by department needs. As requisite skill and knowledge is developed, greater independence and the full scope of responsibility is exercised. Unless a position is permanently allocated to the Social Worker I level due to the nature of the work, employees are expected to promote to the Social Worker II after one year of satisfactory performance at the trainee level.

REPORTS TO

Social Services Supervisor or Program Manager/Assistant Director

CLASSIFICATIONS DIRECTLY SUPERVISED

None.

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EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

- Conducts interviews with clients, family members, and other in their home, in the office, or via telephone to assess the basic social, physical and mental needs of clients and obtain health information in order to identify and provide social services.
- Performs case studies and evaluates individual and family case information to assess the safety of children and adults; determines appropriate types and methods of treatment.
- Assesses reports of suspected abuse; may provide information to law enforcement or district attorneys
- Develops and carries out culturally sensitive non-complex to moderate treatment plans for an assigned caseload in conformance with agency, state and federal requirements
- Assists clients and family members to develop strategies to accomplish case plan goals
- Refers clients to other staff members or to community resources for direct and intensive services and specialized counseling as necessary
- Advocates on clients behalf for most appropriate services including enabling services
- Assists applicants and recipients in utilizing available resources
- Interprets policies, rules, and regulations of the agency to applicants, clients and others within the scope of their responsibility
- Makes home visits in connection with casework assignments
- Prepares and maintains case records and databases; communicates decisions, timelines, recommendations and case plans to clients, families and service providers
- May testify in court
- May be assigned to specialized functions
- Participates in in-service training and other staff development activities to increase knowledge of the social work processes and achieve technical competence
- Receives casework consultation from professionally trained staff members
- Provides community outreach for various agency programs
- Maintains client confidentiality; performs all duties in conformance with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics
- Performs related duties as assigned

TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Sit for extended periods; frequently stand and walk; normal manual dexterity and eye-hand coordination; corrected hearing and vision to normal range; verbal communication; use of office equipment including computers, telephones, calculators, copiers, and FAX.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed in an office; occasionally works outside; continuous contact with staff and the public.

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DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of organization, workload management and time management
- Principles and practices of note taking, report writing, and English composition, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Phone etiquette and interview techniques
- Socio-economic conditions and trends
- Basic principles of individual and group behavior
- Current issues in the field of social welfare
- Role and responsibilities of social workers
- Principles of interviewing and problem-solving methodology
- Basic public welfare programs on the Federal, State, and local level
- General principles of public assistance policies and programs
- Develops and prepares court report, case plans, case narratives and safety plans in automated computer systems
- Enters and retrieves data and narratives from automated computer systems
- Basic principles and techniques of interviewing and recording of social casework
- Laws, rules, and regulations governing the operation of the public welfare agency and the role of a social worker
- Community organization and the social problems calling for the use of public and private community resources
- Basic principles involved in the nature, growth, and development of personality and in-group processes
- Knowledge of the medical, legal, economic, and social management needs of individuals and families with special medical needs such as HIV disease, drug dependency, the medically fragile child, Alzheimer's, and the terminally ill
- Knowledge of the strategies and protocols surrounding crisis intervention techniques such as voice modulation and assessing the potential for suicide
- Knowledge of basic psychopathology, the different types of mental illness diagnoses, how mental illness affects human behavior and mental health services and treatments utilized by

clients.

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Ability **to:**

- Understand and learn the agency programs, policies, and procedures
- Obtain facts and recognize the relevance and significance
- Organize and maintain work detail
- Establish and maintain effective client rapport and professional working relationships with agency staff, clients, and others
- Communicate effectively, both orally (phone and in person) and in writing
- Analyze situations and adopt effective courses of action
- Interpret and explain to the applicant, recipient, or others public social service programs, policies, rules, and regulations
- Develop skill in interviewing case recording and interpretation
- Work within a community setting and effectively use appropriate resources and services
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with legal standards and/or county regulations
- Work effectively in emotionally charged or stressful settings/emergencies
- Operate a personal computer and other office equipment and software
- Analyze data, interpret and apply directions, rules, policies, procedures and regulations, and develop appropriate responses
- Accept and use constructive feedback
- Interact professionally and respectfully with clients including difficult, hostile, or distressed clients
- Respect cultural differences
- Work with increasingly difficult cases /clients including clients with dual diagnoses, potentially dangerous clients or legally complex cases
- Analyze data from multiple sources, interpret and apply complex directions, rules, policies, procedures and regulations, and develop appropriate responses

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Training and Experience:

Qualifications needed for this position:

Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university;

OR

Successful completion of thirty (30) college semester units (45 quarter units) from an accredited college or university, including fifteen (15) semester units (22.5 quarter units) in social welfare, social/human services, sociology, or other social or behavioral science*

AND

One (1) year of full-time experience in the Social Service Aide, Eligibility Worker II, Employment and Training Worker II or comparable classification; OR Three (3) years of full-time experience providing direct client services to disadvantaged adults or children in a private or public agency.

*Examples of acceptable social or behavioral science courses include: anthropology, criminal justice, education, ethnic studies, history, human development, human services, law, nursing, nutrition, psychology, public health, social welfare, sociology, welfare, women's studies.

Special Requirements: Must possess a valid driver's license at time of application and a valid California Driver's License by the time of appointment. The valid California License must be maintained throughout employment.

Employees in this classification may be required to work holidays, weekends, and evenings. Some travel may be required.

Ability to pass a background/criminal records check as authorized by sections 16501 of the California Welfare Institutions Code and section 11105.3 of the California Penal Code.

All County of Plumas employees are designated Disaster Service Workers through State law (California Government Code Section 3100-3109). Employment with Plumas County requires the affirmation of a loyalty oath to this effect. Employees are Required to complete all Disaster Service Work related training as assigned, and to return to work as ordered in the event of an emergency.