



MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION SPECIALIST

Department: Sheriff's Department
Job Class #: 361000
Pay Range: Professional 08

FLSA: Non-Exempt
Represented: No
Civil Service Approved: 5/31/11

Classification descriptions are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in this class and are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

GENERAL FUNCTION: Employees in this classification are responsible for the evaluation of mentally ill inmates at Pierce County Detention and Corrections Center. Work involves the evaluation of inmates, crisis intervention and stabilization services, and referrals to community services upon release. Incumbents work closely with correctional staff regarding appropriate security levels and housing recommendations factoring in clinical assessment regarding suicide risk and vulnerability due to a mental disorder or development disability, and to oversee and ensure that appropriate care is given within the detention facility and/or available upon release or transfer to another facility.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Receive referrals for mental health care, triage and prioritize according to emergent level of need.
- Evaluate psychological condition of referred inmates as requested.
- Determine appropriate housing needs for mentally and emotionally disturbed inmates within the PCDCC and upon release or transfer.
- Assess the involvement and extent of substance abuse and make appropriate referrals.
- Write reports, including diagnoses, treatment plans and recommendations, progress reports, and other special reports as required.
- Screen referrals for psychiatric medication assessments.
- Make recommendations for on-going treatment options.
- Provide risk assessment and brief crisis stabilization services.
- Make involuntary treatment referrals.
- Follow-up on treatment recommendation and deal with emergency and crisis situations as required within the jail setting.
- Coordinate transportation for voluntary hospitalizations and assure custody staff is advised of arranged ambulance transport by DMHP (Designated Mental Health Professional) for involuntary detentions.
- Participate in rotating call assignment to assure 24 hour mental health coverage.
- Consult with jail staff, coordinate care with multi-disciplinary team of treatment professionals within the PCDCC and work with provider liaisons/case managers to ensure proper treatment of mentally ill inmates.
- Present expert testimony to court regarding mental health status as required.
- Provide training to providers on accessing new and/or existing consumers from the correctional setting and to assure appropriate jail clearance approval.
- Identify system concerns and assist in developing appropriate interventions.
- Assist with resolution of appeals and grievances as requested.
- Provide education to providers as necessary to facilitate cross system coordination.
- Maintain regular, predictable and punctual attendance during regularly scheduled work hours at assigned worksite.
- Meet travel requirements of the position.
- Perform the physical requirements of the position; work within the established working conditions of the position.
- Work a flexible schedule, which may include evenings, weekends, holidays and overtime.

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OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Perform other job functions as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:

Work is performed with considerable independence in accordance with Department policies, state and federal laws regarding the care of the mentally ill and is reviewed by an administrative supervisor. This position does not supervise but may provide training and guidance to new and temporary employees.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment characteristics described herein are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the position. Mental Health Evaluation Specialists work in the confined indoor space of a maximum security adult correctional facility. There is constant exposure to hazardous chemicals, hazardous waste, bio-hazardous material, pharmaceuticals, infectious diseases and in-person contact with inmates. Attendance at meetings outside of normal work hours may be required. Work schedules include shift work, holidays, overtime and weekends and may require reporting to work in the event of emergency.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: The physical demands described herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions. Physical and mental demands include ability to perform tasks involved in operating common office and medical equipment; walk; climb stairs; sit and stand for long periods of time; manual dexterity to include bending, stooping, pushing, pulling and reaching; digital dexterity; talking; seeing; hearing; reasoning and analyzing complex information. Travel to meeting locations may be required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Psychiatric disorders.
- Current APA diagnostic standards.
- Correctional Mental Health Care
- Psychological testing.
- Treatment plans
- Criminal justice system and RCW 10.77, 71.05 and WAC 388-865.
- State and federal laws for involuntary commitments.
- Substance abuse, psychiatric medications, and individual and group psycho-dynamics.
- Community resources.

Skill in:

- Use of independent judgment and effective decision-making in the application of a wide variety of laws, policies and procedures and in effective problem-solving.

Ability to:

- Evaluate and screen mentally ill and emotionally disturbed individuals.
- Make treatment recommendations.
- Work in an authoritative, stressful environment.
- Work independently.
- Use a personal computer.
- Understand and follow written and verbal instructions.

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Ability to (cont.):

- Work effectively and productively with others.
- Communicate effectively verbally and in writing to audiences of various social, cultural, ethnic, educational and economic backgrounds.
- Effectively coordinate, perform and complete multiple duties and assignments concurrently and in a timely manner.
- Meet the travel requirements of the position, if any.
- Physically perform the essential job functions of the classification.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY: Master Degree in Psychology, Social Work or related field from an accredited college or university. Possess and maintain current license or associate license in Washington State as a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed Advanced Social Worker or Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker and two years experience providing psychosocial/mental health services and/or crisis intervention services in an adult mental health setting required. License must be in good standing with no license restrictions or probationary status. United States citizenship and the ability to read and write the English language are required by RCW 41.14.100.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AND/OR QUALIFICATIONS: Ability to successfully complete a Pierce County Sheriff's Department background investigation, which may include a medical physical, behavioral assessment and polygraph, is required prior to hire. A valid Washington State driver's license may be required when travel is required of the position.

CONDITION OF CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT:

- Employees with an associate license must obtain and maintain full licensure within the six year period as required by the Washington State law.
- Employees with an associate license must obtain and maintain agency affiliated counselor designation.