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STATE OF WISCONSIN
CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION

SOCIAL WORKER
CLASSIFICATION SERIES

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of This Classification Specification

This classification specification is the basic authority under ER 2.04, Wis. Adm. Code, for making classification decisions relative to present and future professional positions which provide professional social work and case management services to a specific client population within a state operated facility or in a state agency office that directly services or monitors a specific client group. Some positions may serve a very specific client population (e.g., forensic mentally ill, mentally ill, developmentally disabled, special needs adoption, military veteran) while others provide specialized case management activities (e.g., admission services, discharge services, AODA treatment services, psychotherapy services). This classification specification will not specifically identify every eventuality or combination of duties and responsibilities of positions that currently exist, or those that result from changing program emphasis in the future. Rather, it is designed to serve as a framework for classification decision-making in this occupational area.

Classification decisions must be based on the "best fit" of the duties within the existing classification structure. The "best fit" is determined by the majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the work assigned to and performed by the position when compared to the class concepts and definition of this specification or through other methods of position analysis. Position analysis defines the nature and character of the work through the use of any or all of the following: definition statements; listing of areas of specialization; representative examples of work performed; allocation patterns of representative positions; job evaluation guide charts, standards or factors; statements of inclusion and exclusion; licensure or certification requirements; and other such information necessary to facilitate the assignment of positions to the appropriate classification.

B. Inclusions

This series encompasses professional social work positions located primarily within the Departments of Children and Families, Health Services, Public Instruction, Veterans Affairs, and Corrections. s. 457.01(9), Wis. Stats., defines "social work" as "applying psychosocial or counseling principles, methods or procedures in the assessment, evaluation, or psychosocial

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diagnosis, prevention, treatment or resolution of a difficulty in the social, psychological, personal, emotional, or mental functioning of an individual, couple, family, group of individuals or community, including the enhancement or restoration of, or the creation of societal conditions favorable to the enhancement or restoration of, the capacity of an individual, couple, family, group of individuals or community for social functioning or the delivery of services to a group of individuals or a community to assist the group or community in providing or improving the provision of social or health services to others. Positions allocated to this classification must meet the definition of professional employee, as defined in Sec. 370.030 of the Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook.

C. Exclusions

Excluded from this series are the following types of positions:

1. Positions that meet the statutory definition of management or supervisor as defined, s. 111.81(13) and (19), respectively, as administered and interpreted by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission;
2. Positions that do not meet the definition of professional, as defined in Sec. 370.030 of the Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook;
3. Positions that are responsible for development, oversight, and monitoring of a specific treatment or treatment-related program within an institution or agency a majority of the time and are more appropriately classified as Treatment Specialist;
4. Positions that implement treatment plans for AODA clients within an institution a majority of the time but do not have primary responsibility for development of the treatment plan and are more appropriately classified as Client Services Assistant;
5. Positions in the Department of Children and Families that perform professional level child welfare intake and assessment services for children and families in Milwaukee County and are more appropriately classified within the Initial Assessment Specialist classification series; or,
6. All other positions that are more appropriately identified by other classification specifications.

D. Entrance Into and Progression Through This Series

Employees enter positions within this classification series by competition. Progression to the Senior level is through reclassification as the employee satisfactorily attains the specified training, education, or experience. Reclassification may occur to the Advanced level if the required credentials are obtained. Reclassification may occur to the Clinical level for positions that meet the first allocation, if the required credentials are obtained. Entrance into the Social Worker-Clinical level under the second allocation occurs by competition.

II. DEFINITIONS

SOCIAL WORKER CLASSIFICATION SERIES

Social Worker Classification Series

Positions in this classification series provide responsible, independent social work services within: (1) a mental health facility, facility for the developmentally disabled, Wisconsin Veterans Home or other state-operated facility; or (2) a state agency office that directly serves or monitors a specific client group. Social work services involve each of the following components:

- (1) Evaluation and assessment of difficulties in psychosocial functioning of a group or another individual;
- (2) Developing plans or policies to alleviate those difficulties, and either carrying out the plan or referring individuals to other qualified resources for assistance; and
- (3) Intervention planning, which may include psychosocial evaluation and counseling of individuals, families and groups; advocacy; referral to community resources, and facilitation of organizational change to meet social needs.

Positions in this classification series carry total caseload responsibility for all types of clients including multi-disciplinary and inter-service complexities. Positions may specialize in a particular type of caseload or may serve a broad range of client types. Duties include obtaining information from clients, members of their families and others to identify social, economic, emotional, health or physical problems and to determine eligibility and the need for casework or other services. Employees may provide counseling services, therapeutic intervention, and treatment services to clients and members of their families to aid them in achieving a more satisfactory adjustment of their specific problems or situation. Additionally, employees may provide clinically supervised or independent psychotherapy services. Psychotherapy applies evidence-based talk therapy techniques to treat mental health conditions. Psychotherapy assists clients with understanding their mental health condition and with regulating their own moods, feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. Social Workers work in close cooperation with other social agencies, hospitals, clinics, courts and community resources in planning to meet the needs of clients, and they assist the clients in utilizing these resources. Employees may perform in an advisory capacity to other professional staff in specialized areas through participation in conferences and meetings for purposes of assessment, diagnosis and plan of treatment.

SOCIAL WORKER

This is responsible, professional level social work providing the full range of social work services in accordance with the policies, procedures and guidelines of the department. Employees perform the duties identified in the definition statement under limited, progressing to general supervision.

SOCIAL WORKER - SENIOR

This is responsible, independent social work providing the full range of social work services in accordance with the policies, procedures and guidelines of the department. Employees at this level perform their duties under general supervision and speak and act with authority, independently representing the department in situations involving their clients, utilizing their own professional judgment within prescribed policies, procedures and practices and perform these duties under general direction of supervisory or management staff. These positions may also assist in leading or training lower level Social Workers. For most caseload related activities, administrative review is on an "after the fact" basis and employees perform duties under general supervision.

Representative Positions:

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Department of Veterans Affairs, Wisconsin Veterans Home: Under the general supervision of the social services director, provides casework counseling services to Wisconsin Veterans Home residents including assessment, care planning, and implementation of intervention strategies, advocacy, and transfer and discharge services. Function as a liaison with family members and other community resources. Provide professional social work consultation to staff. Position requires certification as a Social Worker with the State of Wisconsin in accordance with Chapter 457, Wis. Stats., plus one year of supervised social work experience in a healthcare setting working directly with individuals (as required by statutes 483.70(p)(2) from the Code of Federal Regulations for Nursing Homes).

Department of Health Services, Central Wisconsin Center: Under the general supervision of the Director of Social and Community Services or STAP Treatment Director, coordinates admissions of residents to the center (e.g. arranging and coordinating both short-term and extended care programs) and coordinates resident services through other agencies and departments as necessary. Provides assessment/screening and planning of services to meet the needs of the residents coming in and follow-up to assure services are provided as identified. Maintains liaison with families, county and community agencies and CWC staff to coordinate provision of services to residents. Provides consultation and counseling to parents and guardians during times of significant health or behavioral changes, serious illness and hospitalization. Provides pertinent information to the court and county in matters pertaining to guardianship and protective placement. May provide training and field supervision to social work students at the undergraduate and graduate level.

Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Resource Center: Under the general supervision of a unit manager, develops a social service case plan for each inmate as assigned, provides professional social service consultation on the unit team, participates in clinical service components as assigned, provides transfer and discharge planning services, and provides liaison to a variety of community resources.

Department of Health Services, Winnebago Mental Health Institute: Under the general supervision of the social services director, is responsible for social work and counseling services to patients, participates in team assessments of patients, participates in the formulation of treatment plans and programs, monitors and assesses patient progress in treatment, conducts group and individual treatment, provides case management, and develops effective discharge plans. Positions function as a liaison with family members, Wis. Stats. 51.42 Board coordinators, and case managers. This position may be responsible for training graduate and undergraduate students in the field of social work.

Department of Children and Families, Division of Safety and Permanence: Under the general supervision of the Region Supervisor, this position provides complex social work consultation services and technical assistance to courts, counties, and tribal and local agencies. This position assists in permanency planning for children in out-of-home care through reunification, guardianship and adoption. This position performs within the limits of state statutes, and agency regulations and policy while exercising individual initiative and independent judgment. This position, representing the Department, provides testimony regarding permanency planning, adoption options and procedures, and related legal procedures.

Department of Public Instruction: Under the general supervision of the Dean of Students and in consort with the Pupil Services Team, independently provide necessary social work services, as well as a variety of other services with and for the students, staff, parents and school at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf. Responsibilities include performing tasks such as providing crisis

intervention and transitional counseling to exceptional needs students; providing counseling and support to families experiencing adjustment problems and/or seeking assistance in supporting their deaf child; and providing on-going case management services to individual students at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf.

SOCIAL WORKER – ADVANCED

In addition to duties of the Social Worker–Senior level, these positions provide supervised psychotherapy services to individuals or groups. Employees at this level participate in multidisciplinary team assessment of patients to determine the psychosocial needs of patients and develop treatment goals and interventions for attaining these goals. Responsibilities include: participation in psycho-social assessments of patients; team assessments and treatment planning; participation in unit and service treatment programs; provision of individual and/or group psychotherapy/treatment; case management and effective discharge planning. Additionally, these positions may provide psychoeducation and support to patients individually or in groups. These positions may assist in leading or training lower level Social Workers.

Representative Positions:

Department of Health Services, Mendota Mental Health Institute: Under the general supervision of the social services director and assigned unit chief, is responsible for psychosocial assessment, social work, counseling and individual, group and family psychotherapy to children, adolescents, adults and forensic patients with emotional, behavioral, psychiatric, legal, alcohol and other drug abuse problems; participates in the formulation of treatment plans and programs, monitoring and assessment of treatment progress, transfer and discharge planning; provide training to other staff and community agencies; refers client and family to and coordinates treatment efforts with community and state agencies; prepares legal competency and court records as directed; advocates for clients and family in obtaining needed services within the institution and community; and may provide training and supervision to social work student interns.

SOCIAL WORKER – CLINICAL

Positions in this classification perform professional clinical social work services without supervision for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders in individuals, families, and groups, to restore, maintain, and enhance social functioning through treatment interventions that include psychosocial evaluation, counseling of individuals, families, or groups, referral to community resources, advocacy, facilitation of organizational change to meet social needs, and individual, marital, or group psychotherapy. A Social Worker-Clinical will be engaged in psychosocial activities without clinical supervision for a majority of time. Responsibilities also include: providing clinical supervision to Social Workers who are in the process of obtaining 3,000 hours of supervised pre-certification practice for licensure, developing social service treatment goals, and participating in unit treatment programs by providing treatment and coordination of release planning. Positions in this classification function as the liaison with the treatment team, the patient, the family, and the community agencies, and are involved in education and treatment monitoring activities; employees perform duties under general supervision. Some positions may have responsibility for providing alcohol and drug abuse treatment.

First Allocation:

Representative Positions:

Department of Health Services, Mendota Mental Health Institute: The Social Worker Clinical will engage in psychosocial activities and provide services without direct clinical supervision for the diagnoses, treatment, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders in individuals, families, and groups to restore, maintain, and enhance social functioning. This position employs treatment interventions which may include but are not limited to individual, family, and group counseling or psychotherapy; referral to community resources; advocacy; and facilitation of organizational change to meet treatment needs, all based on psychosocial evaluation. Responsibilities also include developing social service treatment goals, psychotherapy treatment goals, and participation in unit treatment programs by providing treatment, and coordination of release planning. This position functions as the liaison with the treatment team, patient, family, and community agencies and is involved in education and treatment monitoring activities authorized by the social service department. In addition, the Social Worker Clinical may provide clinical supervision to other MMHI social workers who are working toward their license as defined in WI statutes section 457 as amended by "Act 80", and Social Worker Students who are placed at MMHI.

Department of Health Services, Winnebago Mental Health Institute: This position functions as a member of a multidisciplinary treatment team on a treatment unit for mentally ill or mentally disordered adults/youth. This position provides services for the diagnoses and treatment of mental illness or mental disorder, including counseling to patient, family, and groups to meet treatment needs of the individual based on assessed need and treatment plan; treatment interventions to restore, maintain and enhance social and emotional functioning; multidisciplinary team assessment of patients to determine clinical status and needs of patient. Positions function as the liaison with the treatment team, patient, family, and community agencies to develop effective discharge plans. In addition, the positions are involved in education and treatment monitoring activities authorized by the social service department and may provide clinical supervision to other social workers who are in the process of obtaining their clinical license.

Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Resource Center: This position develops social service plans for inmates, provides professional social service consultations, provides transfer and discharge planning, provides PRC and Parole Board summaries, participates in clinical service components, including those requiring compliance with Act 80 licensure, co-facilitates inmate staffing and completes other social service assignments as directed.

Department of Veteran Affairs, Wisconsin Veterans Home-King: This position functions as a member of a multidisciplinary treatment team for veterans (members) or the veteran's family members who reside at the Veterans Home-King with mental health issues. This position diagnoses and provides treatment of mental illness or mental disorder, including counseling to patient, family, and groups to meet treatment needs of the individual based on assessed need and treatment plan; treatment interventions to restore, maintain and enhance social and emotional functioning; multidisciplinary team assessment of members to determine clinical status and needs of the member. In addition, positions are involved in education and treatment monitoring activities authorized by the social service department and may provide clinical supervision to other social workers who are in the process of obtaining their clinical license.

Second Allocation:

Representative Position:

Department of Corrections, Taycheedah Correctional Institution:

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Under general supervision facilitate group and/or individual therapy; develop social services plans for inmates, provide professional social service consultations, transfer and discharge planning, and Program Review Committee and Parole Board summaries; function as a member of a multidisciplinary team; participate in inmate staffing; complete other social service assignments as directed; and maintain compliance with licensure. Work at this level requires a degree of independent decision-making regarding inmate planning; and participation in unit treatment programs under the direction of the Psychologist Supervisor providing direct inmate care. As qualified under WI Stat Chapter 457, provide clinical supervision to Social Workers who are in the process of obtaining 3,000 hours of supervised precertification practice for licensure.

III. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications required for these positions will be determined at the time of recruitment. Such determinations will be made based on an analysis of the goals and worker activities performed and by an identification of the education, training, work, or other life experience which would provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

Special Requirements:

All positions must be certified by the Joint Board of Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work within the Department of Safety and Professional Services. Select positions may require this certification plus one year of supervised social work experience in a long-term care setting to enable a facility to meet federal certification requirements as a long-term care facility.

Positions at the Department of Instruction must be licensed as a School Social Worker under PI 34.062, Wis. Admin. Code, issued by the Department of Public Instruction.

All positions at the advanced level must be certified as an Advanced Practice Social Worker, or above, as per s. 457.08(2), Wis. Stats.

All positions at the clinical level must possess a clinical social worker license, per s. 457.08(4), Wis. Stats.,

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This classification series was created effective October 16, 1994 to reflect a three level progression series as a result of the Professional Social Services Personnel Management Survey and announced in Bulletin CC/SC-28. The series was modified effective March 2, 1997 to create an advanced level within the series which is limited to positions located within the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare and announced in Bulletin CC/SC-63. This series was modified effective June 6, 1999, and announced in Bulletin CLR/SC-100 to rename the former entry level "In Training", eliminated the -Objective from the title of the second level within the series and assigned to higher pay ranges. Modification of the series effective July 2, 2000 and announced in Bulletin CLR/SC-115 to remove reference to positions in the Department of Corrections due to the creation of the Social Worker-Corrections. The classification was modified and announced in Bulletin OSER-0021-MRS-SC to remove reference to positions in the Department of Military Affairs.

The classification was modified effective September 14, 2008 and announced in bulletin OSER-0221-MRS/SC as a result of the creation of the Department of Children and Families and the movement of the

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Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare and related functions to that department and the renaming and reorganization of DHFS to the Department of Health Services.

The classification series was modified effective September 8, 2013 and announced in Bulletin OSER-0338-MRS-SC to update definition language and remove the advanced level.

This classification series was modified effective August 9, 2015 and announced in Bulletin DPM-0404-CC/SC to update definition language, add an advanced level and include the Social Worker –Clinical definition language. Social Worker-Clinical classification specification was created in bulletin OSER-0041-MRS/SC, effective June 27, 2004, as result of licensure requirements based on 2001 WI Act 80, was abolished on the same date.

This class series was modified effective August 25, 2024 to update the statutory citations, remove an exclusion, clarify that more than just the listed agencies can use the classification and to make minor updates throughout the classification series.

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