

**Effective Date: October 16, 1994**  
**Modified Effective: February 18, 1996**  
**Modified Effective: September 15, 2003**  
**Modified Effective: August 7, 2005**  
**Modified Effective: November 12, 2006**  
**Modified Effective: September 14, 2008**  
**Modified Effective: August 9, 2015**

**STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION**

**SOCIAL SERVICES SPECIALIST**

**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 are, for the majority of the time, involved in assuring the delivery of social services through program development, implementation, and monitoring activities.

[NOTE: Social service denotes the full range of organized activities of voluntary and governmental agencies that seek to prevent or alleviate recognized social problems or contribute to the solution of those problems, or to improve the well-being of individuals, groups or communities. Social service agencies seek to meet the needs of people through the reaffirming of family and societal relationships, furnishing of rehabilitative services to bolster the economic potential and earning power to the individual and strengthening the person to withstand the stresses of modern life and to make non-economic contributions to the family and community. Federal, state and local governments as well as private organizations are involved in the deliverance of social services which include a wide variety of activities. In Wisconsin, state government interacts with federal and local agencies and private groups through legal requirements and/or program coordination considerations. The state provides direct services to clients, supervises county-operated programs and provides consultation and assistance to private groups. Some of these state functions are outlined and required by federal law. State social services activity is administered at the central office, institution, and field (generally a geographic entity as defined by the Division) levels.]

This classification specification will not specifically identify every eventually 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

The positions in this classification are professional social services positions which assure the delivery of social services through program development, implementation, and monitoring activities a majority of the time. Positions provide and/or oversee the provision of consultation services to administrative staff of

county, tribal, and/or local agencies concerned with social services operations management in the community. Positions may assist private groups, and may provide direct services to clients on a limited basis. Social services activity is administered at the central office, institution, and field (generally a geographic entity as defined by the Division) levels.

C. Exclusions

Excluded from this classification are the following types of positions:

1. Positions which meet the statutory definitions of supervisor and management as defined in Wis. Stats. 111.81(19) and (13) as interpreted and administered by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission.
2. Positions which are engaged in the provision of licensing and/or certification of facilities including, but not limited to: day care centers, foster care homes, etc. a majority of the time and are more appropriately classified as Licensing/Certification Specialist.
3. Positions which are engaged in the direct provision of social work case management activities a majority of the time and are more appropriately classified as Social Worker.
4. Positions that do not administer social services programs for a majority of the time, but administer supportive programs, such as business management, personnel, accounting, etc., for a majority of the time.
5. Positions which perform grants management and/or contract monitoring functions for a majority of the time and are more appropriately classified as either a Grants Specialist or a Contracts Specialist.
6. Positions which coordinate human services programs but are not responsible for case management or direct and indirect social services to families or clients for a majority of the time and are more appropriately classified as Human Services Program Coordinators.
7. All other positions which are more appropriately identified by other classification specifications.

D. Entrance Into This Classification

Employees enter positions in this classification by competition.

## II. DEFINITIONS

### **SOCIAL SERVICES SPECIALIST**

Positions in this classification encompass functional activities geared toward overseeing the provision of professional social services for the state, particularly activities related to case management or direct and indirect services to families or clients/patients. The activities include the administration and supervision of social services programs directly or through county, tribal, and/or local agencies, the provision of expert consultative services to the administrative staff and the community, and the maintenance of a professional staff concerned with social services operations management. Positions in this classification usually work in one of the following social services fields: children and family services, and developmental disabilities.

Positions in this classification have primary responsibility for providing statewide program development and consultative work in a specialized program area which affects one of the largest segments of the state's population or affects a narrower segment of the population in substantial ways (e.g., services for persons with multiple impairments). Positions are responsible for performing the full range of activities (i.e., program development, establishment of program policies and procedures, program implementation, consultation, monitoring program activities, and training local or state staff) necessary to administer the program on a statewide basis. This includes

the provision of consultative services in selected program areas that require highly specialized training and skills. Work is performed under general supervision.

NOTE: Services to counties and community organizations involve overseeing county-administered programs (including the elements of control and review) and the coordination and direction of community social work efforts. Consultation services are activities which are defined as “indirect” services and provide a nucleus of “experts” with specialties in a given service area, acting in an advisory, coordinative, and educative capacity to state, county and community agencies bringing specialized knowledge to bear in resolving problems inherent in the establishment, continuation and improvement of social services program efforts. Direct services involve the administration of on-going social services programs and the oversight of casework activity.

### **Representative Positions:**

DCF, Division of Safety and Permanence, Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care: Reports to a section chief and is responsible for identification of issues, development of adoption program policy, budgets, and department guidelines on adoption and post adoption services in interstate and inter-county adoptive placements of children involving the State of Wisconsin. Provides program consultation to agencies and individuals to ensure adoptive placements involve good practice and meet requirements of Wisconsin law and department policy and procedures.

DATCP, Division of Agricultural Development, Client Assistance Program: This position is responsible for the operation of a statewide federally mandated program funded under the Rehabilitation Act. The program provides information and advocacy to all individuals with disabilities who are having difficulty with service providers. The program works with state and private agencies to improve the quality of vocational rehabilitation services for Wisconsin citizens with disabilities. This position must develop and maintain relationships with agencies funded under the Rehabilitation Act; develop and implement system change strategies to improve statewide delivery of vocational rehabilitation services; direct the work activities of Client Assistance Program (CAP) staff; manage the program budget; and ensure compliance with all federal requirements. The position will also develop and present training programs for consumers, their families, and service providers of covered programs.

## **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 education, training, work, or other life experience which would provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

## **IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

The Social Services Specialist classification series was created in October 1994 upon implementation of the Professional Social Services Personnel Management Survey. The third level (Social Services Specialist 3) was abolished in February 1996 when it was determined that no existing positions met the definition and no positions meeting the definition were envisioned for the future. This classification specification was modified effective August 7, 2005 and announced in bulletin OSER-0073-MRS/SC to add clarification as to what constitutes a social services program and added better definitions throughout the specification. This classification specification was modified effective November 12, 2006 and announced in bulletin OSER-0153-MRS/SC to remove the representative position for Sand Ridge Secure Treatment Center that are now located in the Corrections Program Specialist classification specification.

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 some of these functions to that department and the renaming and reorganization of DHFS to the Department of Health Services and to recognize a position located in the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

The classification was created effective August 9, 2015 and announced in bulletin DPM-0404-CC/SC as a result of Schedule 12 broadbanding which resulted in the abolishment of the Social Services 1, 2 classification series.

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