

SOCIAL SERVICES SPECIALIST (TRAINEE)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: Under supervision of higher level employees, incumbent serves as a trainee, learning the principles, practices and procedures of public sector social services case management, as well as acquiring the ability to provide these services and apply these skills and knowledges in handling an assigned case load. Appointees to this class are provided training for a period of one year, consisting of on-the-job as well as classroom/workshop instruction designed to provide the essential knowledges, skills and abilities toward fulfilling the full responsibilities of the position. Trainees receive instruction on the mission and organization of the department, the legal and theoretical framework of departmental programs, with special attention to federal, state, and local laws, rules and regulations and program eligibility criteria. Assignments initially predominantly involve case load maintenance activities but as experience in the Social Service programs is gained, the workload and the complexity of the duties will increase. As familiarity with the various financial service programs (public assistance, medical assistance, food stamps, etc.) increases, greater leeway for independent judgment in the performance of the duties will be allowed. Upon the successful completion of the one-year training program, the employee is promoted to the full performance position of Social Service Specialist I without further examination. Supervision is not a function of this class. Performs related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative only)

Receives On-The-Job Training and Classroom/Workshop Instruction In:

- Investigation and interviewing procedures, practices and techniques;
- Federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and program eligibility criteria;
- Conducting investigations including in-depth interviews to elicit sufficient information to approve, deny or determine feasibility of establishing a financial service program;
- Making appropriate referrals for other services;
- Contacting, by mail and telephone, a variety of sources to document information on applications;
- Initiating necessary transactions caused by a change in the client's personal, family or financial situation consistent with established laws, rules and regulations and procedures;
- Meeting with clients for recertification purposes and, under close supervision, the handling of emergency situations;
- Clearing cases with other agencies and obtaining medical, education and vocational data;

SOCIAL SERVICES SPECIALIST (TRAINEE) (cont'd)

Informing and advising applicants/recipients on the services provided by the agency and on related services provided by other agencies;  
Making contact with public utilities, landlords and employers, as needed;  
Referring cases for further investigation when fraud is suspected;  
Entering case information into electronic data system for budget computation and case management purposes;  
Completing a variety of reports as necessary;  
Performs a variety of related activities as required.

*Typical Work Activities are intended only as illustrations of possible types of work that might be appropriately assigned to an incumbent of this title. Work activities that do not appear above are not excluded as appropriate work assignments, as long as they can be reasonably understood to be within the logical limits of the job.*

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Ability to learn, interpret and apply detailed written policies, procedures and regulations; ability to manage time effectively; ability to organize facts and information logically; ability to analyze and evaluate numerical and written material; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to establish rapport with persons from various ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds; ability to interact calmly with people who are under physical or emotional stress, or who are facing other emergency situations; ability to deal tactfully with others; patience; good judgment; integrity.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:  
Associate's degree or its equivalent.

PLEASE NOTE: Education beyond the secondary level must be from an institution accredited or recognized by the Board of Regents of the New York State Department of Education as a post secondary, degree-granting institution.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:  
Access to transportation may be required to complete possible field work assignments in a timely and efficient manner.