

SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER, SENIOR PS/L

EST: 9.89

REV: 4.05

DEFINITION: Under direction, performs professional level social work in adoptions, child/adult protective services, and medical/geriatric services; acts as lead worker over social workers performing less complex and difficult social work in such areas as in-home supportive services and foster home licensing; and performs related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: This class is responsible for performing complex diagnostic assessments, developing and implementing intensive treatment/service plans, investigating child/elder abuse and other similarly difficult assignments, or for performing lead work over other social service workers assigned non-complex social service caseloads. Incumbents work with only occasional direction and are required to demonstrate professional competence in the application of social work principles, theories and methods as related to child development, parenting, aging, family dynamics, and child/elder abuse. The nature of the work is such that periodic rotational assignments are desirable to relieve employees from the most demanding assignments.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

1. Responds to and investigates complaints of child and/or elder physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, severe and general neglect, and exploitation; performs intake screening in order to make emergency response assessments; interviews clients and other involved parties in order to assess home environment, individual functioning, and family dynamics; makes diagnostic assessments of problems; takes action necessary to minimize the risk of abuse to children and/or adults, including taking into custody neglected and abandoned children and elder adults and placing children and/or adults with relatives, foster family homes, group homes, institutions, or other suitable placements.
2. Develops and implements service plans; counsels children and parents to enhance functioning of family unit; monitors progress toward delineated objectives by evaluating behavioral adjustment; acts on behalf of children, adults, or mentally impaired persons, within legal authority, to arrange for medical treatment and/or other needs; makes referrals to community resources.
3. Coordinates activities with law enforcement, legal, and court systems; prepares court reports and legal documents; obtains police, medical, and psychological reports to substantiate recommendations; testifies and/or presents case investigative findings; acts as court officer; participates in out-of-court settlements; orients staff in other agencies on the role of social work in client care.
4. Places children in appropriate care facilities and makes permanency planning recommendations based upon an analysis of individual physical and psycho-social needs, and available facilities and homes; matches children with prospective adoptive parents; determines suitability of applicants for adoptions; investigates home environment; counsels adoptive parents and children to assess and provide for needed support services; provides supportive counseling.
5. Leads the work of social workers providing non-complex social work; orients and instructs new workers; plans, organizes, and reviews the work of others; acts for the supervisor in his/her absence.
6. Manages assigned caseload; prepares narrative and statistical reports, documents, and correspondence regarding client status; documents case files; prepares and serves legal documents; testifies in court.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:

- 1) Possession of a bachelor's degree including 30 semester or 45 quarter units of course work in social work, psychology, sociology, child development, or other behavioral sciences; **and** two years of professional social work experience; or,
- 2) two years of experience performing duties comparable to a Social Service Worker with Santa Barbara County; or,
- 3) a combination of training, education, and experience that is equivalent to one of the employment standards listed above and that provides the required knowledge and abilities.

Additional Requirements:

1. Possession of or ability to obtain a valid California Class C Driver's License may be required.
2. Independent travel, including client transportation, is required.
3. Positions allocated to this class may require bilingual skills.
4. Selectees for employment in some positions allocated to this class must as a condition of employment sign a statement agreeing to comply with Section 11166 of the California Penal Code relating to child abuse reporting and Section 15630 of the Welfare & Institutions Code relating to dependent adult abuse reporting.
5. Selectees for positions in this class assigned to Child Welfare Services are subject to fingerprinting for the purpose of a criminal record check as authorized by Section 16501 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code and Section 11105.3 of the California Penal Code.
6. May be required to work outside normal business hours and be available on call.

Knowledge of: interviewing and life skills counseling techniques; medical, psychological, educational, and social service resources, needs, problems, attitudes, and behavior of assigned client population; function of public assistance and social services systems; the practical application of human behavior and child development/parenting or aging principles; socio-economic/psychosocial factors affecting individual behavior, independent living social functioning, and social abnormalities.

Ability to: interview a variety of people with diverse socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments and obtain specific information; assess social services needs; encourage clients in progress toward independent living and/or social functioning; learn, apply, and explain complex regulations and policies governing processes in assigned program; work independently; understand and follow direction; listen; cope with unusual life circumstances; manage a caseload and recall case details; maintain confidentiality of information; write reports and prepare routine statistical reports; organize and prioritize work assignments; make decisions and independent judgments; determine the appropriate course of action in emergency or stressful situations; understand program objectives in relation to departmental goals and procedures; deal firmly and fairly with clients; maintain accurate records and document actions taken; identify and make referrals to local and regional providers of social, medical, and/or other specialized services; act on behalf of client to obtain needed services; access and use personal computer applications in a Windows (or equivalent contemporary operating system) environment; communicate effectively both verbally and in writing; establish and maintain cooperative working relationships.