

Employment Specialist Tompkins County

Department: Mental Health Department
Classification: Competitive
Labor Grade: White Collar 14
Approved: Reclass of a vacant slot 07/13/2016
Revised: 2/23
By: RP, Commissioner of Human Resources

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- (a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered four year college or university with a Baccalaureate in Social Sciences, Human Services or Resources, Education, or related field; OR
- (b) Completion of a minimum of 60 semester credit hours in a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university AND two years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a counselor, caseworker, employment interviewer or similar title in a community action or similar agency dealing with employment or training; OR
- (c) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that described in (a) and (b) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

The applicant must possess a valid New York State Driver's License at the time of application and maintain such license for the duration of employment.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This position is responsible for providing a full range of employment and rehabilitation services to PROS program participants. These include psycho-social assessment, competency training, rehabilitation services, and vocational services, evaluation, training, counseling, placement and support, and special employment programs. The Employment Specialist will provide employment activities and community job development to all clients/individuals involved with Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) in the Mental Health Department. The Specialist will provide services for individuals that may be affected by a wide range of diagnosable mental health challenges, including co-occurring substance use disorders. Employment services are a key component in this NYS Office of Mental Health licensed program and as such, the Employment Specialist will provide and develop dynamic individualized person-centered services for ongoing recovery related to gainful employment in the community. The work includes identifying local labor market trends, matching participant skills with employer needs, and facilitating and monitoring job placements. Furthermore, the Employment Specialist will participate as a part of a multi-disciplinary PROS team to plan and conduct appropriate programming to empower individuals to live with their mental illness and successfully maintain, re-attain, or regain self-identified life-role goals. The Employment Specialist will coordinate services in relation to employment for the PROS program. In addition, the Employment Specialist in PROS may also lead classes or groups in the program, or serve as a primary for a participant, and will be responsible for all required OMH assessments and documentation. The work is performed under the general supervision of the PROS Program Director; additionally the position operates with a great deal of autonomy as the incumbent works alone with participants as well as with other professionals and employers in the community. This autonomy includes working to develop relationships with local employers to help develop job opportunities consistent with the needs of the program participants. The employment specialist must be able to handle complex issues and to exercise independent judgment in performing these duties. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Generates individual assessment of participants and creates individualized recovery plan;
- Provides specialized assessment of participants for employment services regarding interest in working, regardless of previous employment history or current barriers;
- Carries out plans to meet the needs of the participant and reviews progress/deficiencies with participant, supervisors and employers;
- Provides individual and group counseling to motivate the individual to increase their own capacity and confidence in their ability to handle problems;
- Plans and maintains programs, including employer development files and records of contacts;

Identifies participant needs and barriers to placements/full employment, and advocates for participants with community agencies to fill these participant needs and alleviate barriers;
Evaluates participant skills, aptitude, qualifications and overall employability with PROS staff, case managers, and other counselors to ensure appropriate placement/employment matches;
Provides skills building/training to participants with job interview training, actual job interviews, resume development, completion of applications, and post-employment/placement follow-ups;
Coordinates with other organizations, training programs, and agencies;
Maintains up-to-date assessment of employment opportunities and employer possibilities;
Develops current list of qualified applicants and employment opportunities;
Conducts a range of Medicaid billable services in the program, including individual or group recovery services;
Completes required program documentation for participant records;
Participates actively in applicable business or employment-related organizations;
Refers participants to appropriate local resources;
Attends regular meetings with local employers and personnel managers to assess labor trends, acquire updated employment information, and promote the job placement program;
Provides benefits and entitlement counseling related to employment;
Works collaboratively with administration and PROS staff to ensure positive placement outcomes; and
Develops and maintains a comprehensive and individual job bank.
Provides daily task oversight of Peer Specialists working in employment services.
Provides information to community organizations and employers about services and supports available to individuals through PROS.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of area employers, services organizations, and their needs;
- Thorough knowledge of federal, state, and local employment and training regulations;
- Good knowledge and familiarity with labor trends and local business and industry;
- Good knowledge and familiarity with clientele served and potential barriers to employment;
- Ability to work under pressure of deadlines and crisis situations with clients;
- Excellent organizational skills;
- Ability to make oral and written reports to county, state, and local agencies;
- Ability to work well in teams;
- Ability to act independently;
- Excellent communication and public presentation skills;
- Self-motivated, highly organized;
- Ability to prioritize tasks and effectively follow through;
- Strong interpersonal skills-including ability to mediate and facilitate difficult conversations;
- Able to handle complex issues and exercise independent judgment in performing these duties;
- High degree of autonomy
- Task supervision of Peer Specialists, Interns or Volunteers in Employment Support
- Tact and good judgment; and
- The employee's physical and mental condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodations.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS:

The employee must be able to sit for extended periods of time within a standard eight-hour work day. Other types of physical effort are minimal with the exception of the occasional requirement to lift boxes of office supplies and paper goods up to twenty pounds. The incumbent's visual acuity must be sufficient to enable him or her to see and accurately work with information on a computer screen. The employee's hearing must be sufficiently acute to enable him or her to hear, understand and carry out verbal instructions. The employee must have the physical ability to manipulate a computer keyboard and other types of office equipment. These fine motor skills include adequate hand/eye coordination and the full use of fingers, hands and arms to perform the essential functions of this job. Environmental factors include the ability to work closely and cooperatively in close physical proximity with others. He or she will often be required to work alone. The majority of the work, 50-65% of the time, is performed in the community - likely not in a temperature controlled environment, so excessive heat, cold, humidity, noise, etc., will be factors that are significant to this job. The employee is at times required to drive to remote locations in order to meet the transportation requirements of this job.

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