

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ▼  
HUMAN RESOURCES ENTERPRISE

SENIOR SERVICES SPECIALIST  
FOR THE BLIND 1

---

---

**DEFINITION**

Plans, directs, and coordinates a program to provide rehabilitation and educational services to blind and severely visually impaired individuals; functions as a vocational rehabilitation counselor, placement specialist or rehabilitation teacher; performs related work as required.

**The Work Examples and Competencies listed are for illustrative purposes only and not intended to be the primary basis for position classification decisions.**

**WORK EXAMPLES**

Coordinates the implementation of individualized employment plans for blind and severely visually impaired person in finding and/or retaining employment.

Determines actual and potential job vacancies statewide via rehabilitation counselors and other sources of input in order to provide a consolidated bank of job information, ensures that counseling staff have available current potential employment information to match against qualified job ready clients.

Facilitates vocational placement of clients via consultation with rehabilitation counselors regarding job development, job retention, and direct placement activities.

Contacts persons newly referred to the Department of the Blind in order to provide information to them regarding the services that are available from the Department. Obtains initial background information on new referrals and makes an assessment of the need for the provision of direct services and referrals to other service providers.

Gathers relevant medical, vocational, psychological, educational, and social information and determines eligibility for agency's programs.

Teaches the alternative techniques of blindness and independent living skills and devises methods and techniques that will motivate and help individuals to achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

Provides long term career, attitude, and crisis counseling; assists clients in determining strengths and weaknesses regarding a variety of career and social goals; counsels clients to obtain and maintain positive attitudes toward their blindness and secondary disabilities as they relate to all aspects of social and career environments.

Develops and maintains cooperative relationships with employers and organized labor in a variety of industries to enable successful employment for clients; provides comprehensive job development, job placement, and follow-up service to employers and blind persons; advocates, consults, advises, educates, mediates, and intercedes on behalf of blind persons with service providers, employers and the general public.

Confers with program administrators and supervisors to determine volunteer needs; acts as a liaison person between the department and community organizations in finding and using volunteer workers and mentors; identifies skills, aptitudes, time requirements, and location needed.

Promotes agency services and resources by providing information to various community resources through personal contacts, written communication, radio spots, speeches, news articles, and workshops.

Directs a volunteer and mentor recruitment program; interviews, screens, and assigns volunteers and mentors to an area of work.

Provides information about agency services and presents a positive philosophy of blindness through speaking engagements, in-service trainings, and consultations

**COMPETENCIES REQUIRED**

Knowledge of vocational rehabilitation and independent living principles and practice.

Knowledge of human behavior and the ability to gain and maintain client confidence.

Knowledge of counseling techniques and procedures.

Knowledge of client interviewing skills and techniques.

Knowledge of volunteer resources and the recruitment, training, use, recognition, and retention of volunteers.

Knowledge of job placement techniques.

Ability to evaluate vocational functioning using information from client interviews, case records, and input from other staff as well as the ability to determine the skills required to perform a variety of jobs.

Ability to understand the needs of blind persons and assist in their move toward independence and self-sufficiency.

Ability to demonstrate or develop positive and realistic attitudes toward blindness.

Ability to learn and relay alternative teaching techniques to the blind.

Displays good organizational skills.

Displays high standards of ethical conduct. Exhibits honesty and integrity. Refrains from theft-related, dishonest or unethical behavior.

Works and communicates with internal and external clients and customers to meet their needs in a polite, courteous, and cooperative manner. Committed to quality service.

Displays a high level of initiative, effort and commitment towards completing assignments efficiently. Works with minimal supervision. Demonstrates responsible behavior and attention to detail.

Responds appropriately to supervision. Follows policy and cooperates with supervisors.

Aligns behavior with the needs, priorities and goals of the organization.

Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity. Fosters commitment and team spirit.

Expresses information to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information. Listens to others and responds appropriately.

**EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, AND SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a degree in human service-oriented sciences, education, marketing or business and experience equal to three years of full time professional work;

OR

the equivalent of three years of full-time experience as a rehabilitation counselor or teacher shall be considered as qualifying provided the employee has successfully completed training to meet the certification criteria established by the agency;

OR

an equivalent combination of education and experience, substituting the equivalent of one year of full-time professional work experience for each year of the required education to a maximum substitution of four years.

**NOTE:**

Positions in this class are exempt from the screening and referral requirements of the Iowa Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise. Apply directly to the Department for the Blind.

Effective Date: 01/15 KF