

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ▼**  
**HUMAN RESOURCES ENTERPRISE**  
**SERVICES SPECIALIST FOR THE BLIND 2**

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**DEFINITION**

Plans, directs and coordinates a program to provide rehabilitation services to blind and severely visually impaired individuals or acts as a vocational rehabilitation counselor, rehabilitation teacher, coordinator of volunteer & mentoring service or a librarian; 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**

Contacts persons newly referred to the Department for 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/or referral to other service providers.

Completes applications for service, determines eligibility and develops individualized rehabilitation programs with clients whose vocational goal is household management and there is a need for substantial and ongoing services.

Provides training in the alternative techniques of blindness and devises methods and techniques which will motivate and help individuals to achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

Serves as a resource person to agency management regarding service providers, volunteers and community programs in the geographical area that comprises their territory.

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

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

Provides career, attitude, and crisis counseling over the course of an extended period of time; assists clients in determining strengths and weaknesses regarding a variety of career and social goals; counsels clients in order to obtain and maintain positive attitudes toward their blindness and secondary disabilities as they relate to all aspects of social and career environments.

Collaborates with clients in determining and realizing career goals; evaluates and assesses capabilities, attitudes, skills, and work potential and makes recommendations accordingly; develops IPEs (individual plans for employment) in cooperation with clients, and outlines specific means of achieving vocational objectives.

Coordinates and directs services, authorizes expenditure of agency funds, monitors progress in training and employment situations; teaches clients necessary attitudes and skills including job seeking/job keeping skills, blindness skills i.e. Braille, orientation and mobility, keyboarding, use of public transportation, accessibility and job specific alternative techniques of blindness.

Maintains client case files and submits reports, case recordings, authorizations, and correspondence.

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.

Selects titles to be transcribed into Braille or tape format after reviewing texts currently in audio format; determines if transcription will be added to collection and initiates cataloging, copyright clearance, intention form and workcard.

Determines taped format based on deadlines and reader preferences; develops and transmits detailed instructions to tapists and proofreaders which may involve reorganization of the print material.

Establishes standards and priorities within the unit and administers all phases of production; responsible for developing specifications, purchasing, maintaining and distributing a large inventory of recording equipment to ensure audio quality of taped transcriptions; maintains statistical records of all transcriptions and initiates billings as required for taped transcriptions.

Provides oversight for corps of volunteer tapists nationwide as well as in-house; develops and revises GUIDELINES FOR TAPISTS as needed; promotes volunteer programs through public speaking engagements, radio and TV announcements and appearances, newspaper and other types of print materials; interviews, screens, and assigns volunteers to various tasks; coordinates training and recognition; may organize multi-faceted workshops to recruit, train, and recognize volunteers.

Participates in the screening and interviewing of workers for the unit; provides training and input to supervisor regarding performance evaluations; pre-approves work schedules and leave requests within the taping unit.

Facilitates library service to patrons and potential patrons; locates literature, references, and other information regarding print or taped transcriptions; participates in quarterly meetings of the Library Consumer Advisory Committee and reports on the activities of the taping unit.

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

Promotes volunteer services and the mentor program through personal visitation, public speaking engagements, radio and TV appearances, and newspaper articles.

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

Prepares training materials to orient volunteers and mentors to the needs of the department; conducts workshops to orient department staff in the proper use of volunteers.

Develops and coordinates the evaluation process; writes progress and evaluation reports on volunteers and mentors; confers with program administrators and supervisors on volunteer and mentor performance, promotions, reassignments and resignations; prepares and manages data base of individuals participating in or interested in the volunteer or mentoring programs.

Supports mission and priorities of the department; conducts tours or causes tours to be arranged of the department in order to promote volunteerism and inform the public of the purpose of the department.

Coordinates events designed to recognize the contributions of volunteers and mentors.

Writes correspondence; answers questions from the public pertaining to the department's volunteer and mentor program; produces and distributes written communication(s) for staff, volunteers, mentors, community groups, and department clients.

### **COMPETENCIES REQUIRED**

Knowledge of vocational rehabilitation principles and practice.

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

Knowledge of the principles of community organization such as community service groups, fundraisers and local governmental boards.

Knowledge of counseling techniques and procedures.

Knowledge of promotional and recruitment methods and techniques such as public speaking, TV, radio, or newspapers used to promote volunteerism.

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Knowledge of National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Knowledge of professional library materials, principles, methods, and practices.

Knowledge of library reference sources within the department, community, and state.

Knowledge of cataloging and classification of library materials.

Knowledge of selection and acquisition of library materials.

Knowledge of tape recording methods, equipment, and techniques.

Knowledge of interviewing skills and techniques.

Knowledge of human behavior and methods of motivating people.

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

Ability to understand the needs of blind persons and problem standing in the way of successful employment.

Ability to assist clients to make the most of their capacities.

Ability to evaluate vocational functioning using information from client interviews, case record, and input from other staff.

Ability to determine the skills required to perform a variety of jobs.

Ability to evaluate progress of clients toward work experience goals.

Ability to negotiate with employers in securing employment opportunities for clients.

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

Ability to gather and interpret information and evaluate personal characteristics, capabilities and interests of clients.

Ability to maintain accurate reports and records.

Ability to assess volunteer needs and match volunteers to fill those needs.

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

Ability to assess/diagnose problems in recordings and recommend solutions.

Ability to plan, coordinate and administer all phases in the transcription, duplication, and circulation of recordings produced by the department.

Ability to analyze, evaluate, and decide regarding the procedures, methods, and equipment used to produce taped transcriptions.

Ability to develop a positive attitude toward blind individuals.

Ability to motivate people to volunteer time and services and to provide leadership to volunteers.

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. Makes an effort to follow policy and cooperate 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 and experience equal to one year of full-time professional or paraprofessional work in human service fields such as: social services; nursing; personnel; vocational rehabilitation; education; psychology; or intangible sales, interviewing, recruiting, and promotion; recreation, public information, volunteer service for public or private organizations, fund raising, or ministry in a recognized faith or denomination;

OR

graduation from an accredited college university with a major emphasis in library science or liberal arts and at least one year of library work experience;

OR

an equivalent combination of education and experience substituting the equivalent of one year of full-time work experience (as listed above) 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: 11/00 BLR