

Iowa Department of Administrative Services – Human Resources Enterprise
Job Classification Description

Psychiatric Security Specialist

Definition

Assists mental health staff in therapeutic work and performs a wide range of security functions in creating a maximally therapeutic environment for the care and treatment of sex offenders with mental abnormalities and/or personality disorders that have been civilly committed directly from prison to the CCUSO (Civil Commitment Unit for Sexual Offenders) program; performs related work as required.

The work examples and competencies listed below are for illustrative purposes only and not intended to be the primary basis for position classification decisions.

Work Examples

Provides care and treatment of patients by implementing program policies and procedures and by assisting in the conduct of therapeutic activities in coordination with professional staff; provides advice, psychological support, and direction to patients; interacts with patients in a therapeutic manner, refraining from making unprofessional comments or displaying unprofessional behaviors and attitudes in the presence of other patients and non-program staff; maintains strict confidentiality with regard to personal disclosures and patient matters, in accordance with Department of Human Services (DHS) policies.

Performs essential security functions such as conducting unit counts and maintaining order and discipline on the unit; supervises patient phone usage; supervises visitations; permits only incidental contact with inmates; conducts room and body searches as necessary; assists in the restraint of disruptive patients according to institutional policies; examines patients, packages, and mail for contraband; follows institutional security procedures in order to minimize the risk of patient escape; operates telephone systems and two-way radios; enforces program rules and issues verbal/written warnings or behavior reports.

Observes and accurately records information relating to each patient's behavior, comments, and attitudes in the patient's treatment record.

Attends and interacts appropriately in group therapy sessions in conjunction with the group facilitator's directions; participates in activity therapy activities in order to model and teach good leisure and social skills, and to observe the patients' behavior as much as possible; documents significant patient behavior, comments, and observations in a timely and accurate way.

Escorts patients to activities, dining hall, medical appointments, recreation, school, or other areas while minimizing conversation with inmates.

Attends treatment team meetings in order to provide information relative to a patient's behavior, comments, attitudes, and treatment progress; participates in treatment team discussions and patient reviews; shares observations and contributes to the objective evaluation of each patients' progress in achieving therapeutic goals.

Performs housekeeping and unit management duties or supervises the performance of such duties by patients as required in order to maintain an orderly and clean program area.

Completes all required Department of Corrections (DOC), Department of Human Services (DHS), and treatment program forms accurately and thoroughly.

Competencies Required

Knowledge:

- Psychology – Human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
- English Language – The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Public Safety and Security – Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
- Therapy and Counseling – Principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.

Abilities:

- Oral Comprehension – Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- Oral Expression – Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- Law and Government – Understand and adhere to applicable laws, legal codes, administrative rules, and regulations.
- Written Comprehension – Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
- Speech Clarity – Speak clearly so others can understand.
- Speech Recognition – Identify and understand the speech of another person.
- Deductive Reasoning – Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
- Inductive Reasoning – Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions.
- Problem Sensitivity – Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.

Skills:

- Social Perceptiveness – Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
- Monitoring – Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.
- Active Listening – Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- Critical Thinking – Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.

- Speaking – Talking to others to convey information effectively.
- Coordination – Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
- Judgment and Decision Making – Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
- Service Orientation – Actively looking for ways to help people.

Minimum Qualification Requirements

Applicants must meet at least one of the following minimum requirements to qualify for positions in this job classification:

- 1) Graduation from high school or possession of a GED, and experience equal to two years of fulltime work involving direct contact with people in a therapeutic role in a residential care or treatment setting.
- 2) Graduation from high school or possession of a GED, and experience equal to two years of full time work involving oversight of incarcerated adults or juveniles.
- 3) A total of two years of education and/or full-time experience (as described in number one or number two), where thirty semester hours of accredited college or university course work in a social or behavioral science such as Sociology, Psychology, Human Services, Criminal Justice, or other related field of study equals one year of full-time experience.

Notes

Within a period of time after hire, as determined by the appointing authority, persons in this class may be required to complete security training and treatment program training.

Positions in this class may require an applicant to have the ability to pass a background investigation.

Effective date: 04/17 KF