

COUNSELING ASSISTANT I

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is work which involves providing guidance and counseling services to clients of all ages, but who are typically youths or young adults. The work is usually performed as a member of a team and involves individual, group and family counseling. The focus is on motivating clients to make simple lifestyle changes or to seek professional assistance. The work is performed under the supervision of a clinical supervisor or senior program staff. Work guidance (e.g., lead work) may be provided to lower-level staff. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Participates in group sessions and acts as a leader or observer as necessary;
Engages with prospective clients to identify general challenges and to motivate them to participate in the program or to seek other professional assistance;
Participates in or facilitates individual, group and family counseling sessions to pinpoint conflicts and issues, and reports findings to a clinical supervisor;
Participates in or facilitates evidence-based programs and positive alternative activities for youth and families;
Creates and maintains client reports and case records, and may provide such records to outside agencies as required;
Participates in any necessary training to prepare for participation in more critical areas of counseling and to comply with current New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) prevention guidelines;
Prepares oral and written reports concerning observations and interactions with clients;
May provide work direction to other program staff (e.g., volunteers, clinical interns, etc.);
May perform incidental clerical work.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Good knowledge of the behavioral patterns of youths and young adults; good knowledge of the principles and techniques of structured counseling as related to the role of prevention counseling team members; working knowledge of effects and remedies of substance use, especially as related to youth; working knowledge of evidence-based programming to encourage positive youth development; ability to encourage and lead youth and secure their confidence and cooperation; ability to understand and carry out oral and written directions; ability to record activities and compile written reports.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: A Bachelor's degree or higher which included or was supplemented by at least twenty-four (24) credits in the behavioral sciences* and one (1) year of paid work experience in client contact in a rehabilitation program in which 25% or more of the clientele are youth**.

NOTES:

1. Client contact work in any social rehabilitative program may be substituted for schooling on a year-for-year basis.
2. A Credentialed Prevention Specialist (CPS) certification, Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) certification, or Credentialed Prevention Professional (CPP) certification may be substituted for six (6) months of the paid work experience in client contact in a rehabilitation program in which 25% or more of the clientele are youth.

(over)

*Behavioral science is a subset of social science usually having reference to psychology, sociology and anthropology. Psychology, sociology, anthropology and other related sciences are characterized by observation of the behavior of living organisms and focused on human social behavior.

**Youth, according to the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), is defined as individuals between the ages of 12 through 17.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Incumbents will be required to complete additional substance use disorder prevention skills training required by the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) within their first year of employment. This training may include SAMHSA's Substance Abuse Prevention Skills Training (SAPST), Prevention Ethics and Cultural Responsiveness. It is the responsibility of the appointing authority to ensure that all training requirements are met.
2. In order for the municipality to receive program funding through NYS OASAS, within 2 years of appointment, candidate will be required to possess one of the following credentials:
 - (a) Credentialed Prevention Professional (CPP); or
 - (b) Credentialed Prevention Specialist (CPS); or
 - (c) Prevention Professional who is licensed, certified or credentialed in a related discipline** and has completed 60 hours of prevention-specific education and training.

Qualifying credentials are required to remain current throughout the course of employment in this title.