

CLASS CODE: 370205
PAY GRADE: 16
UNIT: AFSCME Paraprofessional
FLSA: Non-Exempt

YOUTH SERVICES WORKER

Distinguishing Features Of The Class:

Under general supervision, performs responsible duties related to the care, security, welfare and custody of youth at the Polk County Youth Shelter and Juvenile Detention Center (Meyer Hall). Youth Services Workers are assigned to either facility as needed. When assigned to the shelter, workers are generalists performing intake, transportation, physical security, and direct care of youth. When assigned to the Detention Center, workers are mainly responsible for direct care of youth and security/safety of the center; perform as back up to intake, transportation, and control center staff. Employees are required to possess the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to work at either facility.

Illustrative Examples of Work:

1. Performs admissions/discharge procedures for youth at the youth shelter; provides back up for intake at the detention facility; interviews clients, juvenile court officers, legal guardians and law enforcement personnel to obtain family and personal history, educational background, social skills and medical conditions.
2. Participates in the preparation/ implementation of individual care/placement plans; interacts with youth to assess the impact of services received; monitors participant's progress; assesses the need for additional services and/or behavioral interventions.
3. Maintains appropriate interaction with youth while providing daily care/custody; facilitates, organizes, supervises, and participates in behavioral, educational, instructional, and recreational groups/activities.
4. Counsels youth on situational problems that may arise; instructs youth regarding facility rules/regulations/ procedures; utilizes behavior management skills including discipline/reward to ensure youth compliance with facility rules/regulations and conduct requirements.
5. Inputs/retrieves information on a personal computer regarding services provided to youth; compiles information/prepares reports as requested.
6. Transports youth assigned to the shelter to/from court hearings, appointments, other facilities, school, social and/or recreational activities; documents transportation activities; provides back up for transportation of youth at the detention facility.

7. Makes verbal, written and computerized reports of all occurrences happening during a shift; maintains thorough records of services provided; prepares other reports as directed; maintains continuous internal communications with facility staff; utilizes intercom system, two-way radios, telephone system, and wireless communication systems.
8. Contacts parents, law enforcement personnel and representatives from other social service or community agencies to share program information, arrange for/coordinate services, and resolve problems.
9. Dispenses medication/ performs minor medical duties.
10. Assists in ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of youth; assists in maintaining security by conducting/recording periodic bedroom checks, ensuring doors/windows are locked/secure, observing/reporting youth behavior/ suspicious activities, and detecting/ confiscating contraband/ weapons; performs personal/room searches; may be required to physically restrain youth under emergency conditions; observes for potential escapes; notifies management/control center of emergency situations.
11. Attends/participates in weekly staff meetings.
12. Completes housekeeping duties as needed; assists in setting up, serving, and transporting food between buildings.
13. Provides technical assistance to clerical/support staff as directed; performs as back up for intake, and control center staff.
14. Performs related duties as required.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Knowledge of the principles/practices relating to the operation of juvenile detention/youth shelter facilities.
- Knowledge of the Iowa Juvenile Code and Licensing/Accreditation standards.
- Knowledge/understanding of the methods/techniques used in enforcing discipline of youth.
- Knowledge of the principles/practices of group leadership and recreational/educational group activities.
- Knowledge of individual/group behavior.
- Knowledge of the community services available to youth/families.
- Knowledge of abnormal behavior in youth.
- Knowledge of the behavior patterns common to various stages of youth development.
- Knowledge of electronic monitoring systems.
- Familiarity with juvenile court system procedures.
- Good listening, interviewing, visual observation skills/attention to detail.
- Skill in the use of personal computers/software.
- Ability to read/comprehend written instructions/procedures.
- Ability to facilitate groups/provide individual counseling.
- Ability to secure/maintain the confidence of youth.
- Ability to maintain a sympathetic/understanding attitude toward youth.

- Ability to interact effectively with youth/families from diverse cultures/socio-economic status.
- Ability to enforce regulations with firmness, tact and impartiality.
- Ability to effectively deal with volatile/distraught youth.
- Ability to participate in physical restraint of hostile, aggressive, combative youth.
- Ability to remain mentally alert to visually observe for suspicious activity, breaches in security, safety issues.
- Ability to handle multiple tasks concurrently.
- Ability to work in a stressful environment.
- Ability to keep accurate routine records and make verbal/ written reports.
- Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with parents/legal guardians of youth, other staff, law enforcement personnel and other professionals involved with youth.
- Ability to recognize problems as they arise and take immediate/appropriate steps to intervene.
- Ability to maintain composure and exercise sound judgment under stressful circumstances.
- Ability to operate two-way radios, pagers, and intercom.
- Ability to utilize personal computers/software to input/retrieve information/reports.

Training And Experience:

- Graduation from high school or equivalent, and
- Three years of relevant work experience in an institutional setting dealing with the welfare of dependent or delinquent youth, or
- AA degree in Human Services, Psychology, Sociology, Criminal Justice or related, and
- One year of relevant work experience in an institutional setting dealing with the welfare of dependent or delinquent youth, or
- Any equivalent combination of education and experience that will provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities. Education may substitute for up to two and one half years of the required experience.

Special Requirement:

- Must be able to obtain/maintain a valid chauffeur's license issued by the State of Iowa.
- Must pass a security check as defined in the State of Iowa licensing and accreditation standards (IAC 441, Chapter 105).
- Must be able to obtain/maintain certification in Safe Crisis Management which involves training in de-escalation and physical handling.
- Must be able to obtain/maintain CPR/First Aide certification.
- Must be able to obtain/maintain Medication Manager certification.

Adopted: 07/01/86

Revised: 7/01/01

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