



CLASSIFICATION NO. 232

Established: 10/76

Revised: 7/96

FLSA: Non-Exempt

EEO: 5

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SPECIALIST 1

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Under general supervision, to provide information to promote access to a variety of services available through local agencies and programs; to make referrals to specific service agencies or programs; to gather and compile information and maintain accurate and complete records on community resources; and to do other work as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Social Services Division within the Department of Human Services offers assistance to the County's low income, elderly and disabled residents through the Community Action Agency (CAA) and the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). The CAA program deals with energy assistance, emergency housing, rental assistance, landlord-tenant issues, and volunteer services programs. The AAA program provides case management services and contracts with senior centers to provide services to elderly residents.

The information and referral series is designed to promote public access to a variety of services available through local agencies and programs. The Information and Referral Specialist 1 is the entry level classification which gathers information on community resources and utilizes a broad knowledge of the community resource network to make appropriate referrals to service providers. The Information and Referral Specialist 1 link people with needs and of diverse backgrounds and cultures to agencies and services available to meet those needs and also provide assistance to various agencies.

The Information and Referral Specialist 1 differs from the Information and Referral Specialist 2 which is responsible for specific program components and may have lead worker responsibilities. It also differs from the Program Aide series which perform paraprofessional work to assist clients, the general public or higher professional staff in providing program services.

TYPICAL TASKS

Duties may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Responds to in person and telephone inquiries from individuals, businesses and agencies requesting information on community resources; assesses immediate and ongoing needs, provides information and refers clients and general public to appropriate public or private service provider; follows up on individual referrals to ensure contact with compatible program; provides advocacy for individuals who have difficulty obtaining services; may provide intensive information and referral services to specific clients; may assist with special projects or services for a specific population.

2. Records and compiles data on the nature and quantity of inquiries and referrals; reviews and compiles data reports submitted by service providers; prepares regular and special statistical reports; completes required forms and performs data entry to track client intake and referrals.
3. Updates information on existing resources by contacting organizations by telephone or mail; assists in developing information on potential resources by monitoring newspapers, newsletters, brochures and other sources; informs staff and other agencies of changes or new services.
4. Promotes interagency cooperation and information sharing through contact with various agencies and community and business groups; schedules speakers and publicizes professional meetings; may attend public meetings to explain the function of information and referral services.
5. Gathers correct and current information on each agency's services through a review of available materials and interviews with agency personnel; writes database entries in a multi-screen format; classifies agencies using a taxonomy of terms; conducts database search and records call transactions using a multi-level computerized resource database system.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Working knowledge of: Public and private social service agencies and community resources, their requirements, rules and regulations; policies and objectives of information and referral programs; human behavior; effects of psychological stresses created by a lack of economic resources on an individual's ability to secure needed services; principles and techniques of interpersonal communication and public relations; principles of cultural sensitivity; basic record keeping procedures and techniques; techniques of data collection; general office practices and procedures.

Skill to: Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing with clients, professional staff and the general public; relate to a wide variety of people with diverse needs, social, economic, and cultural backgrounds; interview individuals to identify and assess problems; determine appropriate referrals to agencies or programs able to meet identified needs; establish and maintain effective working relationships with public and private agencies to promote cooperation and information sharing; maintain accurate records, complete basic forms and perform data entry; use complex taxonomy system to categorize data; use computerized Information and Referral program to record client calls, access relevant data and build and update database; utilize basic computer applications such as electronic mail and word processing programs.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum qualifications are used as a guide for establishing the minimum experience, education, licensure, and/or certifications required for employment in the classification. The following minimum qualifications are established for this classification. Additional minimum qualifications and special conditions may apply to a specific position within this classification and will be stated on the job announcement.

Experience: A minimum of one (1) year of related experience that would provide the required knowledge and skills to perform the responsibilities of this position.

Licenses/Certifications: None required.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Must successfully pass a criminal history check which may include national or state fingerprint records check.

Must pass a pre-employment drug test.

Driving may be necessary for County business. For position(s) with occasional/incidental driving, incumbents must possess a valid driver's license. Accommodation requests for an acceptable alternative method of transportation will be reviewed on an individual basis in compliance with State and Federal legislation. For position(s) with regular driving, incumbent(s) must also possess and maintain an acceptable driving record throughout the course of employment.

OTHER INFORMATION

Information and Referral Specialist 1 incumbents may be promoted to open Information and Referral Specialist 2 positions. Promotional readiness must be documented by approved promotional evaluation. Promotional readiness requires a minimum of one year experience and two satisfactory performance appraisals as an Information and Referral Specialist 1.

Edited: 9/13