

GROUP COUNSELOR I - DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Definition:

Under direction, to be responsible for the supervision, health and welfare of minor in a controlled group setting under the jurisdiction of the Department of Human Services; and to do related work as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This is the entry level within the Group Counselor I/II flexible classification primarily performed at the A. Miriam Jamison Children's Center (JCC), a temporary shelter care facility (TSCF) for abused and neglected minors, licensed by the state of California. Applicants are given on-the-job training in the supervision, protection, care and counseling of minors individually and in groups. Work is performed in accordance with established rules and procedures and is reviewed by a superior through personal observation. Promotion to Group Counselor II is considered on a merit basis subject to recommendation of the Department Head and approval of Human Resources.

This job classification requires the applicant to be willing to work any eight-hour shift of a 24-hour period and any five out of seven days, including weekends and holidays, and must be willing to work within outlying areas as well as out of County when required.

Essential Functions:

- Supervises minors at all times.
- Physically able to move about the facility in order to maintain minors safety.
- Counsels, comforts and mentors minors regarding individual and family problems.
- Provides orientation explaining the purpose, rules and program elements of the facility.
- Interacts with parents, caregivers, other county employees, contracted vendors, law enforcement agencies and the public.
- Handles routine and confidential paperwork, and creates, merges, retrieves and stores case files.
- Provides de-escalating interventions and crisis communication to prevent injurious behaviors.
- Administers appropriate discipline and setting of limits for unwanted behaviors.
- Oversees health and personal hygiene needs and the conduct of minors in a group living situation.
- Conforms to all aspects of Title XXII regulations set forth by the state in Division 6 (Group Homes), and TSCF (Interim Licensing Standards).
- Transports minors to outings, appointments, family visits, court appearances, school or education program, placements and for health needs, including doctor and dentist visits, medication appointments, lab work, and medical clearances, as well as other reasons.
- Plans, organizes and engages in group activities and work assignments.
- Compiles information and drafts written reports concerning the attitudes, behavior and adjustment of minors and documents services provided.
- Supervises court ordered family and minor visits as needed.

- Performs direct supportive services such as shopping for food and clothing, cleaning, laundering, running errands, etc. as needed.
- Assists Social Services Workers and Law Enforcement Agencies by providing transportation of minors placed into protective custody from point of contact to JCC as needed.
- Attends staff conference, meetings and training sessions.
- Performs related tasks as directed.

Employment Standards:

Completion of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of college coursework, including courses in the social or behavioral sciences; or any equivalent combination of training and experience; a valid California Class C driver's license is required at time of appointment.

Knowledge of: The growth, development, needs and problems of children and adolescents; principles and methods of child care; knowledge of social casework, interviewing, and group work, principles and techniques of mentoring youth; basic report writing; standard English usage for grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Ability to: Prepare records and reports; get along well with minors to win their confidence and respect; transport individuals in a county vehicle; follow oral and written instructions; communicate effectively orally and in writing; communicate effectively with persons from a variety of social, cultural and economic backgrounds; work effectively with children and adults in crisis situations; work effectively with physically and/or mentally handicapped persons; recognize signs of abuse and report abuse according to departmental protocol; use both a filing and automated system to input, file and retrieve information; and respect confidentiality.

A background check may be conducted for this classification. Additionally a physical examination, fingerprinting and tuberculosis test are required for this classification.

All Kern County employees are designated "Disaster Service Workers" through state and local laws (CA Government Code Sec.3100-3109 and Ordinance Code Title 2-Administration, Ch. 2.66 Emergency Services). As Disaster Service Workers, all County employees are expected to remain at work, or to report for work as soon as practicable, following a significant emergency or disaster.

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