

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH THERAPIST I

### **Definition:**

Under supervision, to plan and provide direct mental health psychotherapy and services for adults, children, families and groups; and to assist in the implementation of treatment programs.

### **Distinguishing Characteristics**

Behavioral Health Therapist I denotes the entry level to the Behavioral Health Therapist flexible classification series. It encompasses four types of licensure: Pre-licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Pre-Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Pre-Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor and pre-doctoral psychology candidates. Through supervised clinical experience, incumbents at this level perform basic professional mental health psychotherapy and develop advanced diagnostic and treatment skills while gaining the qualifying experience for licensure.

Promotion to Behavioral Health Therapist II is made on a merit basis without examination, upon obtaining licensure or obtaining a doctoral degree in Psychology and subject to the recommendation of the department head and the approval of the Director of Personnel.

Dependent upon the area of practice or department assignment incumbents demonstrate clinical knowledge and skill in the treatment of children, adults and/or geriatric populations. This may include substance abuse, dual diagnosis and working with specialty populations or with legal offense-related clients, who are acutely or chronically mentally ill and/or mentally impaired.

Incumbents may be required to work flexible hours including evenings and weekends.

### **Essential Functions:**

- Participates in the evaluation and implementation of various treatment modalities.
- Provides individual, conjoint, marital/family, and group psychotherapy for clients.
- Develops and implements a psychotherapy program for the acutely or chronically mentally ill and/or mentally impaired. Designs and implements plans of care, identifies goals to be achieved and steps for achievement.
- Screens adults and/or children for the appropriateness of treatment; conducts biopsychosocial assessments and diagnoses mental disorders.
- Assists in determining causal relationships of problem behavior, personality traits, socio-economic conditions, and substance abuse.
- Coordinates cases as assigned and assists staff in the provision of case management activities.
- Determines authorization for treatment.
- Reviews and approves plans of care written by Behavioral Health Recovery Specialists.
- Works cooperatively with community agencies to provide a full range of needed services for clients; works in community self-help groups and assists with community liaison activities.
- Keeps supervisors apprised of issues related to client treatment.
- Acts as an advocate for clients.
- Refers clients to community agencies and/or other support systems; refers clients to medical or psychiatric services as appropriate.

**Essential Functions (continued)**

- Provides in-service training and makes presentations to clients, family, staff and/or community organizations.
- Provides crisis intervention.
- Keeps accurate records; prepares correspondence, progress notes, written reports and other documentation.
- Attends in-service training; participates in meetings, committees, and conferences.
- Utilizes a personal computer and various software programs.

**Other Functions:**

- Supervises volunteers and provides clinical supervision to non-licensed staff.
- Prepares court reports, special reports, placement evaluations, in-service curriculum, and manuals.
- Administers, scores, and interprets psychological testing under supervision (for pre-doctoral psychology candidates).
- Participates in utilization review activities.
- Performs clinical duties in association with specialty training.
- Performs other job-related duties as required.

**Employment Standards:**

Completion of a Master's degree from an accredited college or university, with a major in Psychology, Sociology, Counseling, Social Work or a related field AND eligibility for registration with the State of California as an Associate Clinical Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist intern or Pre-Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor. Within 90 days of hire incumbents must obtain and maintain a current and valid intern or associate registration with the State of California and obtain California licensure within the time period specified by the Board of Behavioral Sciences. Failure to maintain a current and valid registration may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

OR

Completion of all Psychology doctoral coursework and completion of a Psychology Internship from an Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) program. Pre-doctoral psychology candidates cannot be employed to provide mental health services unless they obtain a waiver from the California Department of Health Care Services, even if registered with the California Board of Psychology. A waiver granted may not exceed five years from the date of employment.

A California license as Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) or Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) must be obtained within six (6) years from the initial date of employment to continue to qualify to perform mental health services under this job description.

Dependent upon assignment, applicants may be required to pass an extensive background investigation and be fingerprinted. Disqualification for felony, misdemeanor, and traffic offenses will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Possession of a valid California Motor Vehicle Driver's License.

**Knowledge of:** Principles of mental health; laws, rules, regulations, and ethics governing a public mental health agency and the Board of Behavioral Sciences; confidentiality standards and HIPPA regulations; principles and techniques of psychotherapy and case recording; diagnostic criteria and diversified treatment modalities; criteria for medical necessity; working within the scope of practice and the scope of practice of the clinical supervisor; office functions and procedures including basic computer skills.

**Ability to:** Apply the laws, rules and regulations governing a public mental health agency to specific situations; apply the principles and techniques of psychotherapy and case recording; utilize a personal computer and software; access, utilize and maintain electronic records and files; apply diagnostic criteria and diversified treatment modalities; establish and maintain effective working relationships; conduct interviews effectively; write and speak effectively; work with groups and individuals to effect changes in behavior; relate professionally to other agency personnel and other organizations; evaluate and handle psychiatric emergencies; use crisis intervention techniques and determine the need for referral to other agencies or professionals; and perform psychotherapy for a diverse population of individuals and report to work as scheduled.

A background check may be conducted 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.