**Sample IPS Specialist Job Description**

**Overall Function**: Carries out the services of the IPS Supported Employment program by assisting individuals to obtain and maintain employment that is consistent with their vocational goals. The specialist will work in the community (65% of the work week) meeting people on their caseload, family members, and engaging with employers at their businesses. All services are documented in accordance with agency policies.

**Responsibilities**: Engages job seeker in community settings (including client homes, libraries, schools, coffee shops, businesses, worksites, parks, etcetera. based on job seeker preference), and establishes trusting, collaborative relationships directed toward the goal of competitive employment in community job settings with other workers who do not necessarily have disabilities.

Assists job seekers and workers in obtaining information about their benefits (e.g., SSI, Medicaid, etc.) and how entitlements will be affected by employment so that clients can make decisions about employment opportunities. Refers individuals to benefits counseling, as needed, or attends benefits counseling sessions with people. Helps working people report earnings, as needed.

Assesses individual vocational skills and preferences through spending time with job seeker in community settings. May include visiting businesses with job seekers to learn about different positions or arranging informational interviews. With the person’s permission, provides information and support to family members. Discusses job seeker’s preference for disclosure of mental health status to employers. One outcome of this process is a completed Career Profile.

Conducts job search activities directed toward positions that are individualized to the interests and uniqueness of the people on his/her/their caseload, following the principles and procedures of IPS supported employment. Includes visiting businesses with job seekers to follow up on job applications and to talk to managers/business owners.

Conducts a minimum of six in-person employer contacts per week in the community. The aim of these visits to businesses is to develop relationships with managers/owners who have hiring responsibilities. Employer contacts are designed to learn about the needs of the business, describe supports offered by the program and describe job seeker strengths that are relevant to the position.

Provides individualized, job supports to assist workers in retaining employment. Following the worker’s preferences, supports may be provided at the workplace and/or in the community. Writes job support plans with workers and incorporating input from the mental health team and family members (with workers permission). Adjusts plan according to workers’ needs and preferences.

Provides education and support to employers as agreed upon by workers, which may include negotiating job accommodations and job supports by the IPS specialist with the employer.

Provides community outreach services as necessary to workers when they appear to disengage from the service. Uses a variety of methods to provide outreach.

Returns phone calls and reacts to situations in a timely manner, for example, returns phone calls within 24 hours. Meets with workers in person within one week prior to job starts and within three days after job starts.

Participates in weekly meetings with mental health treatment team and communicates individually with team members between meetings in order to coordinate and integrate vocational services with mental health treatment.

 Participates in in-person meetings with state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors at

 least once a month to coordinate services for clients. Collaborates with individual counselors

 between meetings and complies with VR procedures for providing written reports.

Responsible for a minimum of number of job starts per year or maintaining at least % employment on caseload.

Develops an individual employment (and/or education) plan with individuals. Incorporates input from mental health treatment team and natural supports, with permission.

Attends high school meetings with teachers, such as Individual Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan, and Transition Plan meetings, to discuss how students learn best and ways that the IPS specialist can support the student’s education.

As needed, helps people learn about different jobs/careers by helping to schedule meetings with workers/managers to ask about positions that interest individuals, meetings with academic advisors, observing workers (one day or less in duration), and job fairs to talk with employers about different types of jobs.

Assists individuals in learning about different education and training programs related to interests and academic aptitudes. Focuses on mainstream education and training programs only.

Provides supports with financial aid including the annual Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), understanding loan obligations, applying for scholarships, obtaining tools, equipment and computers. May need to collaborate with parents as needed.

Offers supports prior to the beginning of education programs including help with campus/school tours, buying books or supplies, applying for services with the Office of Disability Services, signing up for seminars on good study skills, discussing where to study between classes, researching campus life resources, etc.

Offers help managing school schedule including due dates for assignments, reserving time to study for exams, and keeping track of drop dates for courses.

Collaborates with counselors at college offices for disability services, professors/instructors, to negotiate accommodations such extra time to test, distraction free environment when taking tests, note taking, assistive learning devices, and other individualized accommodations.

**Qualifications**: Education and experience equivalent to undergraduate degree in mental health, social services, or business. Experience working with people with severe mental illness, experience providing employment services, and knowledge of the work world are preferred.

Ability to work as an effective team member is essential.