

Sample Employment Specialist Job Description

Overall Function: Carries out the services of the IPS Supported Employment program by assisting clients to obtain and maintain employment that is consistent with their vocational goals.

Responsibilities: Engages clients 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 clients in obtaining information about their benefits (e.g., SSI, Medicaid, etc.) and how they will be affected by employment in order for clients to make good decisions about employment opportunities. Refers clients to benefits counseling, as needed. Helps clients report earnings, as needed.

Assesses clients' vocational functioning on ongoing basis utilizing background information and work experiences. With the client's permission, provides education and support to family members. Discusses client's preference for disclosure of psychiatric status to employers.

Conducts job development and job search activities directed toward positions that are individualized to the interests and uniqueness of the people on his/her caseload, following the principles and procedures of IPS supported employment.

Conducts a minimum of six employer contacts per week. Employer contacts are designed to learn about the needs of the business, describe supports offered by the program and describe client strengths that are relevant to the position.

Provides individualized follow-along supports to assist clients in maintaining employment. Writes job support plans with clients and incorporating input from the mental health team. Adjusts plan according to clients' needs and preferences.

Provides education and support to employers as agreed upon by clients, which may include negotiating job accommodations and follow-along contact by the employment specialist with the employer.

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

Provides timely interventions. Returns phone calls and reacts to situations in a timely manner. For example, returns client phone calls within 24 hours. Goes to see employers about job loss or job problems within 24 hours. Follows up on job leads within 48 hours. Meets with clients 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 into mental health treatment.

Participates in face-to-face meetings with vocational rehabilitation counselors at least once a month to coordinate services for clients.

Develops an individual employment (and/or education) plan with clients. Incorporates input from mental health team and family members, with permission.

Spends 65% or more of scheduled work hours in the community. For example, meets clients at community locations such as home, workplace, coffee shop, meeting with potential employers, library, One-Stop, VR office, family home, etc. or takes clients to apply for jobs, investigate local GED or colleges, etc.

Provides supported education, using principles similar to supported employment, for clients who express interest in education to advance their employment goals.

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

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 player is essential.