

DESCRIPTION: Performs routine counseling and guidance relevant to an individual's overall adjustment to blindness. Provides teaching of non-visual techniques in the rehabilitation of blind/visually impaired individuals. Performs related work as required.

Tasks performed vary greatly and are based on the needs of the individual client, families or guardians or consulting agency.

This position is located in Lincoln and may require telecommuting as a part of the position as well as performs related work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: (A position is assigned to this class based on the scope and level of work performed as outlined below.)

This is the second classification level of two in the Visually Impaired Orientation Counselor class series.

Positions allocated to the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor series perform counseling and guidance related to vocational training and work placements.

EXAMPLES OF WORK: (A position may not be assigned all the duties listed, nor do these examples include all the duties that may be assigned.)

Describe the availability of services to new referrals and gathers information as needed to complete applications for services. Refers blind consumers to services offered by other agencies or organizations as appropriate.

Determine eligibility for services based on the applicant's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Gathers medical information as needed for documentation of blindness or visual impairment.

Evaluate the present level of skills possessed by clients to identify attainable goals and areas of needed improvement to adjust to blindness.

Develop an individualized plan for independent living in conjunction with consumers with independent living goals designed to maximize their ability to participate fully in their home communities.

Counsel clients in their overall adjustment to blindness with particular emphasis on achieving a positive understanding of blindness based on the belief that blind people are capable of full participation in society using the alternative skills of blindness. Promotes opportunities for blind consumers to network with and learn from positive blind role models.

Prepare and Coordinate instructional programs in training of the alternative skills of blindness in the field or at the Training Center for the Blind, which may include computer use (email, internet, social media, screen readers or low vision applications), cooking and other homemaking skills, Braille and cane travel. Coordinate other services as needed in preparation for achievement of independent living or service goals.

Prepare periodic reports to evaluate the clients' progress toward successful rehabilitation and to monitor the overall effectiveness of programs provided.

C72612 – VISUALLY IMPAIRED ORIENTATION COUNSELOR II (continued)

Build trusting relationship with employers and businesses in the community and help develop after-school work experiences for blind/visually impaired students.

Assist with special programs designed to provide concentrated training and socialization opportunities for blind consumers in a small group setting to empower NCBVI's clients to obtain their goals.

Provide follow-up services for clients in all aspects of adjustment to blindness including working with family members.

Monitor progress towards the achievement of personal goals specified in individual service plans and maintain documentation of all activities and services provided in case service records in compliance with federal and state regulations.

Collaborate with public and private schools, institutions of higher education, health care providers, human service agencies, consumer groups and organizations, and other relevant community resources on behalf of blind consumers.

Conduct presentations for the general public and interested groups designed to promote greater awareness and understanding of blindness and the capabilities of blind people.

Participate in in-service training conferences, workshops, courses, and meetings related to rehabilitation of the blind.

Assists in the training of new staff members in the different philosophies of working with the blind, the implications of being blind and teaching daily living skills to the blind. At times, serves as a team leader for a working group of Orientation Counselors.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED: (These are needed to perform the work assigned.)

Knowledge of teaching and the understanding of the agency's philosophy of working with the blind, various educational modalities as they pertain to the rehabilitation of blind individuals (i.e., Braille, cane travel, assistive technology, etc.);

Understanding of problems arising from blindness, counseling techniques used in the rehabilitation of the blind and ability to apply techniques in proper situations.

Skill in evaluating each client's needs and the subsequent preparation and implementation of instructional programs to answer these needs.

Ability to lead and mentor others in the completion of work, organize and coordinate various ongoing instructional programs, effectively evaluate the results of instructional programs, and revise such programs as warranted; apply specific counseling techniques according to the situation; and establish a strong working rapport with clients, general public, and other service agencies.

Computer skills are required.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: (Applicants will be screened for possession of these qualifications. Applicants who need accommodation in the selection process should request this in advance.)

Bachelor's degree in social science, behavioral science, social work, counseling/guidance, vocational rehabilitation, psychology, sociology, human development, education or related and two years' experience; OR Master's degree in any of the above mentioned fields or related area and one year of experience

Maintaining of the CVRCB Certification, once acquired on the job

SPECIAL NOTE:

Successful candidates for employment must be able to satisfactorily pass an extensive criminal background check. All new hires will complete 600 hours of immersion training in Lincoln, at NCBVI expense, at the Nebraska Center for the Blind to learn the alternative skills of blindness (cane travel, Braille, assistive technology, activities of daily living, etc.); those completing the training will obtain their CVRCB certification. Work is performed under the direct supervision of a district or unit supervisor. Field assignments and travel are involved in varying degrees.

State agencies are responsible to evaluate each of their positions to determine their individual overtime eligibility status as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).