

New York State Department of Civil Service
DIVISION OF CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION

Classification Standard

Occ. Code 5220422

Mental Health Program Specialist 2 (DOCCS), Grade 23

Brief Description of Class

Mental Health Program Specialists 2 (DOCCS) develop, implement, oversee, coordinate, and evaluate a broad range of programs that provide services to incarcerated individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities, blindness, deafness, or other condition requiring special services.

These positions are only classified in the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS).

Distinguishing Characteristics

Mental Health Program Specialist 2 (DOCCS): full performance level; under the direction of the Assistant Director Correctional Mental Health Programs, plans, develops, implements, and monitors DOCCS mental health/special needs service delivery system within an assigned geographic region and/or statewide for a specific program; serves as a resource for DOCCS and Office of Mental Health (OMH) staff within the assigned area or program.

Related Classes

Mental Health Program Specialists are classified in OMH to develop, license, oversee, and/or regulate a broad range of mental health programs operated by State and/or local service delivery systems. Incumbents apply expert knowledge of the clinical and administrative components of New York State's mental health system, Mental Hygiene law, OMH policies and regulations, and federal accrediting body and Medicaid regulations to support, guide, and direct their assigned programs.

Assistant Director Correctional Mental Health Programs, under direction from the Director Correctional Mental Health Programs, acts as liaison for interagency programming and to the Superintendents to ensure proper special needs programming.

Illustrative Duties

Monitors DOCCS mental health/special needs service delivery system and conducts routine site visits.

- Collaborates with the executive teams at assigned facilities, DOCCS central office staff, assigned Supervising Offender Rehabilitation Coordinators, and OMH staff.
- Conducts site visits at assigned facilities to assess needs requirement of the incarcerated population and to monitor program implementation; submits site visit reports on the results of these visits.
- Assists facility staff in identifying program needs, including discharge planning, special program options, and available program resources.
- Collaborates with other departments and outside agencies to design and implement program plans for incarcerated individuals requiring special services.
- Monitors meetings between DOCCS facility staff and OMH staff to ensure proper awareness of issues and programs and effective communication.

Coordinates placement of incarcerated individuals with DOCCS and OMH staff into various programs.

- Places incarcerated individuals into correctional facilities that provide necessary services, including the Correctional Alternative Rehabilitation Program and Residential Mental Health Treatment Units, which are used for therapy, treatment, and rehabilitative programming.
- Ensures compliance with the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement Act.
- Tracks and handles special population transfers.

Develops, coordinates, and presents training programs, modules, and activities on topics related to mental health/special needs programs and incarcerated individuals requiring special services.

- Works collaboratively with other DOCCS staff and OMH staff to develop training agendas and material.
- Directly provides training or arranges for presenters.
- Monitors and tracks newly implemented staff wellness programs, then collects data and feedback.

Implements DOCCS initiatives and mental health/special needs programs with enhanced site visits to determine appropriate program needs and ensure compliance with policies and directives.

- Reviews records and other supporting documentation on the provisions of services.
- Identifies deficiencies and develops appropriate program and system recommendations to bring the facility into compliance.
- Recommends and implements performance improvement projects.
- Collaborates with executive teams at assigned facilities and DOCCS central office staff, OMH and Office for People With Developmental Disabilities staff.

Prepares responses to incarcerated individual and outside correspondence, on behalf of higher-level agency staff and executives, related to area or program assignment.

Reviews, submits and manages recommendations on appropriate incarcerated individual placements and transfers based upon area or program assignment.

Minimum Qualifications

Open Competitive: bachelor's degree in counseling, criminal justice, educational psychology, forensic mental health, health service administration, psychology, public health administration, human services, social work, or sociology and three years of professional experience in a federal or state operated adult correctional facility or mental health facility with primary involvement in at least three of the following areas: oversight, coordination, operation, monitoring, and quality improvement of a correctional mental health program. A master's degree in any of the fields listed above may substitute for one year of experience.

Note: Classification Standards illustrate the nature, extent, and scope of duties and responsibilities of the classes they describe. Standards cannot and do not include all of the work that might be appropriately performed by a class. The minimum qualifications above are those which were required for appointment at the time the Classification Standard was written. Please contact the Division of Staffing Services for current information on minimum qualification requirements for appointment or examination.

Date: 8/2025

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