

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

Classification Standard

Occ. Code 8346200

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Grade 19	8346200
Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Grade 22	8346300
Associate Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Grade 25	8346400

Brief Description of Class Series

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide counseling to individuals* with disabilities with the goal of helping individuals attain employment, education, and independence in daily living. Positions draft and coordinate vocational rehabilitation plans tailored to each individual, and are classified at various State agencies in field and central office settings.

*Individual refers to a person who is being treated or cared for, and is used in place of patient, client, or other nomenclature specific to an agency.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor: full performance level; under the supervision of a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor or other higher-level position, provides counseling services to individuals in need of support, and plans and coordinates rehabilitation services delivery for each individual.

Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor: first supervisory level; under the general direction of an Associate Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor or other higher-level position, supervises and directs a unit of multiple Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and support staff.

Associate Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor: second supervisory level; oversees all counseling services; develops and coordinates program policies to ensure consistency with federal and State guidelines; and supervises multiple Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and staff.

Illustrative Duties

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Performs case analysis functions to determine whether individuals meet eligibility requirements and whether individuals can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services.

- Interviews individuals to explain available services and to identify the vocational interests and desires of individuals.
- Obtains pertinent socioeconomic and medical background information by questioning individuals or by written inquiry of other sources.
- Arranges for appropriate medical, psychological, vocational, and other diagnostic evaluations.
- Consults with medical consultants on individuals' health, the nature and extent of disabilities, and the possibility of medical restoration.
- Compares data obtained from individuals and other sources to agency's standards to determine whether individuals meet eligibility criteria.
- Discusses results of diagnostic evaluations with individuals and shares how results will influence rehabilitation plans.

Drafts rehabilitation plans for individuals based on educational, medical, and diagnostic information previously obtained.

- Confers with medical and program specialists both internally and externally to obtain recommendations concerning rehabilitation plans.
- Drafts written individualized rehabilitation plan for each individual and obtains necessary approvals.
- Discusses proposed plans with individuals, addresses individuals' questions, and obtains individuals' consent for plans.

Coordinates rehabilitation services provided to individuals.

- Contacts appropriate public and private rehabilitation agencies, educational institutions, and employers to arrange vocational services for individuals.
- Compares individuals' financial resources to financial assistance eligibility standards. Determines agency's contribution payments for services, if agency or program is authorized to provide financial assistance.

- Explores other funding sources available to individuals to help cover program costs, such as private insurance and Medicaid.
- Confers with service providers to monitor individuals' progress, and reviews written progress reports.
- Discusses progress with individuals, families, and service providers; recommends changes to reach vocational goals.
- Discusses personal adjustment concerns with individuals and makes referrals for issues outside of the vocational counselling scope.

Maintains and prepares records, reports, and statistical data, and uses statistical reports to assist with caseload management.

- Prepares statistical reports related to individuals' progress and maintains case folders.
- Prepares financial forms to purchase services.
- Establishes and maintains good working relationships with employers in assigned geographical areas.
- Maintains up-to-date information concerning labor market situations and employment needs in assigned geographical areas.
- Assists individuals in finding employment opportunities, arranges interviews with prospective employers, and follows up with employers for employers' impression of individuals.

Follows-up with individuals to ensure that they are successfully coping with the work environment.

- Provides supportive counseling to individuals when necessary.
- Helps resolve issues which may arise between individuals and employers.
- Closes cases after individuals attain goals set forth in the rehabilitation plan, and post-employment needs.

May meet with community interest groups to provide information on available vocational rehabilitation services and encourage the use of services.

Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Performs the following duties in addition to those described for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Assigns new cases to professional staff for evaluation and the preparation of a rehabilitation plan for the individual.

Reviews and approves case plans developed by counselors against a background of policy and professional expertise specific to the case situation, as well as case closures to ensure effective services were provided.

Evaluates the progress of counselors' case activities to ensure that cases are being handled properly and expeditiously. Provides guidance and assistance to counselors in resolving difficult cases.

Trains counselors in the techniques and principles of rehabilitation counseling and participates in the development of training programs tailored to staff, vendors, and other partners.

Supervises clerical staff regarding work assignments, correspondence, and records and prepares unit activity reports.

Plans the effective use of assigned personnel, equipment, and space to ensure effective individual services and a smooth workflow.

Develops and maintains relationships with referral sources.

Performs the full range of supervisory responsibilities.

Associate Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Performs the following duties in addition to those described for Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Coordinates and oversees vocational rehabilitation activities and advises case unit supervisors on policy questions and adherence to procedures.

Reviews and analyzes counseling operations, proposes solutions to address issues, conducts special studies, and recommends corrective action.

Represents management at meetings, committees, conferences, and other functions.

Prepares reports to measure the effectiveness of current programs, the extent of unmet program needs, and proposals for program development.

Serves as a resource in consumer appeals and liaison with community organizations.

Investigates and arbitrates major complaints concerning the provision of individual services.

Transmits consumer requests for administrative reviews and administrative hearings to the appropriate parties.

Promotes and encourages public interest in vocational rehabilitation programs.

Prepares budget requests involving case service expenditures, and those portions of personnel costs involving counseling staff and related expenses.

Performs the full range of administrative supervisory responsibilities.

Minimum Qualifications

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Open Competitive: Bachelor's degree or higher and be enrolled in a master's degree program in Rehabilitation Counseling or a master's degree or higher in a related degree field,* AND satisfactory completion of a two-year traineeship; OR

A current Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) credential as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC); or a master's degree or higher in Rehabilitation Counseling; or a master's degree or higher in a related degree field* and two years of professional work experience in a related field**.

Continued employment as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor is dependent upon maintaining CRC Certification.

*Related degree fields include the following: Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, Social Work, Psychology, Disability Studies, Behavioral Health, Behavioral Science, Blindness/Visually Impaired Rehabilitation and Education, Deaf/Hearing Impaired Rehabilitation and Education, Orientation and Mobility Studies, Educational Psychology, Child/Family Studies, Communication Disorders (including Speech Language Disorders and Pathology), Health Administration, Health Services, Health Studies, Human Development, Human Relations, Business Administration, Public Administration, Human Resources, Human Services, Special Education, Addictions/Substance Abuse Counseling, Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Transition Counseling, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Rehabilitation Services, School/Guidance/Education Counseling, Substance Use Disorders, Vision Rehabilitation Studies, Vocational Assessment, Vocational Evaluation, Counseling Psychology, or Marriage and Family Counseling.

****Acceptable Professional Work Experience in a related field:** Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, Vocational Assessment, Vocational Evaluation, Social Work, Psychology, Counseling (including Addictions/Substance Abuse Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, School/Guidance Counseling, Marriage and Family Counseling), Orientation and Mobility, Disability Studies, Behavioral Health, Behavioral Science, Hearing Impaired Education/Rehabilitation, Visually Impaired Education/Rehabilitation, Communication Disorders (including Speech Language Disorders and Pathology), Special Education, School Rehabilitation Services (including Occupational and Physical Therapy) or experience with assisting persons with disabilities to attain employment, educational, and/or independent living goals.

Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Promotion: one year of permanent service as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Associate Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Promotion: one year of permanent service as a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

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.

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