

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

Classification Standard

Occ. Code 5220410

Mental Health Program Specialist 1, Grade 18	5220410
Mental Health Program Specialist 2, Grade 23	5220420
Mental Health Program Specialist 3, Grade 25	5220430
Mental Health Program Specialist 4, Grade 27	5220445
Mental Health Program Specialist 5, M-3	5220500

Brief Description of Class Series

Mental Health Program Specialists perform a broad range of professional, administrative, and technical tasks in the development, licensing, oversight, and/or regulation of State operated and/or licensed, funded, or designated mental health programs for individuals with mental illness to foster the delivery of safe, high quality, and evidenced-based services. Incumbents provide technical assistance to State facilities, local agencies, providers, and other parties on guidelines, regulations, and/or policy directives; participate in certification surveys and onsite reviews; monitor program operations to ensure compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations; and work with local governments and providers to develop policies and procedures for the delivery of coordinated services and promote the integration of State and local systems of care.

Positions are classified in the Office of Mental Health (OMH).

Distinguishing Characteristics

Mental Health Program Specialist 1: full performance level; under the supervision of a higher-level Mental Health Program Specialist, performs professional, administrative, and technical tasks to assist in the development, licensing, monitoring, and/or evaluation of State and/or local mental health programs.

Mental Health Program Specialist 2: advanced performance level; under the direction of a higher-level Mental Health Program Specialist, handles the more difficult program assignments; oversees, develops, licenses, and/or monitors the operations of State and/or local mental health programs; and may supervise Mental Health Program Specialists 1 and/or other subordinate staff.

Mental Health Program Specialist 3: supervisory level; supervises a unit of lower-level Mental Health Program Specialists engaged in the development, licensure, oversight, and/or regulation of mental health programs.

Mental Health Program Specialist 4: second supervisory level; oversees a large unit or multiple units of lower-level Mental Health Program Specialists engaged in the development, licensure, oversight, and/or regulation of mental health programs; or serves as the deputy director of a large bureau.

Mental Health Program Specialist 5: managerial level; serves as the director of a bureau; and oversees the development of statewide program policies and procedures.

Illustrative Duties

Mental Health Program Specialist 1

Assists in the implementation, evaluation, and monitoring of State and local mental health programs.

- Reviews State and local programs for compliance and ensures that local plans are consistent with OMH service priorities and guidelines.
- Gathers and analyzes information related to program operations, service utilization and management, fiscal and human resources, and/or clinical and quality of care statistics; identifies and reports problem areas, compliance issues, or gaps in services; and assists in the development of corrective action plans.
- Provides feedback and recommendations concerning the development or expansion of program initiatives and policy implementation.
- Assists facilities and providers with budget preparation and State aid requests.
- Participates in certification surveys; prepares reports on review and inspection activities; and makes recommendations regarding the issuing of operating certificates for public or private facilities and programs.
- Provides information and technical assistance to State facilities, local agencies, providers, and other parties on guidelines, regulations, or compliance issues; and may participate in providing related trainings.

Participates and assists in the assessment of alleged incidents of abuse and/or neglect involving individuals receiving services in State licensed or operated programs.

- Verifies and triages incidents for Central Office or provider investigation.

- Reviews and evaluates the appropriateness of corrective action plans; and follows-up with providers to ensure that corrective action plans are implemented.
- Monitors data submitted to the centralized register for completeness and assists in identifying patterns and trends.

Mental Health Program Specialist 2

Independently performs the duties of a Mental Health Program Specialist 1 above.

Assists in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies and procedures and new programs and initiatives.

Oversees and monitors the operations of State and local mental health programs.

- Reviews State facility, local agency, or provider budgets for program impact and/or performance requirements; and assists in reviewing and preparing recommendations for federal and State contracts and grant applications.
- Communicates OMH initiatives, policy directives, and guidelines to other State agencies, local government units, and mental health providers.
- Works with OMH Central Office and field staff, local governments, and providers to develop processes and procedures designed to deliver coordinated services; and promotes the integration of State and local systems of care.
- May lead and conduct formal onsite program reviews to ensure compliance with OMH, federal, and accrediting body standards and guidelines.
- Monitors and evaluates program performance and prepares reports; develops progress indicators and performance measures; identifies trends and compliance issues; and makes recommendations to resolve problems.
- Responds to questions, complaints, and information requests from individuals and families, service providers, local agencies, and the public.

May assess the quality of field office regulatory, compliance, and/or licensing operations; maintain monitoring data and analyze licensing trends; and prepare operating certificates for mental health programs.

- Leads projects to develop licensing protocols, certification procedures, and quality of care standards.
- Provides technical assistance to field office, county, and facility staff on operating standards, certification application procedures, and non-conforming situations.

- Reviews prior approval applications to establish or modify programs for need, cost, staffing, provider character and competence, program quality, and compliance with OMH regulations; and responds to questions regarding licensed programs and the prior approval process.
- Participates in training field office and provider staff on new or modified OMH regulations.

May perform the full range of supervisory duties over Mental Health Program Specialists 1 and/or other subordinate staff.

Mental Health Program Specialist 3

Performs the duties of a Mental Health Program Specialist 2; and the full range of supervisory duties over a unit of lower-level Mental Health Program Specialists.

Develops and maintains policies and procedures for program areas and provides programmatic oversight and technical direction to staff.

Conducts onsite reviews of facilities and local mental health programs to ensure compliance with State and federal guidelines, standards, and requirements.

Monitors and reviews State and federal statutes, regulations, and policies; identifies issues; and assesses programmatic and financial impact.

Serve as a liaison to State and local government partners, and providers; convenes inter-agency and multi-stakeholder project workgroups and committees, including orientation, training, and technical assistance, and the development of communication strategies and informational materials; and makes presentations.

May interact with and negotiate with mental health authorities to manage transfers and/or the provision of services for individuals outside of New York State.

Mental Health Program Specialist 4

Performs the duties of lower-level Mental Health Program Specialists and serves as a second-level supervisor over a unit(s) of lower-level Mental Health Program Specialists and other subordinate staff.

Manages and directs the design, implementation, and monitoring of mental health programs and services.

Oversees the development and implementation of operational policies and procedures, licensing processes, onsite and prior approval reviews, and corrective action plans; and evaluates State and local program operations.

Represents OMH at meetings and on task forces with external agencies, mental health advocacy groups, and trade organizations.

Mental Health Program Specialist 5

Directs the development and implementation of new programs and services and operational policies and procedures for local operations, or State operated, licensed, or funded programs.

Develops annual and multi-year operational plans and resource allocation strategies; identifies funding sources and negotiates for sufficient resources to meet program and service needs.

Acts as a spokesperson for OMH in various public forums; directs special tasks forces or advisory committees; and resolves conflicts among internal and external groups.

Minimum Qualifications

Mental Health Program Specialist 1

Open Competitive: a bachelor's degree in a health or human services area or closely related field and completion of a two-year traineeship.

Mental Health Program Specialist 2

Promotion: one year of service as a Mental Health Program Specialist 1.

Open Competitive: a bachelor's degree as described above for Mental Health Program Specialist 1 and three years of professional clinical or administrative experience in a mental health program.

Mental Health Program Specialist 3

Promotion: one year of service as a Mental Health Program Specialist 2.

Mental Health Program Specialist 4

Promotion: one year of service as a Mental Health Program Specialist 3.

Mental Health Program Specialist 5

Promotion: one year of service as a Mental Health Program Specialist 4.

Parenthetics Attachment

Mental Health Program Specialist 2 (Clinical): advanced performance level; performs the duties of a Mental Health Program Specialist 2 for State and/or local mental health programs requiring clinical expertise; and provides technical assistance and guidance on programmatic issues related to the treatment and care of individuals and scope of professional practice.

Mental Health Program Specialist 3 (Clinical): supervisory level; performs the duties of a Mental Health Program Specialist 3 for State and/or local mental health programs requiring clinical expertise; or serves as a non-supervisory, Clinical Risk Manager in the Office of Quality Management and conducts, facilitates, and/or reviews investigations of incidents and complaints at State psychiatric facilities or licensed mental health programs within an assigned geographic area.

Mental Health Program Specialist 4 (Clinical): second supervisory level; performs the duties of a Mental Health Program Specialist 4 for State and/or local mental health programs requiring clinical expertise.

Minimum Qualifications

Mental Health Program Specialist 2 (Clinical)

Open Competitive: a bachelor's degree in a clinical health or human services area generally relating to clinical mental health fields and three years of professional clinical experience in a mental health program.

Mental Health Program Specialist 3 (Clinical)

Promotion: one year of service as a Mental Health Program Specialist 2 (Clinical).

Open Competitive: a bachelor's degree as described above for Mental Health Program Specialist 2 (Clinical); and four years of professional clinical experience in a mental health program, one year of which must have been at a supervisory level.

Mental Health Program Specialist 4 (Clinical)

Promotion: one year of service as a Mental Health Program Specialist 3 (Clinical).

Open Competitive: a bachelor's degree as described above for Mental Health Program Specialist 2 (Clinical); and five years of professional clinical experience in a mental health program, two years of which must have been at a supervisory level.

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 the work that might be appropriately performed by a class. The minimum qualifications above are those

required for appointment at the time the Classification Standard was written. Please contact the Division of Staffing Services for current information on minimum requirements for appointment or examination.

Date: 3/2026

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