

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Therapy Aide

Class Code: 51110

Pay Grade: GE

A. Purpose:

Carries out client training and therapy programs from a specialized discipline area, such as speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, or recreation therapy to ensure the clients' needs within the discipline or program are met.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Therapy Aide carries out client programs in a specific discipline. Developmental Disability Technician I provides direct care services and conducts daily resident training programs; and provides information at annual staffing where parents, guardians, and professional disciplines determine goals and objectives for residents throughout the next year.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Conducts individual and group programming within a specific therapeutic discipline.
 - a. Carries out prescribed therapeutic techniques and procedures.
 - b. Utilizes or fabricates adaptive equipment for treatment, feeding, and other activities.
2. Maintains client records to document behavior and progress.
 - a. Records observations.
 - b. Completes progress notes.
3. May participate in interdisciplinary team meetings to provide input on clients' progress and behavior.
 - a. Attends annual staffings or special meetings.
 - b. Comments on clients' progress and makes suggestions on programs.
4. Maintains a clean and safe work area to ensure a sanitary and therapeutic environment.
 - a. Cleans and disinfects work area.
 - b. Cleans, checks, and maintains related equipment.
5. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Typically reports to a therapist, e.g., Physical or Occupational Therapist, Speech-Language Pathologist, or Recreation Therapist; or a program manager. Does not supervise, but may provide in-service training to other staff on programs within the discipline area.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to carry out specific therapeutic programs and observe and report clients' behaviors and reactions. This is difficult because it often involves dealing with maladaptive behaviors and/or medical concerns, and identifying minute changes or progress in clients.

Typical problems resolved include scheduling conflicts and changes, behavior problems or non-compliance of client, and equipment problems.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions made include determining programming approach to use within specified guidelines, what observations are relevant and should be recorded, minor schedule changes, how to handle a behavior problem within specified guidelines, and materials to use in program activities.

Decisions referred include changing a treatment program, what treatment team meetings to attend, and patient assignment.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with clients with disabilities to carry out treatment and activities, dorm or module staff to relay information about clients, and medical staff to discuss clients' health; and occasional contact with clients' families to exchange information.

H. Working Conditions:

Works at an institution providing treatment to individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness. Heavy lifting is involved when moving or positioning clients. Exposed to clients with communicable diseases or who may be physically abusive.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- the basic theories utilized in the discipline area.

Ability to:

- work effectively with individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness;
- follow instructions and/or treatment plans;
- record information accurately;
- safely handle and move clients with severe physical or developmental limitations.