

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Nutrition Assistant

Class Code: 50345
Pay Grade: GE

A. Purpose:

Assesses the health and nutritional status of applicants for the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program to determine initial eligibility for program participation.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Nutrition Assistant interviews clients, gathers information, and determines eligibility for certification in the WIC program.

Nutrition Educator provides nutrition counseling and education services to clients in the WIC program in an assigned region and provides training and authorizes reimbursement monies to providers in the Family Day Care Food Program (FDCFP).

Dietitian/Nutritionist performs duties as a registered dietitian/licensed nutritionist in establishing and modifying diets for clients diagnosed as having diabetes, metabolic disorders, food and drug interactions, or other acute care conditions complicated by diet.

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. Performs individual assessments of program applicants and their children to determine eligibility for the WIC program.
 - a. Interviews applicants to determine eligibility for the WIC program.
 - b. Reviews information recorded by the nurse on heights, weights, hematocrit and head circumferences.
 - c. Informs applicants of measurements and test results and how to improve.
 - d. Determines risk codes by reviewing hemoglobin, weight, diet, and the number of infections or illnesses in recent months.
 - e. Provides information to correct or change eating habits.
 - f. Certifies applicants for the WIC program.
2. Evaluates dietary status and medical histories to determine the appropriate food packages for clients.
 - a. Interviews applicants to evaluate dietary status.
 - b. Takes food recalls.
 - c. Reviews intake and compares to nutritional standards.
 - d. Provides clients with advice on how to improve eating habits for themselves or their children.
 - e. Tailors food packages to clients' needs.
3. Counsels program participants on nutrition education and diet interpretation to provide and promote nutrition education.
 - a. Interviews clients to determine if they have been following recommended guidelines.
 - b. Adjusts food packages to meet special needs.
 - c. Answers questions.
 - d. Informs parents on children's eating behaviors.

4. Develops, coordinates, and implements a nutrition education plan following established goals and determines need in order to provide and promote nutrition education.
 - a. Recommends plans and goals to promote nutrition.
 - b. Prepares informational materials and bulletin boards.
 - c. Participates in nutrition program training.
5. Refers clients to other health agencies if their needs go beyond the scope of nutrition in order to provide a well-rounded health assessment for the client.
6. Compiles amounts of special formula being used by clients to complete required reports.
7. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to a Dietitian/Nutritionist, Nutrition Educator, or a Community Health Nurse and typically does not supervise other staff.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to work with diverse groups of people while maintaining objectivity. Many of the clients applying for the program have limited communication skills making it difficult to determine their needs and explain the program.

Typical problems include assessing clients to determine their risks for the WIC program, knowing resources to refer clients to, prioritizing duties, documenting activities, and completing charts and forms.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include determining an applicant's nutritional eligibility, appropriate counseling content and education materials to use, appropriate food packages for clients, clients' or their children's nutritional goals and risks, and what will be displayed on the nutritional bulletin board.

Decisions referred include the interpretation of federal regulations and program policies, complicated and designated nutritional risk participants, final approval of nutrition programs and purchases, and how to deal with client complaints or disagreements.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with WIC applicants and participants to certify or recertify them for the program and to provide nutritional counseling and weekly contact with physicians and/or their nurses to verify the type of infant formula prescribed to a client.

H. Working Conditions:

The incumbent works in a typical office or clinic environment.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- nutrition programs;
- clinical operations.

Ability to:

- interview;
- gather and arrange data and information into charts or graphs;
- make assessments;
- communicate sufficiently to explain nutritional needs to clients;
- interpret nutritional findings;
- determine client risks.