

Merit System Services

1515 S Street, North Building, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95811
(916) 322-5193 Fax (916) 322-8376

Governor Gavin Newsom
Secretary, Government Operations Agency Amy Tong
Director Eraina Ortega

Date: May 5, 2023

To: Interagency Merit System County Directors

From: Merit System Services Program

Re: Notice of Proposed Revision to Social Worker IV Classification Specification

Notice is hereby given that the Merit System Services (MSS) Program intends to revise the classification specification for the Social Worker IV utilized by Interagency Merit System (IMS) counties to include language that will allow candidates to participate in the selection process prior to meeting the minimum qualifications (MQs) of the classification.

BACKGROUND

The Social Worker IV classification requires a master's degree for all patterns of the MQs. As part of the merit process, candidates are required to meet the MQs as listed on the specification at the time of application unless an early entry exception is explicitly stated on the specification. MSS is required to ensure consistent and fair application of minimum qualifications across all counties who use the class specification, and unable implement exceptions or requirements that are not included within the specification. Failure to ensure consistent and fair application could result in appeals, cancelled recruitments, illegal appointments, and even litigation. After review of the current MQs and discussion with several IMS counties, MSS has identified the recruitment and retention barriers posed by the MQs as currently written. As such, MSS has determined that allowing candidates who are within six months of meeting the MQs for the Social Worker IV classification to participate in the selection process would provide additional recruitment options for IMS counties who are facing critical staffing needs.

PROPOSED TEXT

MSS is proposing to add the following text to the Social Worker IV classification specification:

"Candidates who are within six months of satisfying the education requirement for this classification will be admitted to the examination, but they must complete the education requirement and provide evidence of graduation prior to appointment."

CERTIFICATION

The Social Worker IV is a servicewide classification used by multiple IMS counties. In

order to revise the classification specification, MSS must receive certification and approval of the updated language from all counties who utilize the classification. Each Director is responsible for ensuring notification to their Board of Directors and any applicable bargaining units, and certifying approval of the interested parties by completing the attached certification form.

IMPLEMENTATION

Upon receipt of certification forms from all IMS counties, MSS will update the language on the classification specification and implement the new practice. All active Social Worker IV recruitments will be closed using the existing practice, and new requisitions will need to be submitted to ensure the updated language is included on future job bulletins.

RESPONSE DEADLINE

Certification Forms must be submitted to MSSLeadership@Calhr.ca.gov by Friday, June 30, 2023. Failure to respond timely will delay or prevent the implementation of the proposed revision.

CONTACT

Inquiries and questions regarding the proposed revision may be directed to MSSLeadership@calhr.ca.gov.

/s/MSS Program

Attachments:

Social Worker IV Classification Specification (Proposed Revision)
IMS County Certification Form



SOCIAL WORKER IV A/B **(Proposed change in blue)**

CLASSIFICATION DEFINITION

Under general direction, the Social Worker IV A/B performs casework of an advanced nature dealing with complex individual and family problems; undertakes intensive treatment plans and counseling requiring professional knowledge and training; performs other related work as assigned.

Social Worker IV A/B requires a Master's degree and social work case management experience in a public or private social services agency. This is the highest non-supervisory level in the series. Incumbents perform casework requiring the application of high level and sophisticated social services expertise and techniques, generally in areas such as adult and child protective services.

The MQ patterns of the SW IV-B mirror the patterns for the SW IV-A. The distinguishing difference is that the SW IV-B requires one additional year of experience from what is required for the SW IV-A.

Social Worker IV differs from the next higher class of Social Worker Supervisor I in that the latter is the first supervisory level. Social Worker IV differs from Social Worker III in that the latter does not require both a Master's degree and qualifying experience.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED AND RECEIVED

Social Worker IV A/B receives supervision from a Social Worker Supervisor or other higher-level supervisor or manager pursuant to California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Division 31 regulations (31.070). A Social Worker IV A/B may provide lead direction to lower level Social Workers or service employees.

TYPICAL DUTIES

Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Performs case studies for the purpose of assessing problems and determining appropriate types and methods of treatment.
- Develops intensive long or short-term treatment plans, which require a comprehensive fund of professional knowledge with the aim of improving or restoring individual or family functioning.
- Ensures all services are delivered in a respectful, culturally sensitive and appropriate manner and in conformance with agency, state and federal requirements.
- Acts as a casework consultant to staff members without professional training.
- Functions at a highly skilled level in such areas as counseling, protective services, medical social work, family services, community organization and research.

- May perform the following specific types of counseling: marital, family inter-relationship, protective services for children or adults incapable of self-care.
- Investigates and provides services to children where their physical or emotional welfare is involved such as cases of neglect, abuse, emotional or behavioral problems, physical or mental disabilities, or other health conditions involving a child's personality; unmarried parenthood; conflict in parent-child relationships; lack of proper guardianship of a child; problems in school or community relationships; inadequate child care arrangements by working parents or the absence of one parent from the home and its effects on the stability of the child's home.
- Receives reports of children, dependent adults and elderly abuse; investigates allegations by conducting interviews with victims and others; assesses situations to protect vulnerable adults and children and recommends, implements and monitors alternate placement, may remove children from unsafe situations; may provide information to law enforcement or district attorneys; may be required to work on-call; may testify in court; supports witnesses and victims who must testify in court.
- Assesses prospective foster and adoptive parents; matches children with adoptive/foster parents, and counsels foster and adoptive families.
- Refers clients to other staff members or to community resources for direct and intensive services and specialized counseling; advocates on clients behalf for most appropriate services including enabling services.
- Coordinates and directly monitors family visitations to assess progress toward the case plan goals.
- Interprets and explains rules, regulations and policies to clients and applicants.
- Maintains casework records and handles relevant correspondence.
- Develops and prepares court report, case plans, case narratives and safety plans in automated computer systems.
- Operates a personal computer and other office equipment; enters and retrieves data and narratives from automated computer systems.
- Prepares and maintains case records and databases; communicates decisions, timelines, recommendations, and case plans to clients, families, and service providers.
- Communicates effectively with clients and others in writing, in person, and over the telephone.
- Analyzes data, interprets directions, procedures and regulations, and develops appropriate responses.
- Performs job duties under stressful conditions and emergency situations.
- Responds appropriately to situations.
- Maintains confidential information in accordance with legal standards and/or County regulations; performs all duties in conformance with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of organization, workload management, and time management.
- Principles and practices of note taking, report writing, English composition, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Phone etiquette and interview techniques.
- Principles and practices of counseling, bio-psychosocial assessments and therapy
- Physical and mental health principles and the impact on the personality.
- Local socio-economic conditions, trends, and current problems and methodology in the field of public social services.
- Basic principles and techniques of interviewing and recording the social casework.
- Laws, rules, and regulations governing the operation of the public welfare agency and the role and responsibilities of a social worker.
- Community organizations and social problems calling for the use of public and private community resources.
- Basic principles involved in the nature, growth and development of personality, and in-group processes.
- Basic principles of individual and group behavior.
- Current issues in the field of social welfare.
- Principles of analysis and problem-solving methodology.
- Basic public welfare programs on the Federal, State, and local level.
- General principles of public assistance policies and programs.
- Medical, legal, economic, and social management needs of individuals and families with special medical needs such as HIV disease, drug dependency, the medically fragile child, Alzheimer's, and the terminally ill.
- Strategies and protocols surrounding crisis intervention techniques such as voice modulation and assessing the potential for suicide.
- Psychopathology, the different types of mental illness diagnoses, how mental illness affects human behavior and mental health services and treatments utilized by clients.
- Signs, stages and dynamics of abuse, and the effects of abuse on child/adult development and behavior.
- Signs and symptoms of alcohol and drug use/abuse in adults and children and the effects on families.
- Standards for maintaining clients safely in home; options for placement; effects of removing clients from unsafe situations.

Ability to:

- Apply the principles of child psychology and family relationships.
- Evaluate personal psychological factors in the child and/or family's situation.
- Recognize signs of abuse for children, the elderly and dependent adults; assess risk factors and potential dangers to clients.

- Act effectively in stressful situations.
- Demonstrate skill in the more difficult casework areas.
- Accept and use consultative supervision.
- Analyze situations and adopt effective courses of action.
- Apply existing laws, rules and regulations to welfare department operations and interpret and explain to the applicant, recipient, or others public social services programs, policies, rules and regulations.
- Develop skill in interviewing, case recording and interpretation.
- Interact professionally and respectfully with clients including difficult, hostile, or distressed clients.
- Respect cultural differences.
- Work constructively within a community setting and effectively use appropriate resources and services.
- Understand and learn the agency programs, policy and procedures.
- Obtain and recognize relevant and significant facts.
- Organize and maintain work detail.
- Relate and work well with agency staff, clients, and others.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Establish and maintain client rapport on an individual basis.
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with legal standards and/or county regulations.
- Use computers and related software.
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with agency staff, clients, and outside organizations.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS (Education and/or Experience)

Social Worker IV A

Pattern 1: A Master's degree in Social Work from an accredited college or university;

OR

Pattern 2: A Master's degree from an accredited two (2) year counseling program*;

*Qualifying counseling degrees from a two (2) year counseling program includes: Marriage and Family Therapy, Clinical Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Addiction Counseling, Gerontology, Counseling Psychology.

OR

Pattern 3: One (1) year of full-time experience performing advanced journey (equivalent to a MSS SW III) level social work case management as a Social Worker in a public or private agency and Master's degree in social or behavioral science, psychology, anthropology, sociology, or counseling education.

Social Worker IV B (This level is for candidates with a Master's degree and experience. Experience during an internship does not count at this level).

Pattern 1: A Master's degree in Social Work from an accredited college or university and one (1) year of full-time experience performing social work case management as a Social Worker in a public or private agency;

OR

Pattern 2: A Master's degree from an accredited college or university two (2) year counseling program* and one (1) year of full-time experience performing social work case management as a Social Worker in a public or private agency;

*Qualifying counseling degrees from a two (2) year counseling program includes: Marriage and Family Therapy, Clinical Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Addiction Counseling, Gerontology, Counseling Psychology.

OR

Pattern 3: Two (2) years of full-time experience performing advanced journey (equivalent to a MSS SW III) level social work case management as a Social Worker in a public or private agency and Master's degree in social or behavioral science, psychology, anthropology, sociology, or counseling education.

Candidates who are within six months of satisfying the education requirement for this classification will be admitted to the examination, but they must complete the education requirement and provide evidence of graduation prior to appointment.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT

Some positions may require possession of special language and culture skills as a bona fide qualifications standard. In these cases, candidates must demonstrate that they possess the required skills.

DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENT

Some positions in this classification may require possession of a valid California driver's License. Employees who drive on County business to carry out job-related duties must possess a valid California driver's license for the class of vehicle driven and meet automobile insurability requirements of the County. Eligibility for employment for those who do not meet this requirement due to disability will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the appointing authority.

History

Date Established: 1/22/76

Merit System Services

Date Revised: 7/1/03

Date Revised: 11/7/07

Date Revised: 1/17/14

Date Revised: 1/19/17 to add language to reflect supervision requires of Division 31 Regs

Date Revised: 3/13/17 to add on-call language



CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION REVISION CERTIFICATION FORM

Classification: _____

Section 1 – County Information

County: _____ Department: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Section 2 – Notification to Employee Bargaining Unit

Please complete the following information:

1. Have all applicable employee bargaining units been notified of the proposed revision?

Yes. Date of Notification: _____

No. Please explain: _____

2. Did the employee bargaining unit(s) express any concern or disapproval of the proposed revision? If yes, explain in detail below.

Section 3 – Board Approval

Please complete the following information:

Has the county's Board of Supervisors approved the proposed revision?

Yes. Date of Approval: _____

No. Please explain: _____



**Merit System
Services Program**

Section 4 – Director Certification

I have reviewed and approved the proposed revision to the classification specification.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments (if any):

Section 5 – MSS Use Only

Date received: _____ Reviewing Manager: _____

Comments:

MSS Manager Signature: _____ Date: _____