



New Mexico State Personnel Office

2600 Cerrillos Road
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-0127

Classification Description

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Class Code</u>	<u>Pay Band</u>	<u>Alt Pay Band*</u>
Mental Health Counselors-B	G1014B	50	
Mental Health Counselors-O	G1014O	55	
Mental Health Counselors-A	G1014A	60	

**In accordance with SPB Rule 1.7.4.10 NMAC, the assignment to alternative pay bands shall be reviewed annually to determine their appropriateness.*

Occupation Description

Counsel with emphasis on prevention. Work with individuals and groups to promote optimum mental health. May help individuals deal with addictions and substance abuse; family, parenting, and marital problems; suicide; stress management; problems with self esteem; and issues associated with aging and mental and emotional health.

Nature of Work

Mental health counselors work with individuals, families, and groups to address and treat mental and emotional disorders and to promote mental health. They are trained in a variety of therapeutic techniques used to address issues such as depression, anxiety, addiction and substance abuse, suicidal impulses, stress, trauma, low self-esteem, and grief. They also help with job and career concerns, educational decisions, mental and emotional health issues, and relationship problems. In addition, they may be involved in community outreach, advocacy, and mediation activities. Some specialize in delivering mental health services for the elderly. Mental health counselors often work closely with other mental health specialists, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, psychiatric nurses, and school counselors.

Distinguishing Characteristics of Levels

Note: Examples of Work are intended to be cumulative for each progressively higher level of work. The omission of specific statements does not preclude management from assigning other duties which are reasonably within the scope of the duties.

Basic

- Employees in this Role assist coworkers with providing counseling, coordinating treatment plans with other mental and allied health professionals, and implementing counseling programs that service individuals and groups.
- Employees perform standardized duties to provide services that are preventative in nature and promote optimal mental health.

Recommended Education and Experience for Full Performance

Associate's Degree in Human Services or Social Services Counseling and two (2) years experience in mental health or substance abuse counseling.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

Minimum Qualifications

High School diploma or GED and one (1) year experience in a mental health and/or substance abuse counseling environment.

Operational

- Employees in this Role have a varied caseload that emphasizes prevention and the promotion of optimal mental health.
- Employees may help individuals and groups deal with problems such as self esteem, addictions, suicide, stress management, and/or work with counseling specialties such as marriage and family, gerontology (issues associated with aging), and vocational issues.
- Employees work closely with other mental health specialists, including psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, psychiatric nurses, and school counselors to coordinate treatment plans.

Recommended Education and Experience for Full Performance*

Associate's Degree in Human Services or Social Services Counseling and four (4) years experience in mental health and/or substance abuse counseling.

Minimum Qualifications

High School diploma or GED and two (2) years of experience in a mental health and/or substance abuse counseling environment.

Advanced

- Employees in this Role coordinate counseling programs with other institution programs; plan and direct research and follow-up activities to evaluate effectiveness of counseling programs; consult with clinical psychologists and other administrative and professional staff on matters related to counseling programs; organize and administer in-service training for counselors.

Recommended Education and Experience for Full Performance

Bachelor's Degree in Human Services or Social Services Counseling and two (2) years experience in mental health or substance abuse counseling.

Minimum Qualifications

Associate's Degree in Human Services or Social Services Counseling and two (2) years experience in mental health and/or substance abuse counseling. Any combination of education from an accredited college or university in a related field and/or direct experience in this occupation totaling four (4) years may substitute for the required education and experience.

Knowledge and Skills

*This information has been produced by compiling information and documentation provided by O*NET. O*NET™ is a trademark of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.*

Knowledge

Psychology — Knowledge of human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

Therapy and Counseling — Knowledge of principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.

Customer and Personal Service — Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.

Sociology and Anthropology — Knowledge of group behavior and dynamics, societal trends and influences, human migrations, ethnicity, cultures and their history and origins.

English Language — Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

Education and Training — Knowledge of principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.

Philosophy and Theology — Knowledge of different philosophical systems and religions. This includes their basic principles, values, ethics, ways of thinking, customs, practices, and their impact on human culture.

Clerical — Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.

Skills

Active Listening — Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.

Social Perceptiveness — Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.

Service Orientation — Actively looking for ways to help people.

Speaking — Talking to others to convey information effectively.

Monitoring — Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.

Critical Thinking — Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.

Judgment and Decision Making — Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.

Persuasion — Persuading others to change their minds or behavior.

Reading Comprehension — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.

Complex Problem Solving — Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

Statutory Requirements: N/A

Conditions of Employment: Working Conditions for individual positions in this classification will vary based on each *agency's utilization, essential functions, and the recruitment needs* at the time a vacancy is posted. All requirements are subject to possible modification to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Default FLSA Status: Non-Exempt. FLSA status may be determined to be different at the agency level based on the agency's utilization of the position.

Bargaining Unit: This position may be covered by a collective bargaining agreement and all terms/conditions of that agreement apply and must be adhered to.

Established: 07/07/2001 **Revised:** 9/20/2011

**Adapted from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics and are intended to illustrate the typical education and experience required for this occupation.*

Note: Classification description subject to change. Please refer to the SPO website www.spo.state.nm.us to ensure this represents the most current copy of the description.