

RESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR

DEFINITION

Under supervision, provides high quality, day-to-day care, and supervision to participants at a residential or housing program to ensure well-being and development of participants while maintaining a safe and nurturing environment in accordance with program regulations and philosophy, Fred Finch (hereinafter FF) policies and procedures, and accreditation standards; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

The Residential Counselor classification is responsible for independently performing counseling duties in support of residential and/or housing services. Positions at this level exercise judgment and initiative in their assigned tasks, receives continuous coaching and direction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise, and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the residential program.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions (changes to CBA covered positions follows the CBA process) and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Actively supervises and provides high quality care to participants at a residential facility or housing site; supports participants in expressing their needs and advocating for themselves in a community living setting; supports and ensures adherence to individualized safety plans and precautions; communicates safety risks to the treatment team.
- Acts as primary counselor to new and/or assigned participants and performs all duties of primary counselor function. (not applicable for housing programs).
- In collaboration with treatment team, assists in identifying individual participant strengths and needs, assesses influence of individual, family, and community characteristics, and tailors and modifies approach and services based on participant/family experience; communicates any participant health concerns to the treatment team.
- Maintains a safe and nurturing environment in accordance with program regulations and philosophy, FF policies and procedures, and accreditation standards.
- Assists in planning and implements age-appropriate recreational, skills-building, and community integration activities.
- Assists in the implementation of positive behavioral interventions, treatment plan goals, and safety plans; recommends strategies and supports participants in building positive permanent connections within their communities.
- Supports participants as needed with daily living, health, and wellness skills including time management, medication compliance, maintenance of health/hygiene, use of public transportation,

completion of chores, and overall mediation with interpersonal conflicts with peers or staff; prepares and cooks meals in accordance with restrictions and guidelines, as needed.

- STRTP and Crisis Home Only: Under clinical supervision and direction, assists with administering prescribed medications to participants adhering to medication protocols.
- Assists participants in accessing community resources including providing transportation services to appointments and meetings.
- Oversees the conditions and maintenance of assigned residential facility; reports unsatisfactory conditions to assigned supervisor and/or Maintenance/Facility Department; cleans facilities as needed.
- Attends and participates in a variety of meetings, staff trainings, case consultation, clinical discussions, and/or public information and education functions.
- Completes, maintains, and submits accurate, detailed, and thorough documentation, including residential progress notes (as required for specific programs), incident reports, and other paperwork related to participant services delivered; ensures documentation comply with county, state, and federal and/or funder guidelines.
- Observes and complies with all FF and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols.
- Performs related duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Operations, services, and activities of a residential or housing program which encompasses counseling and support services to clients and/or their families.
- Techniques for supervising and providing high quality care to support clients in expressing their needs and advocating for themselves in a community living setting.
- Principles for planning and implementing age-appropriate recreational, skills-building, and community integration activities.
- Short- and long-term therapeutic methods including community-based interventions.
- Theories, principles, and techniques of group and individual counseling to identify and remediate cognitive, mental, and emotional issues in youth, children, and/or young adults.
- Current trends and research in the diagnosis and treatment of behavioral health disorders.
- Principles of risk assessment and crisis intervention.
- Basic needs and challenges for individuals and/or families accessing behavioral health services, including cultural barriers.
- Social, emotional, and behavioral aspects of mental disorders and illness.
- Principles and practices of direct client service delivery.
- Principles of behavioral health education.
- Cultural, social, and environmental factors and influences affecting behavioral health.
- Development milestones of children, youth, or young adults.
- Transitions to assist participants to move from community activities (i.e., parks, recreational activities, etc.) back to the program.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations as well as industry standards and best practices pertinent to the assigned area of responsibility, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- FF and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service, interacting, and effectively dealing with the public, community-based organizations and service providers, stakeholders, and Fred Finch staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Supervise and provide high quality care to participants at a residential or housing program and support participants in expressing their needs and advocating for themselves in a community living setting.
- Plan and implement age-appropriate recreational, skills-building, and community integration activities.
- (Residential Programs Only) Implement treatment and safety plans to measure progress and outcomes and communicates progress and outcomes to participants/families.
- Utilize evidence-based, trauma-informed, individualized, strengths-based, culturally responsive, and family-centered approach to provide intervention and/or case management.
- Observe client behavior and apply appropriate counseling techniques in a coordinated care, social rehabilitation, and recovery model focused environment.
- Develop and maintain the confidence and cooperation of clients to secure pertinent information and to effectively deliver services.
- Maintain professional boundaries and adhere to all professional ethical standards including abuse reporting and maintenance of participant confidentiality.
- Identify and nurture participant strength and support their right to make independent decisions as appropriate.
- Perform crisis intervention, respond promptly to client emergency situations, and take effective action within scope of authority.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, residential progress notes, and other written materials.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and judgment within general policy and procedural guidelines.
- Organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with clients and/or their families, FF staff, and the behavioral health community.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.

Education and Experience:

Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program

- The education and experience for Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) must follow the requirements as outlined by regulation and are listed below.
- STRTP (Education and Experience as Outlined by California’s Code of Regulations, Title 22; Personnel Requirements Section 87065:
- Direct care staff shall meet one of the following requirements prior to employment:
 - (A) Have a Bachelor of Arts or Sciences Degree;
 - (B) Have a valid Child Development Teaching Permit;
 - (C) Have completed 12 semester units of Early Childhood Education, Adolescent Development, or Foster and Kinship Care Education and have at least 100 hours of experience working with youth;

(D) Have a valid certificate as an Alcohol Counselor, Drug Counselor or Alcohol and Drug Counselor, and have at least 100 hours of experience working with youth.

(E) Have a valid Vocational Training certificate, credential or documentation demonstrating that the individual is a trade journey person who instructs children in vocational skills and have at least 100 hours of experience working with youth; or

(F) Have previously been employed as a staff or volunteer at a group home or short-term residential therapeutic center for at least one year.

(G) Have relevant experience as determined by the department to meet any of the above requirements.

(2) Direct care staff shall be at least 21 years of age.

Crisis Home

Education

- High School Diplomat

Experience

- Have at least six (6) months of prior experience providing direct care to individuals with developmental disabilities who have challenging behavior service needs, and

Housing Program

Education

- High School Diploma or G.E.D.

Experience

- One (1) year of providing support services or working in a residential or housing program with a similar population.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of a valid California Driver's License, a satisfactory driving record, and a properly registered and insured vehicle, to be maintained throughout employment.

Licenses and Certifications (Crisis Home Only):

- Must become a Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) within 12 months of employment.
 - Complete online courses within a 180-day period or be a Qualified Behavior Modification Professional.
 - Participation in RBT supervision as assigned.
- **All Positions:** Possession of a valid California Driver's License, a satisfactory driving record.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a residential program setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and visit various locations in the community while providing services to participants. Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary work classification although

standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, and push. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in a residential program environment where the noise levels can range from low to high noise, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees interact with participants with behavioral disorders who may display erratic and assaultive behavior, including those who require emergency crisis intervention. Employees may also interact with upset families of participants, staff and/or community representatives when interpreting and enforcing policies and procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Some positions may require working varied shifts and/or alternate schedules as needed.

I have read and understand the duties and responsibilities of my position as a Residential Counselor. I understand that this job description should in no way be construed as a contract for employment, but rather is intended to indicate the general nature and level of work to be performed. Nothing in this job description restricts management’s right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to or from this job at any time. It is not designed to contain nor be interpreted as a comprehensive account of all the responsibilities and/or qualifications required of an employee assigned to this job. These job duties may be subject to change at any time due to reasonable accommodation or other reasons. Further, I understand that if I have any physical limitations or require any accommodation to perform the essential functions of my job, I must immediately inform my manager and/or Human Resources.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____