

**DEPARTMENT:** MENTAL HEALTH, ALCOHOL & DRUG ABUSE  
**CLASSIFICATION:** COMPETITIVE  
**APPROVED:** APRIL 18, 2007

**ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELOR TRAINEE**

This is a trainee position in the Competitive Class with up to five (5) years duration. The trainee level is used to recruit, to the alcohol and/or substance abuse counseling field, college graduates with a career interest in alcohol and/or substance abuse counseling. During the term of the traineeship, trainees acquire the 6000 hours of supervised experience necessary to participate in the examination for credentialing as an Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) provided by the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. It is expected that trainees will attempt to obtain credentialing during the first testing cycle following the conclusion of the first 6000 hours of supervised training. Upon receipt of credentialing, incumbents receiving satisfactory ratings will be advanced to the title of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor without further examination. The traineeship appointment will be terminated if the trainee does not show the personal stability, cooperation, interest and ability to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills required of an Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor, or if the incumbent fails to receive credentialing within five (5) years of original appointment. The maximum term of the traineeship is five (5) years. Trainees are expected to maintain their CASAC Trainee certificate during the entire traineeship, otherwise their employment will be terminated.

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:** Under direct and continuing supervision, the trainee learns the principles and techniques utilized for providing counseling and social work services to clients of the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Program component of the Niagara County Department of Mental Health. The work is carried out in accordance with the standard, well-established and accepted evaluation and counseling procedures and practices utilized in the field, and involves the learning of the entire process of dealing with clients from intake through counseling and eventual release. Work is performed under the direct and continuing supervision of either a Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor or a Staff Social Worker and also under the general direction of the Director. Supervision of subordinate employees is usually not a feature of this class of positions. Does related work as required.

**TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

1. Learns and assists with pre-admission screening in order to assess the presence of abuse of or dependence on alcohol and/or other substances and to determine the appropriate level of care;
2. Under direct and continuing supervision, assists with referral and admission to alternative levels of chemical dependency care when assessment indicates such need;
3. Under direct and continuing supervision, learns to evaluate and develop treatment plans designed by an on staff health care professional;
4. Participates in multi-disciplinary team case conferencing;
5. Learns and assists with providing primary counseling for a given number of clients under the direct case supervision of an assigned on staff qualified health care professional;
6. Learns to co-lead individual and group alcoholism and/or substance abuse counseling with methods and curriculum approved by an on staff qualified health care professional;
7. Refers and, when appropriate, collaborates with other self-help organizations including Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, and Alateen and with needed community services such as mental health, medical, vocational, recreation services, etc.;
8. Learns to maintain case records for clients in accordance with established policies and procedures, which are then reviewed and signed off by an on staff qualified health care professional;
9. Learns and assists with providing education regarding alcohol and/or drug addiction to other professionals and the community at large;
10. Attends all educational conferences and workshops as deemed appropriate by supervisors;
11. May assist in collaborating with other community agencies regarding client treatment or community prevention programs.

**CONTINUED**

## **ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELOR TRAINEE CONTINUED**

### **FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

Working knowledge of the practices and procedures of social casework as applied to the treatment of individuals affected by alcohol and/or substance abuse; working knowledge of the cultural, medical, and social factors leading and contributing to alcoholism and/or chemical dependence; working knowledge of interviewing and counseling techniques and concepts; working knowledge of the principles and practices of group, individual and family counseling; working knowledge of community organizations and agencies serving persons suffering from alcoholism and/or substance abuse; ability to learn to plan, develop and implement a treatment program; ability to organize work effectively; ability to prepare reports and to acquire the skills needed to prepare case notes; ability to relate to addiction clients; ability to communicate the goals of the treatment program to clients, other agencies and the public to stimulate their interest; ability to establish and maintain effective interpersonal relationships; ability to get along well with others and to acquire the skills needed to establish therapeutic relationships with clients; ability to prepare written material and reports; ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing; ability to accept and utilize guidance; good judgment; initiative and resourcefulness; tact and understanding; good address; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENT FOR APPOINTMENT:**

1. Certification as a New York State Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor Trainee (CASAC-T) at time of the original appointment and throughout entire traineeship.
2. Candidates must possess a valid New York State driver's license or otherwise demonstrate their ability to meet the transportation needs of the job.