

NUTRITIONIST II - LOCAL

Work in this class involves two major activities: 1) providing clinical nutrition services and medical nutrition therapy to clients with broad or comprehensive nutrition needs or; 2) program coordination, including: planning, managing, implementing and evaluating small or limited Local Health Agency nutrition programs or services. Employees in this class may perform one or both of these functions in a Public Health Agency primarily at the local level.

As a clinical nutrition provider, employees in this class provide comprehensive and in-depth nutrition assessments and counseling to clients requiring therapeutic intervention that may include chronic or short-term medical conditions and disabilities of moderate to high-risk nature; and case-consultation.

In the area of program coordination, employees may oversee daily operations of a small or limited nutrition program; develop plans for service delivery; assesses community nutrition needs and design programs to meet those needs; interpret and disseminate current scientific knowledge to professionals and clients; training; perform administrative functions; advise on program evaluation; and may supervise administrative and/or lower level nutrition staff..

This level is distinguished from the Nutritionist I by the application of nutritional theories and concepts, depth of nutritional assessment and counseling, and/or by the lead worker function. Employee may be the primary clinical nutrition professional in a Local Health Agency or service area. Work may include other related programmatic assignments as determined by management. Employees usually report to a higher level Program Manager or Local Health Director.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope – Employees independently complete a thorough nutrition assessment using anthropometric and biochemical measurements, health history data, socio-economic information and food/nutrition history for clients with a wide variety of moderate and high-risk medical conditions or complex nutritional needs. Work requires the employees to provide in-depth individual counseling concerning therapeutic diets, developmental processes, programmatic parameters, and nutrition principles. Nutrition assessment information may be used to determine eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Employees with program coordination activities will plan, implement, manage, and evaluate a Local Health Agency's nutrition program, including developing and carrying out operational plan for service delivery. This can include direct supervision, clinical oversight, determination of daily work efforts, modification of state policies into systematic operational procedures, provision of programmatic or clinical training, and customer service problem-solving. Employees may speak on nutrition and health issues through group and school programs, as well as newspaper, radio, and to other health professionals. Employee may also select, evaluate, and revise nutrition education materials or curricula.

Intricacy - Employees usually spend a considerable amount of time in providing comprehensive nutritional services to clients with chronic medical and nutritional problems and develop client care plans based upon the nutritional assessment. Employees at this level demonstrate full knowledge of nutrition theories in explaining the interrelationships of various nutrients in dealing with nutritional and/or medical problems. Work in program coordination requires analysis of information related to program objectives, strategies, and existing delivery systems while preparing and reviewing operational plans and budgets.

Subject Matter Complexity –Responsibilities are broad in scope and involve many variables and unanticipated circumstances that reflect the constantly changing science and practice of nutrition, public health, and medicine, and the dynamics of population’s need for nutrition programs. Work requires specialized knowledge in dietetics, behavior change theory, and nutrition through the life-cycle. Skillful application of this knowledge is required in counseling clients with chronic or short-term medical conditions and disabilities of moderate to high-risk nature, and in evaluating education materials, and for community involvement. Work requires skillful application of general knowledge in service delivery mechanisms; and program coordination, planning, and evaluation.

Guidelines - Guidelines include standard assessment procedures, professional reference materials, nutrition program reference manuals, and professional standards. Employees independently apply these guidelines or seek advice from a higher level Nutritionist, the State Office, or Local Health Director.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employees are aware of program aims and objectives and address these independently. Considerable independence of judgment and creativity expected in directing staff, developing training, monitoring staff, and resolving on-the-job problems related to staff performance and conflict resolution. Work is done under the general direction of higher level Program Manager or Local Health Director. Employees may seek technical advice for highly complex nutritional or programmatic issues. Employees receive new and modified administrative and programmatic directives and, depending upon the setting, may incorporate these directives into service delivery. Continuing professional development is needed to carry out responsibilities.

Nature of Review – Periodic reviews are conducted by higher level specialists through quality assurance reviews or technical reviews by the Local Health or State Agency. Established cyclic work performance reviews are typically done.

Scope of Decisions – Decisions regarding comprehensive nutrition services will affect the health of clients, and their families. Programmatic decisions may affect the direction and priorities of the program and the health of populations. Work can involve authoritative application of organizational policy. Employees may provide direction or supervision to lower level staff.

Consequence of Decisions –Decisions regarding assessment and care affect clients’ nutritional status and health outcome. Program decisions may affect organization efficiency and efficacy in meeting population needs. Work contributes noticeably to health and nutritional status of individual clients, their families, and the local population.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contact – Contacts vary depending upon agency and primary work role. They usually include: clients and their families; other health professionals (within and outside the Agency), other administrative staff (within the Agency), community members, and the general public.

Nature and Purpose – Clinical contacts are for the purpose of determining client nutrition needs; and ensuring that clients receive appropriate nutrition services. Program coordination contacts are to plan, direct, supervise, and evaluate public health nutrition programs and personnel or provide community-level services.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Employees usually work in a Local Health Agency setting which could be characterized as mildly disagreeable.

Hazards - Employees have contact with clients and other professionals which would not, under normal circumstances, present any danger. Behavioral problems, such as aggression, of some clients or their family members could cause bodily harm.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities – Specialized knowledge and skill in comprehensive nutrition assessment and care planning, including problem diagnosis, counseling, and evaluation of clients from diverse backgrounds, ages, and with multiple and complex health and therapeutic nutritional needs. Knowledge of human behavior and techniques for effecting behavior change with considerable skill in counseling. Broad knowledge in health care ethics, documentation in the medical record, and quality assurance. Knowledge in organization of community health and nutrition resources. Sophisticated knowledge of current scientific information regarding nutrition, diet, and health and the ability to relate this information to clients, professionals, and the general public. Skill in conducting a nutrition education or community needs assessment. Fundamental knowledge of current principles and practices of public health, and program coordination. Ability to interpret policy and protocols into operational procedures and work priorities. Skill in organizing and coordinating the work of others. Full range of skill in presenting ideas orally and in writing in a clear, concise manner.

Minimum Education and Experience - Registered Dietitian with the Commission on Dietetics Registration; or Master's degree in Dietetics, Public Health Nutrition, or Nutrition; or graduation from a Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education- approved Didactic Program in Dietetics and two years nutrition experience; or Dietetic Technician, Registered with the Commission on Dietetics Registration with a Bachelor's degree in any subject area from an accredited four-year college or university and two years nutrition experience; or a Bachelor's of Science degree in Dietetics, Public Health Nutrition or Community Nutrition from an accredited four-year college or university and two years nutrition experience.

Administering the Class – Candidates should provide documentation of registration status from the Commission on Dietetic Registration, provide university or college transcripts or CADE verification statement.