

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**Class Code: 002754
Grade: 24
FLSA: E**

THERAPIST II*

DEFINITION OF CLASS:

The Therapist series directly provides psychosocial treatments and services, including psychotherapeutic counseling, requiring knowledge of, and skill in, a full range of concepts, theories, principles, methods, techniques and generally-accepted practices of professional psychosocial therapy.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The Therapist II is the advanced-level class providing comprehensive professional clinical assessment, referral/coordination, direct treatment (short or long term), case management, other case work, support-advocacy, crisis intervention, crisis response and related professional services to persons presenting with emotional, behavioral, substance abuse and related types of problems/disorders. This class is distinguished from the Therapist I in that the Therapist II class provides professional psychosocial treatment, counselling and therapy work at the highest level of proficiency in the County in eligible professions licensed by the State of Maryland and generally assigned professional work involving nonstandard and complex elements that require application of highly developed clinical skills.

MAJOR DUTIES:

Provides advanced-level crisis intervention therapy, direct psychotherapy, direct clinical counseling and/or facilities, or directly provides, other forms of psychosocial treatment such as sponsorship of self-help/support groups.

Facilitates or directly provides psychosocial treatments and services, including psychotherapeutic counseling, requiring knowledge of, and skill in, a full range of concepts, theories, principles, methods, techniques and generally-accepted practices of professional psychosocial therapy. The Therapist II may serve on an interdisciplinary team of caseworkers, and may coordinate therapeutic and social service support to mitigate problems and facilitate better functioning of clients.

In a clinic or local health program, plans and provides psychosocial treatments-services including individual, family and group intervention, short- or long-range therapeutic counselling or other support services to assist clients and to help solve psychosocial problems

Elicits critical client-specific information about a client's overall background, emotional distress, physical-psychic trauma, mental illness or substance abuse, and other wants-needs-concerns-issues, makes a comprehensive clinical evaluation, recommends a treatment plan or programmatic response, makes referrals, and facilitates or directly provides various psychosocial treatments – psychotherapy, psychoeducation, psycho-rehabilitation, self-help/support groups, etc., consistent with programs and resources.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: (Illustrative Only)

- Obtains information from persons presenting with indicators of mental illness, substance abuse, emotional distress and other problems, their family members (as appropriate) and other sources; conducts a comprehensive clinical assessment and mental health diagnostic evaluation and makes referrals or recommends a treatment plan that is consistent with programs and resources; provides therapeutic case management services, tracking client progress; prepares and maintains case files; and prepares reports.
- Coordinates referrals and provides appropriate linkage for clients to community services; works closely with representatives of other agencies (private and public) involved in cases to ensure clinical coordination of services and continuity of care among various treatment/provider agencies.
- Attends case consultation staff meetings; makes recommendations regarding appropriate treatment interventions.
- Participates in cross-functional service integration meetings and conferences concerning needs of, and treatment plans for individuals.
- Recommends or determines eligibility for programmatic assistance consistent with guidelines. Informs applicants and clients of parameters of various programs specific to their situations.
- Identifies and recommends appropriate resources to control or alleviate problems and develops, with the client, a plan of action for services and follow-up.
- Counsels clients and family members to aid them in achieving better mental health functioning.
- Provides crisis intervention.
- Provides or coordinates preventive, protective and supportive services to individuals or groups threatened by conditions or circumstances detrimental to their well-being or that of the community.
- Advocates for clients regarding eligibility, services, etc.
- Prepares and maintains case records, uses automated recordkeeping systems and prepares reports to supervisors and, as pertinent to assignments, including reports for the courts.
- Uses a computer and modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise software and specialized software for planning, scheduling, recordkeeping, communicating (email), word processing, manipulating data, preparing presentations, reporting time and attendance, researching (the Internet), and performing other functions.
- Coordinates with staff in social, mental health, health, education and other governmental units and agencies outside the unit/team of assignment and with staff in non-governmental organizations to meet the needs of clients.
- Attends, or leads, case consultation staff meetings; makes recommendations regarding treatment plans.
- Participates in, or leads, cross-functional, cross-unit service integration meetings and conferences concerning needs of, and treatment plans, for individuals.
- Participates in, or leads, staff discussions of unit/team, departmental and programmatic policies and procedures.
- May guide/lead lower level staff in clinical or non-clinical matters; may fill in for team supervisor on a recurring basis
- May plan and present continuing education, professional development and other training.
- May assist in preparing and advocating for a program, or unit/team, budget.
- May lead special projects to revise programs, policies and procedures or develop new programs, policies and procedures and help implement them.
- May represent the department, program/service area or unit/team on boards or task forces, or serve as a special liaison with other agencies.
- May prepare court papers and testify in court.

- As assigned, operates a motor vehicle to get to/from meetings/events, client sites, etc.
- Performs related duties, as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

(The knowledge, skills and abilities listed in this specification are representative of the class but are not an all-inclusive list.)

WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF:

- Full professional proficiency in using, the concepts, theories, principles, methods, techniques and generally-accepted practices of professional psychosocial treatment, therapy and counseling to assess, refer, counsel, manage cases of, and provide related professional services to, persons presenting with emotional, behavioral, substance abuse and related types of problems/disorders. This body of information includes socioeconomic/cultural factors and interpersonal dynamics as well as professional ethics and standards-of-practice, pharmacological resources, and professional resources such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) of Mental Health Disorders. The specific professional knowledge-skill set required varies by professional area-of-practice, unit/program of assignment and other factors.
- Co-occurring medical/psychiatric issues and the effects of the pharmacological resources used in treatment thereof altogether at a level sufficient to make holistic therapeutic psychosocial assessments/interventions/referrals/etc.
- Regulations, policies, procedures and systems governing funding/delivery of the services provided and related recordkeeping, including privacy-confidentiality, to ensure adherence to Federal, State, County, departmental, programmatic, fiscal and other guidelines; this includes knowledge of the organization and operations of juvenile justice, criminal justice, Federal/State correction-rehabilitation-parole-probation systems, child welfare/protective services and other matters related to the services provided and clientele served in sufficient detail to operate within the context of the program/unit of assignment.
- State/County/community resources, such as medical, mental health, legal and social services, to make referrals/placements and help ensure completeness of responses to needs.
- Management and supervisory principles and practices.

SKILL IN:

- Case management and reporting systems to document and use personal, diagnostic, therapeutic, counseling, case management, administrative, financial and other types of information; this includes skill in ensuring adequacy and accuracy of data/transactions and, as assigned, generating reports.
- Problem solving to select, organize, and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical, or abstract) to solve a problem. This includes skill in recognizing subtle aspects of problems, identifying relevant information, and making balanced recommendations and decisions. Examples include insightfully assessing the needs of clients, providing therapeutic/counseling services to improve social and emotional functioning in highly complex, hard-to-serve or otherwise non-standard cases, and gathering and using intricate behavioral data to monitor client progress and assess outcomes of therapeutic/counseling services.
- Written communication to understand written information, draw inferences, form hypotheses and develop logical arguments, and to express such information in writing so that others will understand.
- Oral communication to understand verbal information, draw inferences, form hypotheses and develop logical arguments, and to express such information verbally so that others will understand, agree or comply, and, at times, be convinced or persuaded. This includes the ability to listen 'actively' and encourage effective oral communication by others such as clients (or their parents/guardians/families) concerning social, behavioral and emotional problems.
- Interpersonal skills to interact with business contacts in a businesslike, customer service-oriented

manner; this includes skill in establishing and maintaining effective professional working relationships and working as a member of an interdisciplinary team, and skill in human relations to develop and maintain effective, empathetic Therapist-client clinical relationships.

- Using a computer, modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise systems/software, specialty systems/software for client-referral-case tracking/reporting, etc.

ABILITY TO:

- Establish positive working relationships with other employees, clients and their families, other agencies, and the public.
- Follow directions in a professional manner; prepare reports and document client services in a timely and professional manner.
- Work within a team and collaborate with team members;
- Knowledge of and ability to act professionally with regard to a code of ethics and confidentiality.

SUPERVISORY CONTROLS:

The Therapist II independently plans and performs the successive steps required to accomplish the work in accordance with guidelines and solves most problems on own or in consultation with another Therapist licensed by Maryland at the advanced level; the Therapist II, who licensed at the advanced level by the State, is expected by the County to practice independently. Regularly scheduled progress reviews are the norm; the work is expected to be professionally effective and insightful. Work is subject to review for quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and other factors.

GUIDELINES:

Guidelines include, but are not limited to, the concepts, theories, principles, methods, techniques and generally-accepted practices of professional psychosocial therapy and counselling; professional ethics and standards-of-practice of the profession; specific systems, rules, procedures, practices and programmatic elements, services and other specifics of the unit and program(s) of assignment including protocols and procedures of State departments-agencies; contextual matters directly related to the services provided and the clientele served; and confidentiality-privacy requirements. A Therapist II selects and applies professional methods-techniques, uses professional references and adheres to professional ethics, standards-of-practice and programmatic requirements to elicit critical client-specific information, make a comprehensive evaluation, recommend a treatment plan/programmatic response and/or directly provide an effective therapeutic response.

COMPLEXITY:

Complexity of the work is reflected in in the wide array of client problems, many of which are multi-layered, that often manifest within context of physical disabilities or maladies, diminished intellectual capacity, extreme indebtedness or poverty, unemployment, language barriers, diverse cultural norms/taboo, and a host of other factors; co-occurrence itself is a complicating factor because a Therapist II must interview-assess-recommend-decide-act within context to be effective. The array of variables that may attend 'acting out', emotional distress or mental illness provide requisite context for, and complicate, identification of problems/needs, development of treatment plans, delivery of therapeutic counseling and performance of such other services as referral to community providers. Identification of psychosocial needs and attending factors by a Therapist II involve strong, insightful analysis; the typical requirement for responses is similar – well-considered and well-implemented responses are imperative. Methods and techniques used by a Therapist II in clinical interviewing and problem solving tend to be advanced (which is consistent with licensing). The work involves treating a

variety of standard and non-standard psychosocial problems and situations, including crises, in accordance with established criteria.

SCOPE AND EFFECT:

The impact of the work is individual- and often family-specific, and it results in prevention, stabilization, recovery or enhanced functioning or well-being, or full self-sufficiency, of clientele.

CONTACTS:

Business contacts are with clients, their family members, social work, mental health and human service professionals, support staff, nurses, doctors, teachers, law enforcement and court personnel, for-profit and not-for-profit service providers, and other parties within and outside of County Government to provide, coordinate or report on professional advice and service and perform related functions

PUBLIC SERVICE /ASSISTANCE:

A Therapist II provides direct professional assistance or care to clients. There are intensive interactions with clients concerning their wants, needs, concerns and problems; professional, therapeutic counseling is provided.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Work is primarily sedentary. The work of the class is generally performed in office-type settings in mental health centers, health clinics, schools and other indoor venues; however, several Therapist positions are located in closed, protective custody correctional facilities. There are incidental or occasional home visits by Therapists in some positions and regularly recurring home visits by Therapists in a few positions.

HAZARDS:

Work involves occasional exposure to some risk of aggressive or unpredictable behavior by clients.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Work is primarily sedentary Work may involve evening-weekend-holiday duty or rotating shifts. The work requires ordinary physical effort to sit, walk, stand, bend, and reach or carry light items.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Education:

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Master's Degree in clinical or counseling psychology, social work, marriage and family therapy, nursing, or a related behavioral science field.

Experience: Two (2) years of professional experience rendering therapeutic counseling, social work, nursing or psychology services, as pertinent to one's professional licensing.

Equivalency: None.

LICENSE REQUIREMENT:

One of the following licenses, issued by the State of Maryland, must be held prior to appointment of, and maintained by, the employee:

- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC);

- Licensed Clinical Marriage and Family Therapy (LCMFT);
- Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug Counselor (LCADC);
- Licensed Certified Social Worker/Clinical (LCSW-C);
- Licensed Registered Nurse in the United States, certified as Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Adult Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner or Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in the State of Maryland; or
- Licensed Psychologist

Note: There will be no substitutions for this requirement.

Possession and maintenance of:

- A valid Class C (or equivalent) driver’s license from the applicant’s state of residence when required for job-related duties.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD: (may vary according to assignment)

Individuals appointed to a position in this class will be required to serve a probationary period of six (6) months, during which time performance will be carefully evaluated. Continuation in this class will be contingent upon successful completion of the probationary period.

NOTE:

Individuals appointed or promoted to a position in this class in the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation will be required to serve a probationary period of twelve (12) months. Performance will be carefully evaluated during the probationary period. Continuation in this class will be contingent upon successful completion of the probationary period.

MEDICAL PROTOCOL: Limited Core Exam with a pre-placement Drug/Alcohol Screen. *

*Positions assigned to Fire and Rescue require Limited Core Exam with Drug/Alcohol Screen.

PROMOTION POTENTIAL:

This is the budget level classification for the series.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

Employees in this class may lead the work of lower level staff in clinical and non-clinical matters on a recurring basis or in the absence of the unit/team supervisor.

CLASS SPECIFICATION HISTORY:

Class Established: September 1976 **Revised:**

March 1981

January 1988

Classification Study: May 1996 (M)

June 2001

Classification Study: June 2003 (M)

January 2013

August 2013

Classification Study: January 2018 (M)

(Probationary Period) February 2020

Revised: Medical Protocol per OMS Review: February, 2022

Notes: Employees in this class have a mandatory licensure requirement, as specified in the Code of Maryland, which contains regulations governing the practice of clinical counseling-psychotherapy-nursing-psychology, and by the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists, the Maryland Board of Nursing, the Maryland Board of Social Worker Examiners or the Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists, as pertinent to the profession.