

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

**Code No. 002806  
Grade 24  
FLSA: E**

**SOCIAL WORKER III**

**DEFINITION OF CLASS:**

This is professional social work at the highest level of proficiency in the County and licensed by the State of Maryland: Licensed Certified Social Worker/Clinical (LCSW-C). A Social Worker III works with people experiencing endangerment, abuse, neglect, homelessness and/or emotional-behavioral-mental health problems including those resulting from physical abuse or psychic trauma. A Social Worker III is generally assigned professional work involving nonstandard and complex elements that require application of highly developed clinical skills; assignments may include guidance/leadership of lower level staff in clinical and non-clinical matters on a recurring basis or in the absence of the unit/team supervisor. A Social Worker III elicits critical client-specific information about health-aging-disability, family dynamics, employment-income-housing, physical-psychic trauma, mental illness or substance abuse, makes a comprehensive clinical evaluation, recommends a treatment plan or programmatic response, makes referrals and facilitates or provides direct therapy-counseling consistent with programs and resources. 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. A Social Worker III provides direct professional assistance or care to clients. There are intensive interactions with clients concerning their wants, needs, concerns and problems; professional counseling is provided. Some clients have multi-layered problems that make interviewing, counseling or provision of assistance or care particularly challenging.

A Social Worker III provides 'clinical specialist' therapy-counseling and other services requiring knowledge of, and skill in applying, the full range of concepts, theories, principles, methods, techniques and generally-accepted practices of professional social work, including advanced techniques. A Social Worker III may serve on an interdisciplinary team of caseworkers, and may coordinate social service support, to mitigate problems and facilitate better functioning of clients. In a clinic or local health program, a Social Worker III plans and provides social work treatment-services including individual, family and group intervention, short- or long-range therapeutic counseling or other support services to assist clients and to help them attain better social, economic, emotional or physical adjustment. Most work flows to a Social Worker III consistent with established unit/team workflow. The Social Worker III 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 LCSW-C; as a Maryland-licensed LCSW-C, the Social Worker III is permitted by the State and 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 include, but are not limited to, the principles, methods, techniques and generally-accepted practices of professional social work and counseling; 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 Social Worker III 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 or programmatic response and/or directly provide an effective clinical response. Complexity of the work is reflected in the wide array of client problems, many of which are multi-layered, that often manifest within context of physical disabilities, physical maladies, diminished intellectual capacity, extreme indebtedness, poverty, unemployment, child care problems, language barriers, diverse cultural norms/taboos, legal problems and a host of other factors; co-occurrence itself is a complicating factor because a Social Worker III must interview-assess-recommend-decide-act within context to be effective. The array of variables that may attend the client's need for physical-psycho safety (from endangerment, neglect or abuse), housing or family stability (including homelessness, foster care or adoption) or recovery include 'acting out', emotional distress or mental illness; these variables provide requisite context for, and complicate, identification of core problems/needs, development of treatment plans, determination of placements, delivery of counselling and performance of such other services as referral to community providers. Identification of social work needs and attending factors by a Social Worker III typically require strong, insightful inquiries and analyses; the typical requirement for responses is similar – well-considered and well-implemented responses are imperative. The work involves treating a variety of standard and non-standard professional social work problems and situations, including crises, in accordance with established criteria. 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. Work is primarily sedentary. The work of the class is mainly performed in human-social service centers, health clinics, schools and other indoor places; there are incidental or occasional hospital-home-nursing home visits by Social Workers III in some positions and regularly recurring hospital-home-nursing home visits by Social Workers III in a few positions. Work involves occasional exposure to some risk of aggressive or unpredictable behavior by clients. Work may involve evening-weekend-holiday duty or rotating shifts.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: (Illustrative Only)**

- Obtains pertinent data from clients, family members and other sources to assess socioeconomic, emotional, health and other problems, and recommends or determines eligibility for programmatic assistance consistent with guidelines. Informs applicants and clients of parameters of, or eligibility for, various programs suited to their situations.
- Identifies and recommends appropriate resources to control, reduce or alleviate problems and develops, with the client (or guardian), a plan of action for services and follow-up.
- Counsels clients and family members to aid them in achieving better social functioning.
- Provides advanced and specialized clinical social work and casework or group work services to clients and families of clients. Conducts clinical assessments, formulates a diagnostic impression, and provides treatment services, including psychotherapy, for mental and emotional disorders.
- Applies LCSW-C level clinical skills in applying advanced interviewing skills (including listening techniques), assessing risks (including subtleties), determining intervention(s) required, providing counseling (including empowerment), handling hostility, developing treatment plans, making referrals (including referral to protective services) and guiding/assisting Social Workers with lower level professional credentials or professionals licensed in other areas of practice.
- 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. May prepare court pleadings. May testify in court. May serve as guardian.
- Advocates for clients regarding eligibility, services, etc.
- Prepares/maintains case records, uses automated recordkeeping systems and prepares reports to supervisors and, as pertinent to assignments, including reports for the courts.
- Interprets the social service program to professional staff members and works with them in effecting the most efficient and integrated service.
- 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.
- As assigned, guides/leads lower level staff in clinical or non-clinical matters; may fill in for team supervisor on a recurring basis.
- May assist in preparing and advocating for a program, or unit/team, budget.
- 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 lead special projects to revise programs, policies and procedures or develop new programs, policies and procedures and help implement them.
- As assigned, plans and presents continuing education, professional development and other training.
- Coordinates with various governmental and non-governmental social/human services, mental health, health, education and other organizations to meet the needs of clients. Makes 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 coordination of services and continuity of care among various treatment/provider agencies.
- 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.
- As assigned, operates a motor vehicle to get to/from meetings/events, client sites, etc.
- Performs related duties, as required.

#### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:**

- Knowledge of, and full professional proficiency in using, the concepts, theories, principles, methods, techniques and generally-accepted practices of professional social work and counselling to assess, refer, counsel, manage cases of and provide related professional services to persons experiencing problems of endangerment-abuse-neglect, aging-disability, family conflict, homelessness or other socioeconomic matters as well as emotional, behavioral and related types of problems-disorders. This body of information includes professional ethics and standards-of-practice, fundamentals of human growth and development, socioeconomic/cultural factors and interpersonal dynamics, and skill in using 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.

- Knowledge of co-occurring medical/psychiatric issues and the effects of the pharmacological resources used in treatment thereof altogether at a level sufficient to make holistic social welfare and therapeutic psychosocial assessments, interventions, referrals, etc.
- Knowledge of (or ability to rapidly acquire and apply knowledge of) 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 body of information includes knowledge of the organization and operations of juvenile justice, criminal justice, 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.
- Knowledge of (or ability to rapidly acquire knowledge of) State, County and community resources, such as medical, mental health, legal and social services, to make referrals-placements and help ensure completeness of responses to needs.
- Knowledge of, and skill in using, client intake, case management and reporting systems to document and use personal, diagnostic, therapeutic, counselling, 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.
- Skill in 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.
- Skill in 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.
- Skill in 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, concerning endangerment/abuse/neglect, stability or 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 professional team, and skill in human relations to develop and ensure effective, empathetic Social Worker-client clinical relationships.
- Skill in using a computer, modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise systems/software, specialty systems/software for client referral, case tracking/reporting, etc.

#### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Education:** Possession of a Master's Degree in Social Work (MSW) from an accredited college or university that meets the criteria of graduate social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

**Experience:** Two (2) years, to include a minimum 3,000 hours, of professional experience rendering social work services under the supervision of a LCSW-C in accordance with Maryland Board requirements.

**Equivalency:** See Maryland Board requirements.

**LICENSE:**

- Must be licensed as a Licensed Certified Social Worker - Clinical – LCSW-C by the Maryland State Board of Social Work Examiners prior to appointment. **Note:** There will be no substitutions for this requirement.
- Possession and maintenance at all times 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 EXAM PROTOCOL:** Limited Core Exam with a pre-placement Drug/Alcohol Screen.

**Date Adopted:** June 28, 1955

**Dates Revised:** March 4, 1963

November 24, 1970

July 4, 1973

**Corrected:** February 1984

**Date Revised:** July 1, 1986

**Date Adopted by Montgomery County:** December 1988

**Date Revised:** June 1995 (M)

December 2004

August, 2013

October, 2017 (M)

(Experience & License) January 2020

(Probationary Period) February 2020