CLASS SPECIFICATION
CalWORKS Program Specialist

FLSA Status: Nonexempt
EEOC Job Category: Paraprofessional
Union Representation: Represented

GENERAL PURPOSE
Under general supervision, serves as primary liaison with outside employer-partners and coordinates District’s CalWORKS work-study program with employers; provides technical and individualized intake, coordination, tracking and support services for assigned Program student/participants; maintains, updates and submits highly detailed, confidential case notes, reports, records and other program documentation; acts as GED examiner; and performs related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS
CalWORKS Program Specialist performs work involving a high level of initiative and independent judgment to identify, secure, negotiate and monitor ongoing student placements with a wide variety of employer-partners. This job function is performed to provide students opportunities to carry out work for an organization related to their career interests. Assigned work involves difficult and responsible intake, orientation, service provision and monitoring activities for designated CalWORKS student/participants to ensure that federal, state, local and District minimum work hour, accountability, reporting, retention and other program-specific requirements are successfully met. Incumbents in this position must demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of and ability to work with a wide range of external employer-partners and must be able to effectively work with student/participants from diverse socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds who often have one or more educational, psychological, social, economic or other barriers to successful program participation.

CalWORKS Program Specialist is distinguished from CalWORKS Program Student Advisor in that the incumbent in the former class has program administration and implementation responsibility in coordinating the work-study component of the CalWORKS Program in addition to performing case coordination activities for a large number of students.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
The duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to this class.

1. Serves as primary liaison, contact and coordinator for District’s off-campus work-study program; identifies, recruits, secures and maintains productive working relationships with a wide variety of prospective and current employers; frequently interacts with prospective and current employer contacts and responds to inquiries and complaints, ranging from routine to highly confidential or complex in scope; coordinates matching of and matches student skills and career goals to employer
needs; monitors student placements; negotiates student pay rates and work schedules with employer and performs other related support duties to ensure student success.

2. Serves as case coordinator for assigned CalWORKS student/participants; performs initial intake duties; personally meets with and interviews students and obtains thorough case history; organizes, coordinates and/or performs orientation activities, including campus tour; within scope of authority and expertise, guides, advises and assists students in a variety of areas, including enrollment process, financial aid application and appropriate class selection; organizes and ensures scheduling of students’ meetings with other District/program counselors and representatives to develop educational plans or coordinate other services; regularly meets with work-study students to review eligibility and work performance; provides career development coaching to students, as assigned; via telephone or in-person, maintains on-going contact with designated students to monitor progress and identify and resolve or recommend action to resolve issues.

3. Initiates provision of other District and external services needed by student to ensure continued program participation; assesses and identifies participants’ additional service needs, which may be sensitive, confidential and complex in nature; identifies appropriate District and external resources and provides referrals to appropriate internal and external service providers; serves as student advocate to secure required services, as necessary.

4. Maintains ongoing contact with other District or external agency representatives involved with student/participants or participant populations; confers with DPSS GAIN and District counselors regularly to provide required updates and information and to discuss, review and/or resolve participants’ progress, eligibility status or other related issues, within Program-defined policies, procedures and guidelines; attends DPSS job fairs and other events to recruit potential student/participants; participates in regular training conferences and workshops with other organizations and agencies to gather and share program-specific information.

5. Performs technical and administrative duties in support of program; oversees completion of, reviews and processes required intake documentation; assists in coordinating development of, reviews and tracks student accountability measures, plans and contracts; researches and compiles information for, completes and maintains Program reports, forms and logs, including retention reports, material request forms, time management logs, progress reports, work-study summary, weekly placement and employee matrix; keeps detailed case notes on all assigned students; accesses and utilizes District, program and other databases to track appointments and contract dates and to maintain and update demographic and program information; drafts and submits formal appeals, extension requests and other necessary documentation in support of student participation.

6. Acts as GED examiner; reviews documentation provided by examinees prior to testing; supervises and ensures integrity of test administration.

OTHER DUTIES
1. Performs special projects as assigned.
QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:
1. CalWORKS program policies, practices and procedures, including reporting and record-keeping practices, procedures and requirements applicable to assigned areas of responsibility.
2. District policies and procedures applicable to assigned areas of responsibility.
3. Federal, state and local laws, regulations and court decisions applicable to assigned areas of responsibility.
4. Cultural and socio-economic issues relevant to providing education and support services to CalWORKS population.
5. Typical skills and experience required to perform a wide variety of jobs.
6. Region’s current and prospective employer employment philosophy and practices.
7. Sources of information on employment opportunities.
8. District, community and agency resources available to provide assistance to participants.
9. Interviewing principles, methods and techniques used to determine participant education and service needs and to develop participant plans and contracts.
10. Methods and practices of public outreach and involvement, including marketing techniques and practices.
11. Principles and practices of sound business communication; correct English usage, including spelling, grammar and punctuation.
12. Conflict resolution methods and techniques.

Ability to:
1. Provide effective guidance, assistance and information to students in intake process, including advising students in development, monitoring and revision of participant program plans.
2. Identify and secure off-campus employment opportunities for work-study program.
3. Negotiate employment issues, including pay rates and work schedules, with current and prospective off-site work-study employers.
4. Operate a computer and other standard office equipment.
5. Organize, set priorities and exercise sound judgment within areas of responsibility.
6. Organize and maintain confidential student records and files.
7. Communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
8. Understand and follow written and oral instructions.
9. Use tact, discretion, courtesy and patience in dealing with sensitive and difficult students and situations.

10. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with off-site employer contacts, student/participants, other agency representatives, College management, faculty, staff, students, the public and others encountered in the course of work.

**Education, Training and Experience:**
A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined above is an Associate’s degree in business, social services or a closely related field; and at least three years of progressively responsible program administration and implementation experience, preferably focused on providing employment and/or education to high-risk groups; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

**Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:**
A valid California driver’s license and the ability to maintain insurability under the District’s vehicle insurance policy.

**PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS**
The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

**Physical Demands**
While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit; talk or hear, both in person and by telephone; and use hands to repetitively finger, handle and feel computers and standard business equipment; and reach with hands and arms. The employee is frequently required to stand and walk.

Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus.

**Mental Demands**
While performing the duties of this job, the incumbent is regularly required to use written and oral communication skills; read and interpret data, information and documents; analyze and solve problems; observe and interpret people and situations; use math/mathematical reasoning; perform work on multiple concurrent tasks; work with constant interruptions, and interact with participant/students, other counselors, off-site work-study employer representatives, District management, staff, the public and others encountered in the course of work.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**
The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.
Employees work under typical office conditions, and the noise level is usually quiet.