




SUD SERVICES BULLETIN

Title: Key Staffing Standards for Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs 		Issue Date: October 3, 2017 Expiration Date: N/A	Issue No.: 17-05
Approval: Joseph Rangel Division Manager Contracts Division - Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services	Function: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Treatment <input type="checkbox"/> Prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Training <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Supersedes Bulletin/SAS Letter No.: N/A	

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Bulletin is to inform County-contracted substance use disorder (SUD) treatment providers of minimum requirements necessary for each staff member.

DISCUSSION:

The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) ensures the provision of quality treatment through enforcement standards for professional and safe treatment. Counselor certification requirements are found in the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 9, Division 4, Chapter 8 and the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services (MHSUDS) Information Notice 16-058. All non-licensed or non-certified individuals providing counseling services in an SUD treatment program must be registered to obtain certification as an alcohol and other drug counselor by one of the DHCS-approved certifying organizations.

In addition to regulatory specifications, programs that are DHCS Alcohol and/or Other Drug Program (AOD) certified must comply with staffing requirements stated within the AOD Certification Standards. County-contracted Youth Treatment Service providers must also comply with staffing guidelines found in the State of California Youth Treatment Guidelines.

With the goal of raising the quality of service delivery, Fresno County has supplementary requirements in place for all treatment staff (see Attachment A, Key Staffing Standards). Staff must meet the requirements prescribed for each position. In any instance of deficiency, the program must submit a training and supervision plan and obtain approval from the County to waive the requirement(s) before the counselor can begin providing services.

If the deficiency is related to a counselor's direct counseling experience, the program will be required to supervise the counselor for one year, until s/he reaches two years of experience. Supervision meetings will be recorded on the attached Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience form (Attachment B), to be placed in the staff file every month. If the current month's form is not found in the file, the program shall provide it on request.

REFERENCES:

California Code of Regulations, Title 9, Division 4, Chapter 8
Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services Information Notice 16-058
Alcohol and/or Other Drug Program Certification Standards, Section 13000
Youth Treatment Guidelines, Section X

EXHIBITS:

Attachment A: Key Staffing Standards
Attachment B: Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience form

CONTACT:

Please contact your assigned analyst with any questions.

**Fresno County
Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Mental Health Services**

KEY STAFFING STANDARDS

Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Services

Fresno County seeks a multidisciplinary team that includes an array of services organized to treat the interaction of substance use disorders and mental health for male and female adults and adolescents. In addition to staffing requirements found in California Code of Regulations, Title 9, Chapter 8 and the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services (MHSUDS) Information Notice 16-058, program staff will have specific expertise in working with the target population and their families, and provide continuity of care.

It is understood that not all of the positions indicated below are required for each program.

PROGRAM/PROJECT DIRECTOR

The program/project director shall demonstrate sufficient knowledge in the field of substance abuse treatment, principles of recovery, state licensing and certification standards, personnel management and budget development.

Minimum requirements are as follows:

- Bachelor's degree required, Master's degree preferred;
- Administrative experience and capabilities including budgeting responsibilities and personnel management;
- Demonstrated knowledge of applicable state and federal regulations;
- Two (2) years of experience supervising personnel;
- One (1) year of experience managing program budget including preparing or directing the preparation of budgets and cost reports.

CLINICAL SUPERVISOR

The clinical supervisor shall demonstrate sufficient knowledge in the field of substance abuse treatment, principles of recovery, and knowledge regarding principles, models and methods of clinical supervision specific to alcohol and drug counselors.

Minimum requirements are as follows:

- Bachelor's degree required, Master's in relevant field preferred (psychology, social work, rehabilitation);
- Certification in clinical supervision and alcohol and other drug counseling;
- Two (2) years of experience providing direct alcohol and/or other drug treatment or recovery services.

Fresno County
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KEY STAFFING STANDARDS

COUNSELOR

Program staff who conducts individual or group counseling sessions, intake interviews, client exit conferences, and/or assessments of clients' alcohol and/or other drug problems shall demonstrate sufficient knowledge in the field of substance abuse treatment, principles of recovery, and counseling.

Minimum requirements for staff are as follows:

- Individuals providing counseling services as defined in Chapter 8, Subchapter 1., Section 13005, 4. A-F, shall be in compliance with Chapter 8 (commencing with Section 13000) Section 9846, 10125 and 10564, *Division 4, Title 9, California Code of Regulations (Counselor Certification Regulations)*;
- Two (2) years of experience in providing direct counseling services to persons with alcohol and/or other drug problems;
- Two (2) years of college-level education.

Two (2) additional years of alcohol and other drug counseling experience may be substituted for one (1) year of college-level education for a total of 4 years of experience/1 year of college. No more than one (1) year of college-level education may be substituted with alcohol and other drug counseling experience.

Counselors must have *at minimum one year of direct SUD counseling* experience in order to be considered. If a counselor is lacking the requested 2 years of experience, the program must provide a training and supervision plan for the counselor's second year of experience that includes the following:

- The individual supervising the training shall be physically present and available on site or at an immediately adjacent site, but not necessarily in the same room at all times;
- The counselor and supervisor shall meet weekly to discuss cases and address any questions or concerns. The meetings shall be documented using a County-issued weekly summary form; and
- The supervisor shall document in the counselor's staff file when s/he has completed the supervised training.

This plan shall be approved by the County *prior* to these staff conducting individual or group counseling sessions, intake interviews, client exit conferences, or assessments of clients' alcohol and/or other drug problems, and/or clinical supervision.

**Fresno County
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KEY STAFFING STANDARDS

NURSE

A nurse shall have a valid license to practice as a Registered Nurse issued by the Board of Nursing Education and Nurse Registration in this state and possess a Master's Degree in Psychiatric or Public Health Nursing, and two (2) years of full-time, paid nursing experience in a mental health setting. Additional post-Bachelor's nursing experience in a mental health setting may be substituted on a year-for-year basis for the educational requirements.

LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE

A Licensed Vocational Nurse shall have a valid license to practice Vocational Nursing issued by the Board of Vocational Nurse and Psychiatric Technician Examiners and possess six (6) years of full-time, paid post license experience in a mental health setting. Up to four (4) years of college or university education that is acceptable within the United States' accredited college or university system may be substituted for the required Vocational Nursing experience on a year-to-year basis.

PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIAN

A Psychiatric Technician shall have a valid license to practice as a Psychiatric Technician issued by the Board of Vocational Nurse and Psychiatric Technician Examiners and six (6) years of full-time, paid post license experience in a mental health setting. Up to four (4) years of college or university education that is acceptable within the United States' accredited college or university system may be substituted for the required Psychiatric Technician experience on a year-for-year basis.

MENTAL HEALTH REHABILITATION SPECIALIST

A Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialist shall be an individual who has a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university that is acceptable within the United States' college or university system and four (4) years of full-time, paid experience in a mental health setting as a specialist in the fields of physical restoration, social adjustment, or vocational adjustment. Up to two (2) years of graduate professional education may be substituted for the experience requirement on a year-for-year basis; up to two (2) years of post-Associate of Arts clinical experience may be substituted for the required educational experience in addition to the requirement of four (4) years of experience in a mental health setting.

**Fresno County
Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Mental Health Services**

KEY STAFFING STANDARDS

CERTIFIED REHABILITATION COUNSELOR

A Certified Rehabilitation Counselor shall be an individual who is certified in Rehabilitation Counseling by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Counselors, and who shall have two (2) years of full-time, paid experience as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Psychologists shall have obtained or have been declared eligible by the Psychology Examining Committee for a California license granted by the California State Board of Medical Examiners, and within one (1) year shall have been granted a California license by the California State Board of Medical Examiners, and shall have two (2) years of full-time, paid post-Doctoral experience in a mental health setting.

LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN

Mental Health Clinician shall have obtained current California license as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) or Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) issued by the State of California Board of Behavioral Sciences, and who shall have two (2) years of full-time, paid experience as a Mental Health Clinician.

UNLICENSED MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN

Current and active registration with the State of California Board of Behavioral Sciences as an Associate Clinical Social Worker or Marriage and Family Therapist Intern, with one of the following:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Master's Degree in Social Work with an emphasis in clinical social work, or Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling, or other course of study acceptable to the State of California Board of Behavioral Sciences towards licensure as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker or Marriage and Family Therapist.
- Current enrollment, in good standing in, or completion of, the final semester of a Master's Degree program in Social Work with an emphasis in clinical social work, or Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling, or other course of study acceptable to the State of California Board of Behavioral Sciences towards licensure as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker or Marriage and Family Therapist, at an accredited college or university.

Fresno County
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KEY STAFFING STANDARDS

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS and DEFINITIONS

1. As used for these standards, "one (1) year of college-level education" is defined as the satisfactory completion of at least twenty-four (24) semester units, or the equivalent, of classroom instruction provided by an accredited or state-approved, public or private, post-secondary institution of higher learning.
2. At minimum, twelve (12) of the twenty-four (24) semester units required shall be in alcohol and drug studies, psychology, counseling, social work or a closely related field.
3. As used in these standards, "one (1) year of experience" means 1,776 total hours of full or part-time, compensated or uncompensated, work experience.
4. The provider agency shall require all employees to have written evidence of their qualifications.
5. Resumes, applications, reference checks and/or transcripts documenting work experience and education may be used to meet the requirements of this section.
6. The provider agency shall have written guidelines specifying the requirements to be employed by the provider agency.
7. Volunteers and/or interns may assist in conducting educational sessions, group counseling sessions, intake interviews, exit interviews or assessments of alcohol and/or other drug problems.
8. Volunteers and/or interns shall be under the direct supervision of program staff.
9. Volunteers and/or interns shall not provide services unless the supervising staff member is present in the room during the provision of services.
10. Providers that cannot meet the minimum experience, educational and/or certification requirements as described above shall submit for County approval a plan that describes how the agency plans to adequately train and supervise these staff. This plan shall be approved prior to these staff conducting individual or group counseling sessions, intake interviews, client exit conferences, or assessments of clients' alcohol and/or other drug problems, and/or clinical supervision.
11. Any variance from the key staffing requirements must be reviewed with and approved by the County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrator before implementation.

Variations implemented without prior written approval by the County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrator shall not be supported by County funds.

**Fresno County
Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Mental Health Services**

KEY STAFFING STANDARDS

For Youth Treatment Services

Staff Competency

In addition to the general Key Staffing requirements, core staff working in youth treatment shall have training and skills in the following areas:

- An understanding of addiction process in youth; the intergenerational nature of AOD use, abuse and dependence; and the dynamics of adolescent recovery;
- Effective and developmentally-appropriate interventions and approaches for treating substance-abusing adolescents;
- Assessment of SUDs, mental health disorders (psychotic, mood, anxiety, behavioral and personality), and cognitive impairments as they relate to youth;
- Psychoactive medications prescribed to adolescents, their benefits, and their potential side effects and interactions with other medications or substances;
- Child development and normal adolescent growth and development;
- Therapeutic recreational therapy;
- Family dynamics;
- Detection of adolescent injury, disease, abuse, and neglect;
- Community resources and other adolescent treatment systems (schools, child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice system, etc.);
- Methods of drug and alcohol testing, interpreting test results, and the benefits and limitations of the tests;
- Legal issues specific to adolescents (informed consent for minors, disclosure of confidential information, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and duty-to-warn issues).
- Program rules and procedures; and
- Client rights and grievance procedures.

The program must provide a training and supervision plan for youth treatment counselors lacking any of the training or skills above. This plan shall be approved prior to these staff conducting individual or group counseling sessions, intake interviews, client exit conferences, or assessments of clients' alcohol and/or other drug problems, and/or clinical supervision.



AOD COUNSELOR

WEEKLY SUMMARY OF HOURS OF EXPERIENCE

Name of Counselor

Last Name:	First Name:	Middle Initial:
Date of Hire:	Registered Counselor #:	
Supervisor Name:	Type of License or Certification:	
Work Setting (use a separate log for each): Provider School Site (if applicable)	Site Address: Line 1 Line 2	

			Weeks					Total Hours
Year:	Month:	e.g. 09/18- 9/22						
Direct Counseling <small>(Individual or group)</small>		20						0.00
Supervision		2						0.00
Total Hours per Week <small>(Direct Counseling + Supervision)</small>		22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Supervisor Signature								