



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE JOB DESCRIPTION

Position classification: NUNC
Date created or revised: 9/8/2022
Exempt/Non-Exempt Status: Exempt
Responsible individual: No
Campus Security Authority: No

Title: Benefits Specialist – Work Incentives Planning and Assistance
Status: Full-time, 35 hrs/week, (Three-year grant funded position)
May involve working outside regular hours; evenings and weekends.
Grade: 11
Affiliation: NUNC (Non-Union/Non-Classified)
Reports To: Associate Director, Paul V. Sherlock Center

PRIMARY PURPOSE:

The Benefits Specialist – Work Incentives Planning and Assistance is responsible for counseling and educating beneficiaries, individually or in groups, about how employment will affect their current benefits (which can also include public and private health insurance as well as other federal, state, and/or local benefits received) Additionally the Benefits Specialist - Work Incentives Planning and Assistance may work with stakeholders to improve access to information and benefits counseling.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Essential Job Functions:

- Triage Beneficiary referrals to meet benchmarks, program goals and SSA standards.
- Implement and meet quality assurance standards and monitor and meet annual benchmarks.
- Ensure all information about beneficiaries is securely maintained and entered into approved data base following guidelines and protocols (i.e. SSA Efforts To Outcome (ETO), NIRS.); ensure that all Personal Identifiable Information (PII) is kept confidential following established protocols, including all written and electronic files.
- Provide individual counseling and/or group information sessions using the communication mode appropriate to the person.
- Gather eligible beneficiary information and provide written Benefits Summary and Analysis reports and Individual Work Incentive Plans. Provide follow up services to support plan implementation.
- Communicate with SSA and Technical Assistance staff to effectively implement and achieve project objectives, bench marks and standards.
- Provide accurate information about SSDI and SSI work incentives, including the Ticket to Work initiative to individual beneficiaries and groups,
- Develop accurate and personalized benefit analysis plans demonstrating appropriate work incentives and application of work incentives strategies that promote employment
- Provide ongoing, comprehensive work incentives; monitoring and management assistance to SSDI and SSI beneficiaries.
- Maintain ongoing close contact with Social Security Administration personnel. Also work cooperatively and constructively with external resources, including collaborators, employment networks, state vocational rehab counselors, State One Stop Center personnel, advocacy groups, Area Work Incentive Coordinators, and Work Incentive Liaisons.

- Provide routine outreach activities to beneficiaries, members, community partners and providers. Work collaboratively with SSA's Program Management for Recruitment and Outreach (PMRO) Conduct group presentations regarding Social Security work incentives, job readiness and other employment related topics.
- Develop Work Incentive Plans that promote employment, utilization of appropriate work incentives and provide linkages to Career Centers/One Stops, Department of Rehabilitation and community employment resources.
- Support development of project related materials such as fact sheets, web site, webinars, etc.

Occasional Job Functions:

Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Associate Director, Paul V. Sherlock Center.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATION STANDARDS:

Education:

BA/BS degree.

Certification(s):

- Community Work Incentives Coordinator Certification from Social Security Administration or other approved.
- Security Clearance: Level 5 Suitability Clearance must be obtained.

Experience:

- Three years of experience in any of the following areas: disability services, an employment agency, educational institution, or an advocacy-related organization.
- Experience providing individual counseling and group presentations.

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities:

- Knowledge of Work Incentives for all Social Security Administration programs including, but not limited, to Social Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Knowledge of Federal, State and local work incentives programs.
- Knowledge of public benefits programs (e.g., housing, heating assistance, health Insurance, food stamps, etc.) and population specific programs (e.g. veterans, railroad employees, etc.), including basic operations and interactions between the programs, specifically in terms of how they are affected by employment.
- Familiarity with the RI Vocational Rehabilitation- Office of Rehabilitation (ORS), Disability Employment Initiative, and Social Security's Employment Networks (ENs).
- Knowledge of Social Security field office structure and how to work with various Social Security work incentives specialists including, Area Work Incentives Coordinators (AWICs), PASS Cadre, and Work Incentives Liaisons (WILs).
- Ability to communicate technical information in language that matches the beneficiaries' learning style.
- Strong counseling and evaluation-related skills (ability to listen, evaluate alternatives, and advise beneficiaries on potential course of action).

- Strong computer skills (MS Outlook, Word, PowerPoint and Excel).
- Strong research and outreach skills to obtain information relevant to beneficiary entitlements.
- Maintain certification by meeting annual professional development requirements (state / federal).
- Ability to analyze complex information.
- Ability to both work independently and collaborate with other professionals and organizations as needed.
- Ability to work outside regular hours, evening and weekends to meet with beneficiaries, provide presentations or attend meetings on site.
- Maintain knowledge of federal and local programs that impact benefits and/or support employment.
- Ability to obtain Level 5 Suitability clearance.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.

PREFERRED:

- Master's degree.
- Bilingual in English / Spanish (fluent in speaking and writing).
- Knowledge of American Sign language.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:

May be exposed to adverse weather conditions such as rain, snow, extreme heat or cold.

The College requires that all applicants and employees be able to perform the essential functions of the job and will explore reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

As an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity institution that values and is committed to inclusion and expanding the diversity of its faculty and staff, the College invites members of protected classes, including minorities and persons with disabilities, to identify themselves as such at the time of application.