

## STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

**Class Title: Orientation and Mobility Specialist**

**Class Code: 51375**

**Pay Grade: GI**

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### **A. Purpose:**

Organizes, develops, and executes orientation and mobility (O&M) services for the blind and visually and impaired citizens to teach them the necessary skills needed to travel safely and independently in a community.

### **B. Distinguishing Feature:**

Orientation and Mobility Specialists determine who receives orientation and mobility training, develop training plans for each individual client and execute most training in the area of orientation and mobility. Most training is done outdoors where the client deals with a variety of environmental conditions.

Rehabilitation Teachers provide academic, social, independent living and vocational training to clients with mental, physical, and emotional disabilities.

### **C. Functions:**

*(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions that may be found in positions of this class.)*

1. Determines orientation and mobility training to develop a unique, effective, and practical training strategy.
  - a. Assesses clients' responses on a sight-ability questionnaire.
  - b. Examines clients' life styles and environments.
  - c. Considers the personality and capacity of each client.
2. Analyzes clients' environments and needs to determine the safest route of travel.
  - a. Studies neighborhoods and street conditions.
  - b. Assesses traffic trends.
  - c. Researches modes of transportation such as the city bus system.
3. Re-evaluates skills frequently by assessing a clients' ability to maneuver safely, effectively, and gracefully in real situations to help determine if clients require additional orientation and mobility training or if a case may be closed.
4. Determines the progression of training by applying the three orientation and mobility principles of sequencing, distancing, and acceptable risk to encourage learning and ensure safety.
  - a. Teaches or supervises the teaching of orientation and mobility techniques to prepare blind and visually impaired and multiply disabled clients for independent travel.
  - b. Instructs and evaluates clients' decision-making processes and skills to determine their ability to identify and handle safety and potentially dangerous situations.
  - c. Provides statewide orientation and mobility training by conducting on-site visits or directing field rehabilitation teachers in orientation and mobility techniques to meet the mobility needs of clients throughout the state.
  - d. Conducts training in many different situations to ensure that clients have practice in dealing with various obstacles such as rain, snow, ice, curbs, gutters, gravel, and cars.
  - e. Coordinates services to meet clients' overall independent living goals.

- f. Determines levels of safe travel to communicate to clients safety needs, restrictions, and negotiations.
  - g. Completes written evaluations and progress reports, and attends all client staffings to document and inform others on client functioning in the area of orientation and mobility.
  - h. Learns to operate mobility and low vision devices, brailers, and audiometers to teach or to familiarize clients with the use of such devices.
  - i. Orders and maintains training supplies for orientation and mobility field training.
5. Documents all training plans to enable the incumbent to detect clients' strengths and weaknesses, to aid in the re-evaluation process and to help determine when cases may be closed.
    - a. Lists what specific techniques were taught.
    - b. Lists how and where the teaching was administered.
  6. Provides consultation on teaching techniques and situational problems to and reviews the work of field rehabilitation teachers in the area of orientation and mobility training to maintain quality statewide orientation and mobility services.
    - a. Collaborates on teaching strategies.
    - b. Evaluates client progress.
  7. Applies rehabilitation techniques such as kinesiology, concept development, and sensory awareness by heightening clients' awareness of spatial relationships, object-to-object relationships, directions, numbering systems, landmarks, and information gathering clues to increase client development and rehabilitation.
  8. Performs other work as assigned.

**D. Reporting Relationships:**

This position does not typically supervise.

**E. Challenges and Problems:**

Challenged to identify the proper training plan for an individual client because not only does each client have a unique vision impairment and possibly multiple disabilities, but also because the scope of training possibilities is limited due to resource availability.

Typical problems include determining when clients are ready for additional training and when and where they are skilled enough to travel safely and independently.

**F. Decision-making Authority:**

Decisions made include determining clients needs and potentials; developing appropriate training plans; identifying effectiveness of training techniques; assessing abilities of clients to maneuver safely in their environment; supervising orientation and mobility services provided by rehabilitation teachers; making recommendations to department leadership, supervisors and co-workers concerning the field of orientation and mobility; and evaluating the competency of field rehabilitation teachers with regard to orientation and mobility procedures.

Decisions referred include those that over-step the written policies and procedures that are dictated by budget.

**G. Contact with Others:**

Daily contact with rehabilitation staff members to participate during client evaluations and blind and visually impaired individuals to conduct orientation and mobility training; weekly contact with field rehabilitation teachers, program administrators and district supervisors to plan programs and to evaluate the progress of clients; and monthly contact with other state agencies to promote awareness and to promote client advocacy.

#### **H. Working Conditions:**

May encounter extensive environmental factors to complete the performance of his or her duties. Because clients must be exposed to all factors of the environment, the incumbent must teach orientation and mobility techniques during all weather conditions. Good physical stamina is needed to compliment the walking required during training sessions.

#### **I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

Knowledge of:

- orientation and mobility practices and techniques;
- associated standards, rules, policies and procedures that apply to the teaching of orientation and mobility;
- methods used to accommodate the challenges of individuals dealing with blindness.

Ability to:

- work effectively on a one-on-one basis with blind and visually impaired individuals;
- assess clients' functioning levels;
- determine appropriate training techniques for each client;
- teach orientation and mobility concepts to clients as well as to others involved in the orientation and mobility field;
- communicate information clearly and concisely;
- operate and teach operation of mobility devices.