

COUNTY OF SOLANO

VETERANS' BENEFITS COUNSELOR TRAINEE

DEFINITION

Under immediate supervision, assists veterans and their dependents in understanding and obtaining benefits provided by federal and state laws and regulations; performs related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is the entry level for Veterans' Benefits Counselor series. Incumbents learn laws and regulations affecting veterans benefits, as well as service organizations and programs while providing referral and claims processing services. This class is distinguished from Veterans' Benefits Counselor in that the latter is the full working level in this series.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

Depending on assignment, duties may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Interviews veterans and/or their dependents to solicit information needed to determine eligibility for a variety of benefits and services; discusses sensitive matters (e.g., marital or medical history) with veterans and their dependents.
2. Completes claim forms for a variety of benefits and programs; prepares transmittal letters; orders documents (e.g., marriage licenses, medical records, school transcripts) needed to support claims; establishes and follows up on case files.
3. Answers general inquiries made by callers over the phone and in person; provides information regarding claims procedures, eligibility criteria; deals with clients of various socio-economic levels and temperaments; makes referrals to other agencies.
4. Communicates with representatives of other agencies to determine status or explain circumstances of claims submitted; clarify regulations; communicates and makes client referrals.
5. Prepares and maintains work records; maintains currency with legislation and regulations.
6. May assist in filing appeals to denied claims by researching regulations and personal history information or making referrals to organizations providing specialized support services.

QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

EDUCATION AND/OR EXPERIENCE

Any combination of experience, education and training which demonstrates possession of and competency in requisite knowledge and abilities.

KNOWLEDGE/ABILITIES

Considerable knowledge of office operations and record maintenance procedures; public contact techniques.

Working knowledge of interviewing techniques; effective techniques for dealing with hostile, confused or recalcitrant clients; benefits and services generally available to veterans and their dependents; techniques of dealing with the disabled, distraught and senile.

Ability to interview others to solicit information to complete claim forms; deal effectively with people of various socio-economic levels, mental and physical capacities and temperaments; communicate effectively with veterans and the bereaved; complete and process claim forms; compose and prepare routine correspondence; read, understand, learn and apply complex government regulations related to veterans affairs; make routine arithmetical calculations; research regulations; prepare routine correspondence and reports; learn local and regional providers of social and other specialized services; project consequences of decisions; initiate action necessary to process claims; interpret information/regulations and apply such to specific cases; demonstrate tact, diplomacy, patience and compassion; establish and maintain cooperative working relationships.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Possession of or ability to obtain a valid Class III California driver's license may be required.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Independent travel throughout the County will be required.

Bilingual skills may be required.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION (Continued)

Incumbents of this class should demonstrate necessary knowledge and abilities to be promoted to Veteran's Benefits Counselor within 18 months of appointment.