

Jurisdictional Class: Competitive
Adopted: March 6, 2025

COURT NAVIGATOR

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This position involves support of justice-involved individuals with mental health needs by connecting them to appropriate services, fostering engagement, and promoting recovery and wellness. The incumbent acts as a liaison between the criminal justice, mental health, and social services systems, playing a pivotal role in facilitating voluntary care and addressing barriers to treatment and recovery. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Director of Community Services, with leeway allowed for the use of independent judgement within established guidelines. Supervision is not a responsibility of this position. The incumbent does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: (Illustrative only)

Conducts intake screenings to assess client needs and establish a foundation of tailored support;
Seeks opportunities to engage individuals with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) in alternatives to incarceration or other diversion programs to reduce incarceration for those with SMI;
Connects individuals to appropriate mental health services, treatment programs, and community resources based on their needs and circumstances, including when available a connection to Single Point of Access (SPOA), Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) teams, Intensive and Sustained Engagement Teams (INSET), case management services, and/or SafeOptions Support (SOS) teams;
Connects participants with resources for shelter, food, or other health-related social needs;
Provides participants with basic information about the court process and education on court terms;
Troubleshoots barriers to accessing services, such as transportation or paperwork challenges, and encourages participation;
Addresses barriers to mental health treatment for those with behavioral health needs to potentially reduce the number of missed court dates, technical violations, and re-arrests;
Follows up with referred individuals and community providers to ensure seamless transition and engagement in services;
Supports participants through attendance at meetings and/or appearances at municipal courts, the Public Defender's Office, the County jail, and supportive service providers;
Provides ongoing training and consultation about navigator services and available state and local behavioral health resources to various criminal justice stakeholders and mental health agencies to increase referral opportunities;
Develops and maintains a comprehensive resource guide of appropriate local behavioral health and social services to assist with matching individuals with the best resources to promote health, wellness, and recovery;
Enters data on program referrals, participant demographics, interventions, and outcomes into the OMH Diversion Center Navigator data collection system;
Maintains accurate records of clients served, interventions, and outcomes.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES & PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of local law enforcement, behavioral health, and community service agencies;
Thorough knowledge of community resources and how to use them effectively;
Good knowledge of the principles, methods, procedures, and practices of the field of behavioral health services, mental health, addiction, and co-occurring disorders;

Court Navigator

Good knowledge of the functioning of community mental health and addiction facilities and the scope of services rendered;
Good knowledge of the personal and social problems related to mental health, addiction, and developmental disabilities;
Good knowledge of the symptoms and physical signs of mental health and addiction;
Good knowledge of promotional public relations and educational techniques relating to ongoing behavioral health, mental health, and addiction programs;
Ability to use computer applications such as spreadsheets, word processing, e-mail, and electronic health records;
Ability to work effectively with others;
Ability to manage, organize, direct, and coordinate mental health and addictions services;
Ability to function as a member of an interdisciplinary team;
Ability to prepare technical and informational data for administrative use;
Ability to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing;
Initiative;
Empathy, sound judgement, and tact.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's degree or higher in Social Work, Counseling, Psychology, or closely related field and one (1) year of professional experience in the mental health, criminal justice, or substance abuse field.

NOTE: Your degree must have been awarded by a college or university accredited by a regional, national, or specialized agency recognized as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Secretary of Education. If your degree was awarded by an educational institution outside the United States and its territories, you must provide independent verification of equivalency. A list of acceptable companies who provide this service can be found on the Internet at <http://www.cs.ny.gov/jobseeker/degrees.cfm>. You must pay the required evaluation fee.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Assignments made to employees in this class require reasonable access to transportation to meet fieldwork requirements made in the ordinary course of business in a timely and efficient manner.