

Human Services Worker

Nature of the Profession

Human services worker is a generic term for people performing jobs such as social service technician, case management aide, social work assistant, residential counselor, alcohol or drug abuse counselor, mental health technician, child abuse worker, community outreach worker, or gerontology aide. These individuals generally work under the direction of social workers or, in some cases, psychologists.

Human service workers play a variety of roles in community settings. They may organize and lead group activities or assist clients in need of counseling or crisis intervention. In psychiatric clinics, they may help clients master everyday living skills, and teach them how to communicate more effectively and get along better with others.

The substance abuse counselor helps people who are physiologically or psychologically dependent on alcohol or drugs deal with their dependency. The substance abuse counselor also helps family members, former addicts, and those who are afraid they might become addicts.

APTITUDES

- Strong desire to help others
- Ability to work with a variety of people
- Ability to be patient and understanding
- Good communication skills
- Strong sense of responsibility
- Ability to manage time effectively

EDUCATION

Certificate or associate degree programs (18 months to 2 years) offer training in human services, mental health, and substance abuse counseling. There are also bachelor's degree and master's degree programs in human services administration.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN NEBRASKA

- Bellevue University – Bellevue (B, M)
- Central Community College – Hastings, Grand Island (A, C, P)
- Doane College – Lincoln (B)
- Metropolitan Community College – Omaha (A)
- Southeast Community College – Lincoln (A)
[Drug/Alcohol Counseling & Nursing Home Administration]

LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION

Licensure is required for alcohol and drug abuse counselor. An applicant for a license to practice as an alcohol/drug abuse counselor must complete high school or equivalent, complete an approved program of drug/alcohol counseling, and pass a written and oral exam.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

National Organization for Human Service Education

Web Address: www.nohse.org

Council for Standards in Human Services Education

Web Address: www.cshse.org