

**(SAMPLE)**  
**JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

**NOTE:** The Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement has identified a comprehensive list of skills, functions, and duties for use by agencies in developing job descriptions for Offender Employment Specialist (OES), Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) and Offender Workforce Development Program Manager (OWDPM) . It is understood that the typical position descriptions may not require all of the skills, functions, or duties listed below. These job descriptions are recommended for use by state and local personnel classification systems.

## **Offender Employment Specialist (OES)**

A position that may require a person to utilize seven specific competencies and their related skills to assist offenders to make informed decisions about jobs; develop vocational and educational plans based on knowledge of their interests, skills/abilities, and values; identify educational and occupational opportunities; and prepare the offender for the realities of the world of work. OES's may work in setting such as prisons, jails pre-release facilities, probation offices, parole offices, one-stop shops, non-profit organizations, and/ or vocational rehabilitation centers. Depending on work location, the OES may typically be employed as a teacher, case manager, probation officer, parole officer, transition specialist, or job counselor. Regardless of the title assigned to the position, the job generally requires individuals to be resourceful, capable of multi-tasking and working under pressure, and skilled in developing programs and partnerships.

### **Skill Areas and Functional Responsibilities**

Persons in this position need the skills necessary in the performance of the functional duties as identified below:

#### **Vocational Guidance Skills**

A range of processes and procedures developed to guide, expose and bring about offenders awareness of job choices and opportunities with the goal of maximizing the individuals potential for job retention and advancement.

Typical job duties:

- Collecting, organizing and analyzing information about offenders and/ or ex-offenders through records, tests, interviews and professional sources to appraise interests, aptitudes, abilities, and personality characteristics for vocational and educational planning.
- Reviews employment applications and evaluates an individual's work history, education and training, job skills, compensation needs and other qualifications.
- Develops proposals for programs to provide needed services, using knowledge of vocational rehabilitation theory and practice, program funding sources, and government regulations.
- Counsels individuals and provides educational and vocational guidance services.
- Provides occupational information to enable an individual to formulate realistic educational and vocational plans.
- Counsels individuals on problems with work adjustment and vocational training.
- Helps individuals to modify attitudes and patterns of behavior by increasing

understanding of self, personal problems, and his/her part in creating them.

- Works with offenders on vocational needs consistently working towards employment retention.

### **Job Readiness Skills**

Identifies need for and assists in development of auxiliary services to facilitate bringing an offender and/ or ex- offender into job ready status.

Typical job duties:

- Consults with members of local communities and personnel of rehabilitation facilities, such as skills training centers, to identify need for new programs or modification of existing programs.
- Develops and coordinates implementation of vocational rehabilitation programs.
- Organizes programs of practical and technical instruction, including demonstration of skills required in trade.
- Instructs offenders and/ or ex-offenders in resume writing, job search, and interviewing techniques.
- Facilitates individual and group services to assist offenders and/ or ex-offenders in achieving more effective educational and vocational development and adjustment.
- Instructs offenders and/ or ex-offenders in work-related attitudes and behaviors to improve the potential to successfully retain employment.

### **Job Development Skills**

Promotes and develops employment and on-the-job training opportunities for offenders and/ or ex-offenders.

Typical job duties:

- Develops work opportunities that allow offenders and/ or ex-offenders to experience success in performing tasks that teach work values, such as self-improvement, independence, dependability, productivity, and pride of workmanship.
- Confers with members of industrial and business communities to determine training needs for occupations that offer apprenticeships and those that do not.
- Establishes and maintains working relationships with local employers to promote

hiring of offenders and/ or ex-offenders.

- Assists employers in revising standards that exclude offenders and/ or ex-offenders from jobs.
- Identifies jobs in the community that offenders and/ or ex-offenders can perform.

### **Job Placement Skills**

Places an offender and/or ex-offender in a suitable job, clarifies expectations and conditions and provides information regarding duties and responsibilities.

Typical job duties:

- Contacts prospective employers to determine their needs and to solicit job vacancies for offenders and/ or ex-offenders.
- Reviews job vacancies and matches candidates with job requirements.
- Interviews job applicants to select candidates who meet employer qualifications.
- Arranges interviews between employers and candidates to facilitate placement.
- Conducts events, such as job fairs, that bring employers into contact with groups of offenders and/ or ex-offenders.
- Informs individuals of job duties and responsibilities, compensation and benefits, work schedules and working conditions, company and union policies, promotional opportunities, and other related information.

### **Job Retention & Advancement Skills**

Offender's ability to maintain employment and advance in the job market is the ultimate test of the extent and application of an Offender Employment Specialist's knowledge, skills and abilities. Therefore, job retention and advancement should be the thread that runs throughout individualized plans and programs for offenders. Given the critical nature of this responsibility some of the related duties are being highlighted by specifically identifying them below:

- Helps individuals to modify attitudes and patterns of behavior that interfere with job placement and retention by increasing the understanding of themselves and their interactions with their environment.
- Provides information on the utilization of community resources addressing barriers to job retention.

- Creates client-driven advancement plans.
- Gathers information on job and career factors that may affect morale, motivation, efficiency, and job retention.
- Assists offenders to include strategies for advancement as part of their employability plan.
- Assists offenders with an employment plan that is goal-oriented to focus attention on steps to advancement.
- Identifies and implements job retention strategies.
- Routine follow-up calls with employers and offenders to keep track of how employment is going and intervene to circumvent job loss when possible.

### **Client Centered Action Planning Skills**

The development of a plan with the offender that identifies vocational goals with steps and a time line to achieve those goals. The plan will include defining strengths, supports, and problems the offender may encounter with strategies to address the foreseeable barriers including methods to carry out these strategies.

Typical job duties:

- Determines suitable job or career path with offender.
- Assists offenders and/ or ex-offenders in identifying influences that factor into career-decision making i.e., family, friends, and finances.
- Develops and contracts partnerships with offenders and/ or ex-offenders.
- Stimulates and encourages offenders to achieve goals and provides offenders with any appropriate assistance.

### **Program Development**

Based on offender and program needs assessment provide services that enhance the offenders job placement, retention, and advancement capability.

Typical Job Duties:

- Develops opportunities, on an as needed basis, for offenders to obtain life skills training in one or more of the following skill areas:

Employability/job search skills such as career/job awareness, the use of

classified ads, writing business letters and resumes, filling out applications, interview techniques, and appropriate behaviors on the job.

Consumer skills such as money management, comparative shopping, understanding labels and bills, using credit, and shopping for food, housing, clothing, and transportation.

The use of community resources, such as using the telephone, obtaining help from social service agencies, interpreting postal forms, using the library, and finding child care.

Health and safety skills such as reading warnings, using prescription drugs, practicing first aid, and maintaining a balanced diet.

Parenting and family skills ( sometimes included under health skills), such as child-rearing practices, understanding inducements to child and wife abuse, and finding alternative ways to settle conflicts.

Civic skills, such as passing a driver's test, registering to vote, interpreting legal forms, filling out tax forms, and understanding the Bill of Rights.

Intra- and interpersonal skills such as clarifying values, developing a positive self-concept, improving communication skills, and developing support systems.

Social and personal responsibility skills such as goal-setting, decision-making, and predicting consequences.

- Develops formal and informal partnerships and links with community, business, and education including local community college or university, advisory boards, resource community service groups, government agencies, labor, business, industry, civic, church, other groups and individuals including ex-offenders.
- Develops a public relations program to inform people about the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the program in an effort to develop and maintain internal and community support.
- Monitors state and federal regulations that may influence the successful re-integration of offenders back into the community.

## ***Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS)***

The OWDS is responsible for the specific competencies and their related skills required to assist offenders in making informed decisions about vocational occupations and career paths based on the offender's interests, skills, abilities, values, employment objectives, educational and occupational backgrounds, and the realities of the working world. OWDSs may work in settings such as prisons, jails, pre-release facilities, probation offices, parole offices, one-stop shops, non-profit organizations, or vocational rehabilitation centers. Depending on the work location, the OWDS may typically be employed as a teacher, case manager, offender employment specialist, probation officer, parole officer, transition specialist, or job counselor. Regardless of the title assigned to the position, the job generally requires individuals to be resourceful, capable of multi-tasking and working under pressure, and have leadership skills and experience.

### **Skill Areas and Functional Responsibilities**

As indicated by the OWDS curriculum, persons in this position require skills in the following areas. Functional duties related to each skill area are also listed.

### **Career Theory**

A thorough knowledge of at least four career theories that can be used to assist offenders with job choice, career planning, and transition. Typical job responsibilities include the application of counseling and career development theories and techniques.

### **Facilitation Skills**

Mastering a set of communication skills, such as attending, listening, reflecting, encouraging, and questioning, that can be used to create an environment in which offenders share relevant personal information to assist the OWDS with providing assistance with job placement and career planning. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Develop and maintain a professional relationship with offenders, employers, community organizations, and other employees;
- Assist offenders with personal adjustment to education, training, job or career placements;
- Communicate effectively with offenders, professionals, and community; and
- Apply skills to assist offenders with career and education decisions.

### **Assessment**

Knowledge of a variety of formal and informal assessment tools and techniques that can be used with offenders and skill to administer and interpret Level A or other instruments for which specific training has been provided. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Administer and interpret (Level A) employability assessments, interest inventories, and aptitude vocational or educational tests;

- Administer, interpret, and personalize assessment data in relation to the career development needs of the offender;
- Collect, organize, and analyze individual offender information through records, tests, interviews, and professional sources; and
- Assess interests, aptitudes, and abilities for education, training, and career opportunities.

## **Design and Implement Work Development Services**

Knowledge of the basic principles of program planning and implementation, including evaluation, promotion, and public relations, and skill to apply this knowledge to the development and delivery of broad-based programs for offender populations. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Organize a program of practical and technical instruction, including demonstrations of skills required; and
- Conduct events (job fairs) that bring employers into contact with groups of offenders.

## **Instruction and Group Facilitation**

Skill to provide instruction to groups and to effectively lead instructional activities. Typical job duties include the following:

- Provide instruction on addressing specific barriers to offender employment;
- Instruct offenders in resume writing, job search, and interviewing techniques;
- Instruct offenders in work-related attitudes and behaviors;
- Instruct offenders about how to enter the world of work; and
- Instruct offenders in assertiveness skills, distinguishing it from aggressiveness.

## **Barriers to Employment**

Knowledge of the many barriers that are characteristic of offenders as they approach the workplace and skill to identify ways to remove and/or minimize them. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Assist individuals in modifying attitudes and patterns of behavior that interfere with job placement and retention by increasing self understanding;
- Assist individuals with intervention strategies for problems with work adjustment and vocational training;
- Assess the need for and provide referral information to auxiliary services to address barriers;

- Provide instruction on addressing specific barriers to offender employment; and
- Provide information on the utilization of community resources addressing barriers to job retention.

## **Diverse Populations**

Possessing knowledge of the many kinds of diversity represented by offenders and has the skill to modify approaches as needed to accommodate this diversity. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Application of knowledge of cultural diversity to work values;
- Application of knowledge of career planning needs for specific diverse populations;
- Application of knowledge of career planning and job placement needs of high profile offenders (i.e., sex offenders); and
- Application of knowledge of gender roles and their impact on work, family, and leisure.

## **Ethics, Scope of Practice, and Consultation**

Possesses thorough knowledge of, and abides by, the GCDF Code of Ethics, including recognizing appropriate role boundaries relative to training and scope of practice.

## **Interventions and Action Planning**

Possesses knowledge of the various methods of intervention that can be used with offenders as they make the transition to work, including the development of goals and action plans. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Interview individuals to determine placement suitability for specific occupations or career paths;
- Create client-driven advancement plans;
- Determine suitable job or career path for, and discuss with, the offender;
- Assist offenders in identifying influences that factor into career decision-making (i.e., family, friends, and finances);
- Assist offenders with an employment objective; a goal-oriented plan to focus attention on steps to advancement;
- Develop contracts/partnerships with offenders;
- Develop plans for family communication and support;
- Provide individual and group services on educational and vocational development;

- Interview individuals and provide educational and vocational guidance;
- Collect information about community opportunities for education and training;
- Assist individuals with developing intervention strategies for work adjustments and vocational training; and
- Assist individuals with identifying motivators to achieve goals and provide offenders with feedback.

## **Career Information and Technology**

Knowledge of the sources of occupational and educational information, the skill to locate this information in print, and on the Internet, and use it to assist offenders with job placement and career planning. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Provide occupational information to enable individuals to formulate realistic educational and vocational plans;
- Research market conditions and labor trends in local, regional, or national area;
- Gather information on job and career factors that may affect morale, motivation, self-sufficiency, and job retention;
- Apply knowledge of employment requirements (i.e., labor laws, licensing, credentialing, and certification);
- Research jobs, industry requirements, and worker characteristics to determine job functions and worker traits;
- Compile and study occupational, educational, and economic information to aid offenders;
- Match offenders with job requirements, utilizing manuals or computerized file searches; and
- Research jobs, industry requirements, and worker characteristics to determine job functions and worker traits.

## **Job-Seeking, Employability, and Retention**

Possesses knowledge and understanding of methods that can be used to find, pursue, and keep a job, and how to teach these skills to offenders. Typical job responsibilities include:

- Identify needs and provide referral to auxiliary services to facilitate job-ready status;
- Instruct offenders in resume writing, job search, and interviewing techniques;
- Review employment application for the offender and be able to evaluate the offender's work history, education, training, job skills, and compensation needs;

- Develop work opportunities that facilitate success for offenders when performing tasks that teach work values;
- Promote and develop employment and on-the-job training opportunities for offenders;
- Assist employers in revising standards that exclude offenders and/or ex-offenders from jobs;
- Identify appropriate jobs in the community for offenders;
- Establish and maintain relationships with local employers to promote consideration of offenders for hire;
- Confer with members of industrial and business communities to determine training needs for apprentice and non-apprentice occupations;
- Contact prospective employers to determine their needs and to solicit job vacancies for offenders;
- Apply skills to assist offenders in understanding the relationship between interpersonal skills and success in the workplace;
- Help individuals to modify attitudes and patterns of behavior that interfere with job placement and retention by increasing understanding of self.
- Pre-interview of the job applicants to select candidates who best meet employer qualifications;
- Review job vacancies and match candidates with job requirements;
- Arrange interviews between employers and candidates to facilitate placement;
- Assist individuals with understanding job duties and responsibilities, compensation and benefits, work schedules and conditions, company and union policies, promotional opportunities, and other related information;
- Evaluate employer selection and placement techniques by conducting follow-up activities;
- Assist offenders with strategies for advancement as part of their employability plan;
- Implement job replacement possibilities as quickly as possible following job loss;
- Complete post-employment follow-up;
- Evaluate offenders' progress on the job on a continuous basis;
- Establish relationships with employees regarding problems, complaints, and progress of recently placed offenders and recommend intervention strategies or corrective actions;

- Act as an advocate on behalf of offenders;
- Identify and implement job retention strategies;
- Maintain relationships with employers;
- Assist offenders with networking in an area of work interest; and
- Model appropriate methods of networking (i.e., review the classified ads, talk with employers, and talk with friends and family members to encourage offenders to take the initiative to network for job placement opportunities).

## ***Offender Workforce Development Program Manager (OWDPM)***

The OWD program manager is responsible for implementing individual and group programs in career development for specified populations, training and informing staff (i.e., educators, counselors) on the use and application of computer-based systems for career information; planning, organizing and managing a comprehensive career resource center; working as a lead person in developing and implementing career development programs involving collaborative arrangements with other professional staff; preparing budgets and time lines for career development programs; identifying staff competencies needed to remain current in the field of career counseling and development; developing and utilizing record keeping methods; and implement a public relations plan on behalf of the agency's career development activities and services.

### **Skill Areas and Functional Responsibilities**

In addition to the skills in the competency areas required of the OWDS, the OWD program manager requires skills in management and program design and implementation. The program manager should possess the skills necessary to plan, implement, and manage career development programs and initiatives in a variety of settings and remain current in the requirements of today's changing labor market. Typical job responsibilities include the following:

- Design career development programs;
- Conduct needs assessment and apply evaluation techniques and practices;
- Possess knowledge of organizational theories, including diagnosis, behavior, planning, organizational communication, and management, that are used to implement and administer career development programs;
- Utilize knowledge of leadership theories, evaluation, feedback approaches, organizational change, and decision-making and conflict resolution approaches;
- Apply professional standards for accreditation and program development purposes;
- Evaluate personal and environmental barriers affecting the implementation of career development programs;
- Use computers for forecasting, budgeting, planning, communicating, policy analysis and resource allocation;
- Analyze educational trends and state and federal legislation that influences the development and implementation of career development programs;
- Implement a public relations strategy to promote the development and improvement of career development activities and services;
- Convey program goals and achievements to key leaders in the community;

- Consult with influential parties such as employers, community groups, and the general public to obtain and convey information on offender workforce development;
- Establish links with community-based organizations that engage the community in the provision of support services crucial to successful offender reintegration;
- Stay abreast of educational trends and state and federal legislation that may influence the development and implementation of career development plans;
- Use current technology for the purpose of gathering data to make informed decisions relative to offender career development initiatives, forecasting, budgeting, planning, communicating, policy analysis, and resource allocation;
- Seek new and original methods of reducing barriers to employment;
- Design and develop proposals for programs involving collaborative arrangements using career development theory and practice, funding sources, etc;
- Consult with correctional educational administrators in designing and developing offender education and work programs;
- Consult with directors of corrections, education, human services, labor department, private industry councils, and others to promote collaboration, coordination, and shared resources to address offender reintegration issues;
- Collect and organize occupational data and materials relating to job opportunities, occupational trends, careers, training opportunities, and funding sources;
- Consult with directors of correctional industry programs in developing training opportunities for offenders;
- Identify staff competencies needed to remain current in the field of career counseling;
- Develop a program for, and provide training to departmental staff to better enable them to work with, understand, and assist the most difficult cases of underemployment or unemployment; and
- Train and inform teachers, case managers, correctional industry personnel, and others on the use of labor market information and employability assessments in making education, training, and work program decisions.

## **New Initiatives**

The Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement (OCJTP) supports the development of offender workforce development initiatives. The following initiatives are currently being developed and will be available for use by the field on or before January 1, 2004.

### **Job/Career Resource Centers**

The OCJTP will publish a program focus document and develop a video featuring job/career resource centers within correctional facilities. This public information initiative will provide an overview of the purposes, functions, and operations of job/career resource centers for offenders. It will feature resource centers currently operational in correctional systems nationally and provide information for consideration in establishing exemplary job/career resource centers. Job/Career Resource Centers are established for the purpose of providing offenders access to information for making informed decisions relative to job and career path choices that ultimately contribute to their successful integration into today's workforce.

### **Job/Career Coach Assistant (Clerks)**

The OCJTP will publish a curriculum for training offenders to serve in Job/Career Resource Centers as Job/Career Coach Assistants (clerks). Many offenders are dependent upon the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employment service providers to assist them with matching their abilities, aptitudes, and interests to potential job and career paths. This will provide an opportunity for correctional facilities to transfer knowledge and skills from offenders serving as Job/Career Coach Assistants (clerks) to other offenders. This will assist offenders in broadening their horizons, helping them to recognize and further develop their strengths and talents, and assisting them in making informed decisions about jobs, licensing or bonding requirements, working conditions, educational and training requirements, employment opportunities, and career paths.