

DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES
CLASS SPECIFICATION

DISABILITY CLAIMS SPECIALIST

POSITION CODE: 12558

Effective: 6-16-02

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF WORK:

Under general direction, provides technical advice and serves as operations specialist for the section; performs a variety of delegated activities assisting in special studies to improve the overall management and efficiency of case related activities; prepares legally defensible decisions which address complex medical, vocational and legal aspects of the most difficult specialized caseload; prepares written responses to inquiries from state legislators, federal congressmen, medical practitioners, and customers for the Secretary of the Department of Human Services.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1. Carries a specialized caseload such as aged aliens, expedited reinstatements, special Title II workload, decision writing for Office of Hearings and Appeals, and accepts all levels of cases and the processes and procedures that encompasses adjudicating initials, reconsiderations, continuing disability reviews, reopenings, and Administrative Law Judge requests, as assigned from the Administrator of Adjudication Services.
2. Receives case files from section adjudicator and reviews for accuracy all medical reports, fifteen year work history, earnings records and substantial gainful employment evaluation, prior decisions of allowance and/or denial, residual functional capacity evaluation, prior vocational assessments, prior administrative law judge decisions, and requests for workshop evaluations.
3. Conducts in-depth, complex and critical studies to assess the effectiveness of current operations, manpower utilization and control of documentation materials, work flow, communications, work processes, filing systems, etc., within the geographic section or as a member or leader of a multiple area task group; recommends supplementary procedures and corrective actions which are required to maintain synchronization and stability of the Disability Determination Services operations.

DISABILITY CLAIMS SPECIALIST (Continued)

4. Audits aged cases in the geographic section, assuring conformance with federal and state guidelines; provides technical advice and serves as a resource person in case related matters for the entire geographic section.
5. Determines whether customer is capable of returning to past relevant work; compares customer's residual functional capacity with physical and mental demands of past relevant work; denies claim if customer can return to past relevant work. If customer cannot return to past relevant work, determines capability for other work by considering: age (which affects customer's ability to adapt to a new work environment), formal schooling (which affects customer's ability to meet educational requirements), work experience (none, unskilled, semiskilled, and skilled - relevant to mental capabilities for other work), residual functional capacity assessment (the ability to meet physical demands of other work - lifting, walking, etc.).
6. Reviews and analyzes statistical reports; prepares statistical tables, charts and graphs; makes narrative presentations in a clear, concise and logical manner to supervisor or section staff.
7. Provides on-the-job mentoring to new employees in the section, on a group or individual basis regarding various cases, involving both minor and complex issues.
8. In conjunction with rehabilitation counselors, prepares progress reports, work sample batteries, reports and evaluation reports on customers; prepares vocational analyses detailing the meaning and weight given to vocational evidence and its impact on the customer's ability to engage in substantial gainful activity.
9. Coordinates psychological and medical examination evaluations with vocational assessment results; serves as a resource for adjudication staff and rehabilitation counselors in the vocational goals and program of a customer in concert with the medical and psychological limitations and needs.
10. Serves as a specialist in the vocational arena; provides advice and guidelines to adjudicators, medical staff, rehabilitation counselors and administrative staff regarding vocational factors to ensure proper consideration, identification and referral of persons with disabilities.

DISABILITY CLAIMS SPECIALIST (Continued)

11. Promotes professional relations by maintaining effective working relationships with a wide variety and number of employees, supervisors, administrative and program officials of the agency; makes field contacts with Social Security District Offices resolving problems, e.g., base data preparation, explaining program objectives and establishing improved lines of communications; visits medical consultants, hospitals, clinics and private physicians; promotes public relations with the medical community.
12. Prepares written responses to inquiries regarding specific customers; prepares correspondence for the Secretary of the Department of Human Services and the Deputy Director of the Bureau of Disability Determination Services.
13. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

Requires a bachelor's degree, with major courses in medical, premedical, legal, prelegal, nursing, psychology, pharmacy, health, biological sciences, physical sciences, business administration, management, or disability claims adjudication.

OR

Requires current valid licensure as a Registered Nurse in the State of Illinois, plus three years of professional registered nursing experience.

In addition to either of the above, requires two years of progressively responsible professional experience as a Disability Claims Adjudicator II.

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Requires extensive knowledge of the provisions of the Social Security Act and Amendments relating to the occupational and legal aspects of disability, opinions and instructions issued in connection with the Disability Program, and the organization and operation of the Social Security Administration and bureaus involved in the disability program.

Requires extensive knowledge of the special employment problems found by persons with disabilities in securing and performing jobs and the types of jobs available to them, including their physical activities and educational requirements.

DISABILITY CLAIMS SPECIALIST (Continued)

Requires extensive knowledge of the Disability Determination Services in Illinois and of the policies, regulations and standards under which the program functions.

Requires extensive knowledge of the Office of Rehabilitation Services, the services it offers and its organization and operation.

Requires extensive knowledge of medical and vocational terminology, body systems, impairments and understanding their disabling effects.

Requires extensive knowledge of management principles and techniques, including organizational structure, staffing and administrative controls.

Requires extensive knowledge of agency programs, policies, objectives, methods, procedures, rules and regulations.

Requires working knowledge of personal computers, keyboard skills, various PC applications, and the SSA/DDS operating systems.

Requires ability to apply knowledge of a wide variety of physical and mental conditions, the characteristics and effects of these conditions, quality and types of acceptable evidence to accurately interpret available medical data.

Requires ability to evaluate, develop and install new and revised methods, procedures and performance standards.

Requires ability to analyze complex factual situations and to clearly and concisely document and organize the data.

Requires ability to evaluate legal, medical and occupational aspects of a controversial claim necessary to support a sound determination.

Requires ability to analyze and evaluate significant diagnostic information on difficult factual situations.

Requires ability to exercise considerable judgment in interpreting medical facts presented by a physician and to apply these facts in determining an individual's capacity to engage in gainful occupation.

Requires ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing on a professional level, as well as being sensitive to persons with disabilities.

Requires the ability to consider the impact of pain, fatigue and weakness, etc. on the customer's ability to function and to sustain work-related activities on a regular and continuing basis.

Requires ability to establish and maintain satisfactory working relationships with customers, federal and state officials, lawyers, physicians, hospitals, clinics and other staff.

In addition to having a written and spoken knowledge of the English language, candidates may be required to speak and write a foreign language at a colloquial skill level in carrying out position duties in conjunction with non-English speaking individuals.