

# NUTRITIONIST

## **JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

Classification incumbents perform professional nutrition assessments, individual counseling and group education in a variety of Health Department programs, including Women, Infant and Children's (WIC) program, Basic Food Nutrition Education Program (BFNP), Children with Special Health Care needs (CSHCN), Maternity Support (MSS), and other public health programs. Additional activities include development and approval of educational materials, group interventions and nutrition campaigns. Program quality assurance is a part of the job expectations. Incumbents provide consultation and training for other staff on nutrition topics.

## **KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Provides individual nutrition assessments of infants, children, and pregnant or lactating women using anthropometric measures, laboratory test results, and dietary histories and recalls. Assesses need for follow-up appointments or attending education classes.
- Counsels individual clients and groups from varying socioeconomic levels and cultural backgrounds on dietary and lifestyle changes needed for better health.
- Makes appropriate referrals to other Health Department programs, health care professionals and social service agencies.
- Plans, develops and presents nutrition education to groups and approves materials/lesson plans presented by other staff.
- Plans, develops and approves nutrition education program materials and nutrition education campaigns.
- Accurately records and summarizes client assessments and counseling, and care planned.
- Responds to other nutrition related program needs.
- Assist in the development of policies, procedures, standards and services for nutrition assessment, education and intervention; assist in the planning and evaluation of the education component of nutrition programs.
- Cooperates with other community agencies in the coordination of nutrition programs; may provide nutrition consultation to other agencies; may provide technical advice to institutions and groups providing direct feeding services.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

**Education and Experience:** A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in nutrition or a related field and certification as a Registered Dietitian (RD), plus one year of experience in community-based dietetics.

**- OR -**

RD eligible and ability to become certified in Washington State as a nutritionist, plus one year of experience in community-based nutrition practice.

**- AND-**

A valid driver's license is a requirement for the position, and finalists for the position must submit to a criminal background check as required by RCW 43.43.830. Hepatitis B vaccination and annual TB testing is required.

**Knowledge of**

- Physiology, nutrition related chemistry, human dietary needs, bacteriology, symptoms and results of dietary deficiencies, diet planning for normal health, therapeutic dietetics, and accommodation of physical malfunctions.
- Menu planning and food purchasing.
- Principles and techniques of preparing and presenting workshops and educational materials to adults including motivational interviewing and social marketing
- Principles of public health nutrition.
- Current scientific nutrition principles and practices.

**Ability to**

- Become familiar with social service agencies in the community and the services they provide.
- Assess needs and provide effective nutrition counseling to members of various ethnic, cultural, age, and economic groups.
- Review and edit educational materials, presentation or campaign plans.
- Advise and mentor other staff regarding nutrition information and practice.
- Obtain cooperation of volunteer agencies and staff members in improving nutrition standards.
- Learn the operation and care of audiovisual equipment.
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Research, compile and analyze data and make recommendation.
- Interpret regulations, policies and procedures.
- Accurately chart client assessments and counseling.
- Establish and maintain rapport with clients.
- Establish effective working relationships with co-workers, other professionals and the public.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Incumbents work in a variety settings that may include a noisy environment. Additionally, the environment can include odorous exposures such as children with dirty diapers or clients with poor hygiene. Exposure to common illness through frequent client contact such as influenza and colds requires consistent practice of good hand washing techniques and other protective methods such as annual vaccinations. Exposure to potential bloodborne pathogens requires use of universal precautions and Hepatitis vaccination as well as annual TB testing.

Revised 2/11/2004, 6/2005