

Job Class Profile: **Family Court Counsellor II (UFC)**

Pay Level: **CG-42** **Point Band:** **994-1037**

Factor	Knowledge	Interpersonal Skills	Physical Effort	Concentration	Complexity	Accountability & Decision Making	Impact	Development and Leadership	Environmental Working Conditions	Total Points
Rating	7	6	3	6	6	6	6	5	2	
Points	327	100	19	29	180	130	124	107	21	1037

JOB SUMMARY

The Family Court Counsellor II (UFC) provides supervisory, administrative and professional work in overseeing staff which are providing family mediation, parent education and counselling services to separated/divorcing parents who are making arrangements for custody, access and support of their children. Duties include workload management, staff training and development, coordination with partners, quality assurance, and conducting a broad range of education and mediation services.

Key and Periodic Activities:

- Oversees the delivery of family mediation, parent education and counseling services within a region including ongoing and development and monitoring of intake protocol; providing direction and assigning cases to Mediators/Support Application Social Workers; monitoring timely resolution of cases and gathering statistics; conducting case consultation with mediators, both individually and on a group basis; and responding to inquiries from clients, legal counsel and courts.
- Identifies staff development and training needs by researching and conducting in-service presentations; arranging for others to provide in-services as appropriate; identifying gaps and making recommendations for improvement; implementing best practices within delegated authority; and providing orientation to new staff.
- Coordinates services between Family Justice Services and other partner agencies and provincially including liaising with HRLE regarding staffing for services to income support clients; responding to inquiries/priority referrals from courts; representing region and providing information and presentations to government and community partners; meeting on regular basis with Provincial Director, Clinical Consultant and regional counterparts; participating in policy and program development with both internal and external partners/stakeholders; and overseeing provincial projects.
- Performs administrative and human resources duties such as maintaining adequate staffing levels; participating in hiring of new staff; conducting regular staff meetings; addressing staff accountability issues; resolving staff disputes; ensuring availability of office space, supplies and equipment; and maintaining safety of staff and clients while on premises.
- Provides direct mediation services to clients regarding matters relating to custody, access and support of children including conducting parent education sessions, interviewing clients to

Key and Periodic Activities:

determine suitability for mediation, conducting mediation/conciliation services, liaising with and making referrals to counselors for families requiring additional support, and preparing and filing court orders reflecting agreements reached in mediation.

SKILL**Knowledge****General and Specific Knowledge:**

- Knowledge of Family Justice Services' policy and procedures.
- Knowledge of Family Law and legal processes.
- Knowledge of a broad range of theories and intervention strategies.
- Knowledge of custody/access issues, child development/attachment issues and family violence.
- Knowledge of court processes.

Formal Education and/or Certification(s):

- Minimum: Undergraduate Degree in Counselling, Psychology, Social Work or other Social Sciences. Registration with the related association.

Years of Experience:

Minimum: 6 to 7 years

Competencies:

- Ability to provide clinical assessment and evaluation
- Ability to develop plans that meet client needs
- Ability to provide expert advice in the counseling field
- Effective communication skills for interviewing and listening to clients
- Effective mediation skills
- Ability to organize and manage time
- Ability to supervise others
- Ability to operate a computer to prepare documents or access databases.
- Ability to write letters, reports and assessments in order to communicate complicated or conceptual ideas where clarity and precision of language is critical.

Interpersonal Skills

- This class uses a mix of advanced interpersonal skills to listen to information, ask questions, provide information and direction to others, provide care/comfort or nurturing to clients, conduct formal interviews, coach/mentor, gain the cooperation of others to complete work/address issues/solve problems, provide expert advice or counselling to others; facilitate meetings/sessions, negotiate contracts/agreements, resolve disputes between people, instruct/teach/train others, and deal with upset or angry clients on phone or in-person and make formal presentations to groups.
- Communications occur with employees in the immediate work area, within and with other departments, managers, clients, professional advisors, with other government representatives,

internal/external executives, and professional associations.

- The most significant contacts are with direct reports to provide guidance and direction, clients while providing direct service and respond to on an organizational level; and immediate supervisor for consultation and clarification.
- Frequently the most important interpersonal skills used are to provide direction/guidance/advice to staff on mediation process, dealing with specific issues, and providing positive and constructive feedback to enhance service delivery; information sharing and consultation are also done on a group basis sometimes through formal in-service presentations and training events; working with outside partners such as HRLE and courts to understand priorities and see different perspectives while attempting to arrive at consensus; and the ability to deal with clients who have heightened emotions during mediation work.

EFFORT

Physical Effort

- Work demands do not result in considerable fatigue requiring periods of rest.
- There is lifting of objects less than 10 lbs (office supplies, furniture).
- Sits while using the computer and answering the telephone. Takes detailed notes while engaging in lengthy phone sessions can create neck stiffness/cramping. In play therapy sessions, some lifting, squatting and kneeling is required for certain activities. Driving (travel within a geographic area) and standing (teaching/formal presentations) are also a requirement for the position.
- Performs work on the computer while using fine finger/precision work (entering client information into computer systems).

Concentration

- **Visual** concentration is required when drafting legal agreements to ensure appropriate legislation is used and that the order complies with the appropriate rules of court, with clauses that are legally sound while being understood by clients so they can abide by the terms; reading literature, utilizing computer to draft agreements, review client files or notes and for documenting work into computerized systems.
- **Auditory** concentration is also required when listening to staff present case histories and other particulars for consult, facilitating meetings and training events and attending in discussions with partners. Listening is also important when dealing with clients with various accents and abilities to express themselves clearly and being alert to obtain and interpret information correctly, and to listen for tone, voice, and the level of volume in their communications in order to detect distress/urgency. While listening intently for detail and blocking out uncontrollable noises can create strain.
- A **higher than normal level of attentiveness** and carefulness is regarding the health and safety of others (particularly staff) while working with clients who may be referred from court (clients may present with mental health concerns requiring careful attention to their well being and knowing when to make appropriate referrals).
- Lack of **control over the work pace** and **time pressures** are experienced as court referred applications have to be resolved within 90 days for issues involving custody and access, and 60 days for support matters only. Carrying a file load while providing file consults, fielding calls

and walk-in clients as well as dealing with staff issues can increase time pressures. Most **interruptions** are from angry or emotionally upset clients that require immediate assistance in order to prevent situation from escalating.

- **Eye/hand coordination** is required for computer work.
- The need for **exact results and precision** is required when drafting agreements/draft consent orders as they have to be reflective of what the parties agreed to without compromising intent or losing flow.

Complexity

- Performs a series of tasks and activities that are different/unrelated and require a broad range of skills and diversity of knowledge. There is the requirement for creative problem definition and analysis, development of complex solutions, and there are tasks with strategic or policy significance that can be solved in a team setting. Each client/case brings with it unique problems and challenges with sometimes multiple problems that must be identified and solutions found. Responsible for performing mediation, counselling and education functions as well as performing supervisory/administrative functions that require different skills and knowledge.
- The most typical challenge or problem is consulting with staff regarding mediation files and working together to figure out how to proceed with mediation process in cases where there are many issues (parental conflict, power imbalances, substance abuse, mental health issues, separation adjustment issues on the part of parents and children, breakdown in parent-child relations).
- When addressing typical problems, consults with peers, Clinical Consultant, Family Justice Services' policies, literature reviews, professional associations, Code of Ethics, standards of practice, governing acts and legislation, and regulations to help find a solution.

RESPONSIBILITY

Accountability and Decision-Making

- Work tasks and activities are moderately prescribed or controlled.
- Has the flexibility to enhance client service and streamline staff work as long as a decision is within the mandate of the Division and does not have provincial ramifications. Exercises a high degree of discretion when authorizing staff leave and assigning/delegating workload, accepting referrals, providing counseling to clients and their families, management of caseload, scheduling of appointments and decision to close a file.
- Discussion with the Director occurs during some cases, because of actual or potential contentiousness, or if directly involving a partner (HRLE and Courts) to ensure that our organizational response is in line with our provincial mandate. The Director and Clinical Consultant may be consulted on matters of policy interpretation. The hiring of new staff requires the approval of the Director.
- Uses judgment and discretion to determine what information is confidential and appropriate to share. A high degree of independent judgment and discretion is also used during completion of intake assessment forms, testimony in court and decision to make outside referrals.
- Requires approval for all requests from the court for child-focused reports or court appearances are screened for acceptance by the Provincial Clinical Consultant.

Impact

- There are significant impacts within the immediate work area, within the department, outside the organization and on clients. Directly impacts the staff and clients in terms of providing advice and direction on how best to provide mediation/education services and providing consultation on counselling (i.e. improving general functioning, reducing/alleviating conflict, improving communication, addressing needs of children, etc.). As a member of a multi-departmental operation, is expected to fulfill the mandate of the Family Justice Services and any deviation from that impacts the delivery of services, desired outcomes, teamwork and reputation of self and agency.
- There are positive and negative impacts on clients and their health and safety (ensuring that clients do not participate in mediation when it is unsafe to do and to support them through difficulties encountered in the mediation process); however, there are also impacts on processes and systems (court processes and system), human resources (providing proper advice and direction to staff ensures quality of service to clients, managing workloads, etc.), health and safety (assessing potential for violence with high conflict couples) and corporate image (integrity and reputation of Family Justice Services).
- Consequences from inadvertently providing direction to staff on a client case may result in miscommunication/misinterpretation that could potentially affect finances and parenting time for clients. Consequences and/or errors are identified within hours of problem identification and an attempt is made to resolve them.
- There are professional guidelines, procedures in place to help mitigate any errors from a professional perspective, as there is a requirement for licensure to practice and the governing body regulates the practice, guides ethical decision-making, and professional conduct.

Development and Leadership of Others

- Typically responsible for direct and ongoing supervision for a medium size work group of employees (5 to 10 employees).
- Provides on the job advice/guidance/direction, feedback, input for performance assessments, training, delegating/allocating tasks, input to others about staffing and recruitment, checking and reviewing the work of colleagues/contractors, orientation to new employees, acting as a technical mentor or advisor and building morale and employee relations.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Environmental Working Conditions

- There is no requirement to wear any safety equipment or take safety precautions.
- There is no likelihood of injuries or illnesses resulting from hazards in the workplace, given that all health and safety regulations are followed.
- Occasionally exposed to unusual/distracting noise, glare from computer; isolation and adverse weather conditions while driving through large geographic areas; and awkward or confining workspaces when interviewing or counselling small children. May experience physical dangers/threats from irate clients.