

County of Santa Cruz

INVITES YOU TO APPLY FOR:

SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH CLIENT SPECIALIST II

Supplemental Questionnaire Required

Open and Promotional
Job # 26-SL6

Salary: \$8,316 – 10,530 / Month

****September 2026 – 3.5% increase to base pay**

Closing Date: Friday, August 28, 2026



County Equity Statement

Equity in action in Santa Cruz County is a transformative process that embraces individuals of every status, providing unwavering support, dignity, and compassion.

Through this commitment, the County ensures intentional opportunities and access, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive and belong.

THE JOB: Under direction, to provide highly skilled, specialized, and intensive crisis intervention which may include evaluating for 5150/5585 applications, psychosocial assessments, mental health and/or substance use services, counseling, brief therapy, and short term case management services to individuals with mental illness or emotional disturbance, their families and support network; to serve as a liaison to other community agencies/organizations in a training, educational, advisory, and/or consulting capacity; and to do other work as required. **This eligible list established will be used to fill the current vacancy and any future vacancies during the life of the list.**

THE REQUIREMENTS: Any combination of training and experience, which would provide the required knowledge and abilities, is qualifying. A typical way to obtain this knowledge and abilities would be:

Possession of a master's degree or PhD with a major in social work, psychology, clinical counseling, psychiatric nursing or a closely related behavioral science field which has included completion of a university approved internship, preferably a clinical internship, in a mental health agency. **AND** One year of full-time experience as a Senior Mental Health Client Specialist I at the County of Santa Cruz or equivalent experience.

OR

Possession of a master's degree or PhD with a major in social work, psychology, clinical counseling, psychiatric nursing or a closely related behavioral science field which has included completion of a



university approved internship, preferably a clinical internship, in a mental health agency. **AND** Three years' experience in crisis intervention as a Mental Health Client Specialist II.

Special Requirements/Conditions: License Requirement: Possession of a valid California Class C Driver license, or the ability to provide suitable transportation which is approved by the appointing authority. Possession of one of the following licenses issued by the State of California: Clinical Social Worker; Marriage and Family Therapist; Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor; or Clinical Psychologist. If licensed in another state, the incumbent must obtain the appropriate license issued by the State of California within twenty-four months from the date of employment. **Alcohol and Drug Assignment:** All persons providing alcohol and drug counseling services within the Alcohol and Drug Program must be certified as an Alcohol and Drug Counselor OR be licensed as a mental health professional, **OR** within six (6) months of the date of hire, all non-licensed individuals pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 9, Division 4, Chapter 8, Subchapter 2, or non-certified individuals providing counseling services in an AOD program, must be registered to obtain certification as an AOD counselor by one of the approved certifying organization (CCR, Section 13035 (f)).

Background Investigation: Fingerprinting is required.

Special Working Conditions: All assignments: Exposure to offensive odors such as unwashed people and clothes, human and animal feces; the possibility of infections which may cause chronic disease or death; and may be exposed to cigarette smoke. Juvenile Hall and Acute/Emergency Services assignments: Exposure to noise, such as people yelling. Children's Service assignment: Exposure to disturbing material, such as photos of abused children; allergens such as poison oak, insect stings or bites, and pollens. Some positions may require lifting objects such as boxes of belongings weighing up to fifty pounds. Note: Persons in this classification may be assigned to positions with any of the above working conditions on an emergency, as needed basis.

Other Special Requirements: Positions may be assigned to carry an agency issued cell phone and laptop and respond to crisis situations and perform "on-call" or call/back duties. Work situations may include evenings, weekends, and holidays.

Knowledge: Thorough knowledge of psychological and social aspects and characteristics of emotional disturbances and mental illness and/or substance use disorders; principles and methods of counseling and the accepted techniques for assessing psycho-social behavior; welfare and institution codes 5150 and 5585; crisis intervention models. Working knowledge of human behavior and development; appropriate and available community resources; problems, needs and attitudes of individuals with emotional and social disturbance; pertinent laws and regulations regarding health and social service programs; laws and regulations as they pertain to clients' legal rights. Some knowledge of pharmacology of medications and psychotropic drug treatment; current diagnostic and statistical manual of the American Psychiatric Association.

Ability to: Assess and diagnose all types of client behavioral, substance use and emotional actions/problems, and develop and implement effective and appropriate treatment plans; conduct effective and appropriate individual and group psychotherapy on an on-going basis; train others at various levels of expertise in the concepts and theories of the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness and/or substance use disorders; prepare a variety of administrative and professional reports; lead and participate in a treatment team, including effectively coordinating and directing the work of others; establish and maintain a variety of case notes, client records and other required documentation; communicate effectively in both oral and written form, expressing complex and technical terminology and concepts in an understandable manner; learn Agency's policies and procedures relative to client support and treatment programs; establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the performance of required duties; learn to input and access data utilizing a computer; distinguish speech and non-speech sounds in noisy environments; intervene and diffuse situations involving individuals in crisis who are presenting a danger to themselves or others due to a grave disability; stand and walk for extended periods of time may be required for some positions. Work in field-based settings; be designated to perform 5150

and/or 5585 assessments and holds, including lifting holds when indicated following a comprehensive risk assessment in a variety of settings including in the community, in the office, or as a co-responder with law enforcement or emergency medical services; interact with individuals in crisis and utilize evidence-based crisis de-escalation techniques to stabilize the individual and connect them with services, including hospitalization or admission to a crisis program in the community; see new patients who are not connected with services and presenting as a walk-in to the Access Team or similar programs; perform suicide risk assessments and utilize that information to develop a comprehensive safety plan for the individual.

THE EXAMINATION: Your application and supplemental questionnaire will be reviewed to determine if you have met the education, experience, training and/or licensing requirements as stated on the job announcement. If you meet these criteria and are one of the best qualified, you may be required to compete in any combination of written, oral and/or performance examinations or a competitive evaluation of training and experience as described on your application and supplemental questionnaire. You must pass all components of the examination to be placed on the eligible list. The examination may be eliminated if there are ten or fewer qualified applicants. If the eligible list is established without the administration of the announced examination, the life of the eligible list will be six months, and your overall score will be based upon an evaluation of your application and supplemental questionnaire. If during those six months it is necessary to administer another examination for this job class, you will be invited to take the examination to remain on the eligible list.

HOW TO APPLY: Apply online at www.santacruzcountyjobs.com or mail/bring an application and supplemental questionnaire to: Santa Cruz County Human Resources Department, 701 Ocean Street, Suite 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. For information, call (831) 454-2600. Hearing Impaired TDD/TTY: 711. Applications will meet the final filing date if received: 1) in the Human Resources Department by 5:00 p.m. on the final filing date, 2) submitted online before midnight of the final filing date.

Women, and people of color, and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply. If you have a disability that requires test accommodation, please call (831) 454-2600.

To comply with the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, Santa Cruz County verifies that all new employees are either U.S. citizens or persons authorized to work in the U.S.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

ANNUAL LEAVE - 22 days first year, increasing to 37 days after 15 years of service. Available for vacation and/or sick leave.

HOLIDAYS - 14 paid holidays per year.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE - 3 days paid in California, 5 days paid out-of-state.

MEDICAL PLAN - The County contracts with CalPERS for a variety of medical plans. For most plans, County contributions pay a majority of the premiums for employees and eligible dependents.

DENTAL PLAN - County pays for employee and eligible dependent coverage.

VISION PLAN - County pays for employee coverage. Employee may purchase eligible dependent coverage.

RETIREMENT - Pension formula 2% at age 60 or 2% at age 62 as determined based on provisions of the CA Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013(PEPRA). Pension benefit determined by final average compensation of three years. County participates in Social Security.

LIFE INSURANCE - County paid \$20,000 term policy. Employee may purchase additional life insurance.

DISABILITY INSURANCE - Employees in the General Representation Unit participate in the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program. This program is funded 100% by employee payroll deductions.

DEPENDENT-CARE PLAN - Employees who make contributions for child or dependent care may elect to have their contributions made utilizing "pre-tax dollars."

H-CARE PLAN - Employees who pay a County medical premium may elect this pre-tax program.

HEALTH CARE FLEXIBLE SPENDING ALLOWANCE (HCFSA) - Employees may elect this pre-tax program to cover qualifying health care expenses.

NOTE: The provisions of this bulletin do not constitute an expressed or implied contract.

**SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH CLIENT SPECIALIST II
SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

NAME: _____

THE SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS ARE DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS RECRUITMENT. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED WITHOUT THE REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION WILL BE SCREENED OUT OF THE SELECTION PROCESS. Employment, internship, or volunteer experiences referred to in your responses MUST also be included in the Employment History section of the application.

NOTE: Please answer the question(s) below as completely and thoroughly as possible, as your answer(s) may be used to assess your qualifications for moving to the next step in the recruitment process.

1. Describe the population(s) to whom you have provided mental health and/or substance abuse services and the types of settings in which you have provided those services.
2. Describe your scope of experience (if any) providing mental health services for adults with serious mental illness.
3. Describe your scope of experience (if any) providing mental health services for children/youths who have been diagnosed with an emotional disturbance and support services for their families.
4. Describe your scope of experience (if any) providing psychosocial assessments for children/youth and/or adults.
5. Describe your scope of experience (if any) providing crisis services in community response teams, walking in clinics, crisis lines, & forensic settings (such as juvenile halls, jails, and co-response with law enforcement).
6. Do you hold current certification as an Alcohol and Drug Counselor?
☐ Yes
☐ No
7. How much experience, if any, do you have providing mental health services for children or youth clients?
☐ Less than 0.5 Months
☐ 0.5-5 Months
☐ 6-12 Months
☐ 13-24 Months
☐ 25-36 Months

8. How much experience, if any, do you have providing mental health services for adult clients?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
9. How much experience, if any, do you have providing substance abuse counseling services for drug and/or alcohol issues?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
10. How much experience, if any, do you have providing services in locked psychiatric facilities (includes psychiatric hospitals and Institutes for Mental Disorder)?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
11. How much experience, if any, do you have providing mental health and/or substance abuse services in criminal justice settings such as juvenile hall, California Youth Authority, county jail, prison or programs serving adult or youth probationers?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
12. How much experience, if any, do you have working in residential mental health or substance abuse settings (not including residential services for developmentally delayed population)?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
13. How much experience, if any, do you have providing mental health or substance abuse services in community settings, such as client's home, park, etc. (not in office, residential facility or clinic setting)?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months

14. How much experience, if any, do you have providing crisis services in community response teams, walk in clinics, crisis lines, & forensic settings (such as juvenile halls, jails, and co-response with law enforcement)?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
15. How much experience, if any, do you have placing agitated, distressed and/or acutely psychiatrically symptomatic persons on a 5150 hold and/or assessing such patients to determine if they need to be psychiatrically hospitalized?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
16. How much experience, if any, do you have conducting and documenting psychosocial evaluations/assessments including determining Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) diagnosis?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months
17. How much experience, if any, do you have providing mental health and/or substance abuse services while collaborating with co-workers or representatives from different disciplines (psychiatrists, consumer employees, therapists, case managers, social workers, public guardians, probation officers, teachers, psychologists, law enforcement officers, and/or different agencies)?
- ☐ Less than 0.5 Months
 - ☐ 0.5-5 Months
 - ☐ 6-12 Months
 - ☐ 13-24 Months
 - ☐ 25-36 Months

(**Note:** Selective certification to positions will be based on the preference(s) you have indicated above along with the demonstrated working knowledge and abilities you have demonstrated on your application and supplemental application).

LIVE Here

WORK Here

PLAY Here