

TO: Personnel Board

FROM: Emaan Abdel-Halim, Human Resources

DATE: 29 February 2020

SUBJECT: Mental Health Specialist – Child Care Unit, Community Development Division

The 2020 Adopted Operating Budget for the Community Development Division included funding for a new position to provide infant and child mental health services in the Child Care unit of the division. At the request of the Community Development Director, Jim O’Keefe and the Early Care and Education Manager, Coral Manning, a formal HR study was conducted of the new position to recommend an appropriate new classification and placement in the City’s compensation plan. This position study included a review of the duties and responsibilities for the proposed position, and identified comparable City positions that aided in the determination of the appropriate classification for this work. After meeting with Ms. Manning, and upon a full analysis, I recommend the following for the reasons outlined in this memo:

- Create the classification of Mental Health Specialist in Comp Group 18, Range 10; and
- Create a position (#4803) in the Community Development Division’s operating budget as a Mental Health Specialist, with a working title of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant to be filled through an open and competitive process.

The Child Care unit of the Community Development Division provides child care accreditation services, program development support and access initiatives to over 70 child care centers across Madison. This work unit consists of a total of six (6) Child Care Program Specialists, one (1) Child Care Assistance Coordinator, and one (1) Program Assistant in addition to the Program Manager for the unit. The purpose of the new position is to provide mental health consultation services to the child care centers that do not have this expertise on staff, as well as to support the Child Care unit staff in providing access to appropriate mental health resources for child care centers, as needed. Only about 10% of the 70 child care centers have someone on staff with the expertise and certification to provide mental health consultation to the students; and there is an estimated need for such services for over half of the centers. By creating this position, the CDD hopes to provide consultation and training to child care centers on how to identify symptoms from an early age, and develop guidance and referrals for centers, parents and staff to access for appropriate services as needed.

First, a review of an excerpt from the proposed position description for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant describes the work as:

... responsible **advanced-level infant and early childhood mental health consultation work** with early childhood program staff within the City of Madison. In coordination and partnership with City Accreditation staff, this position **supports and provides expertise to ensure quality social/emotional support is available to children within accredited child care programs** in the City. Working with child care center staff and City Accreditation staff, this position **assesses the needs of individual child care centers, provides mental health consultation, training and/or reflective facilitation to staff, families and children at the center.** The consultant may work with individual children on occasion **to assist in the**

assessment of social/emotional function and needs, but work will primarily be with child care center staff and administration.

Additionally, this position will work to **coordinate and/or provide professional development opportunities to bolster the skillsets of Child Care Accreditation and child care center staff** in relevant infant and early childhood mental health topics such as the **impact of trauma** on child development and behavior, **appropriate social/emotional development**, managing **challenging behaviors** in children, etc.

With general supervision, the position exercises **considerable discretion and professional judgement in the provision of mental health consultation services**. Outside of consulting work, the position participates in and collaborates with various organizations, work groups and coalitions in the City focused on early childhood or school-age issues, specifically dealing with topics relevant to infant and early childhood mental health. [emphasis added]

In creating this position, CDD reviewed best practices from the Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health and consulted with outside state agencies (IL and AZ) with similar positions. In order to provide diagnostic services, it is a best practice to have clinical counseling experience that is consistent with Master's in Social Work (MSW), a Professional Counselor (PC), or a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT). Because of this, CDD will look to hire someone with that background, licensure and at least 3 years of related professional work experience.

In determining the proper compensation group and range for the new classifications, some comparable City classifications identified are the Employee Assistance Specialist 2 (CG18, R8); and the Child Care Program Specialist 3 (CG18, R10).

A review of the classification specification of Employee Assistance Specialist 2 describes the work as:

... **responsible professional** work, in conjunction with the EAP Coordinator to maintain the City's EAP/CISM programs for all City Departments and Divisions. Under the supervision of the EAP Coordinator, **employees provide services and consultation with management, labor relations, training, and related organizational areas** in building ongoing support for EAP utilization at every operating level. Incumbents provide **intervention and direct services** to employees at all levels as well as family members. ...expected to **independently provide services and referrals** as appropriate to employees and family members. The incumbent will have more **independent responsibility for coordinating volunteer activities and developing training**. [emphasis added]

Like the Employee Assistance Specialist 2, the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant will work independently to provide similar consultation as referral services. However, this new position is expected to conduct mental health assessments, which requires holding licensure as a professional counselor or licensed social worker. The Employee Assistance Specialist 2 requires a bachelor's degree with two (2) years professional experience and does not require any formal licensing or certification, so placement of this new position in the CG18, R8 would not be appropriate.

The next comparable classification specification of Child Care Program Specialist 3 describes the work as:

... is **responsible professional child care program development and evaluation** ... primary elements include **evaluating the quality of child care programs** in the City as well as **partnering in the development, administration and evaluation of community programs and initiatives** aimed at improving the access to and quality of early childhood and school-age care in Madison. Work includes **on-site observation and evaluation** of the quality of child care programs **as well as coaching, providing resources and training** of child care

program staff and administrators. ... **significant amount of independent work**, building relationships with child care programs and community organizations is required as well as **sound professional judgment** to recommend efficient and effective use of City resources.

At the 3 level:

... **advanced-level work**. Employees at this level have **clearly defined professional knowledge in at least one area** and have **advanced experience** in the **interpretation and application** of accreditation standards and unit policies, procedures and processes. Employees are expected to **have command of relevant** regulatory, child care quality and **procedural frameworks** in these areas, anticipate new challenges or opportunities, and formulate responses. Employees may help **evaluate the effectiveness of broader strategies**, systems and policies, **offer input for program and policy development**, and occasionally interact with managers, larger groups of child care providers and the public to relay information or **provide training on relevant topics**. [emphasis added]

Similar to the Child Care Program Specialist 3, the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant has clearly defined professional knowledge in the field of mental health, and will have significant independence and judgement to carry out these duties. Additionally, this position will serve as a consultant to child care centers by evaluating, training and collaborating with both child care center and internal staff on related mental health initiatives/issues. Due to the necessary training and education required to obtain the licensure needed for this position, it would not be appropriate for placement in the Child Care Program Specialist 3 classification. However, it is appropriate for the new classification to be placed in the same compensation group and range.

Therefore, I recommend the classification of Mental Health Specialist be created in CG18, Range 10; and the new position of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant is created in this classification the Community Development Division’s operating budget. The necessary resolution to implement this recommendation has been drafted.

Editor’s Note:

Compensation Group/Range	2020 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2020 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2020 Annual Maximum (+12% longevity)
18/10	\$ 71,630	\$ 86,086	\$ 96,417

cc: Matt Wachter – Director of Planning, Community and Economic Development
 Jim O’Keefe – Community Development Division Director
 Coral Manning – Early Care and Education Manager
 Michael Lipski – Human Resources Services Manager