

# A Day in the Life of a Case Manager

## Developmental Disabilities Services Division



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services Developmental Disabilities Services Division provides services to Oklahomans ages 3 and up who have a primary diagnosis of mental retardation. Oklahomans served may also have other developmental disabilities in addition to mental retardation such as autism, cerebral palsy or Down Syndrome.

Case managers help people with developmental disabilities gain access to needed medical, social, educational and other services. They assess the needs of the person, coordinate services, develop a plan of care, monitor implementation of the plan and follow up to ensure services meet the service recipient's needs. While some case managers may have a caseload in a specific program, many have caseloads that include people who receive different services.

DDSD consists of the state office in Oklahoma City and area offices in Enid, Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Pauls Valley. DDSD also includes two residential resource centers, Northern Oklahoma Resource Center in Enid and Southern Oklahoma Resource Center in Pauls Valley. DDSD case managers are also available in many of the OKDHS human services centers located throughout the state.



## Here's what some Case Managers have to say about their work days:

*“A typical day of a case manager includes developing and modifying plans of care, conducting and attending team meetings, completing home and vocational visits, computer input and documentation, client referrals, scheduling meetings.”* K.W., case manager III, bachelor's degree, social work

*“My day consists of paperwork, like writing letters to parents to schedule home visits for the following month, plan of care addendums, meeting notes, home visit notes, agency reports and assessments. Most of*

*the individuals that I serve are either school-aged children or adults who may have jobs in the community. When I do schedule visits in the field they are usually after 3 p.m. in order to accommodate their schedules or the schedules of the parents.” C.W., case manager II, bachelor’s degree, special education*

*“There is really no way to describe a typical day as a case manager, as no two days are ever the same. My day may consist of visiting individuals in their homes or workplaces, talking with service recipients, family members or service providers over the phone and providing advocacy for individuals served by DDS.” L.L., case manager III, master’s degree, human resources and adult education*

## **Here’s what Case Manager Supervisors say make successful Case Managers:**

*“A good case manager is someone who is capable of prioritizing, can adapt to change, is able to meet timelines, likes to work with a diversified group of people, understands fiscal responsibility, is willing to research to find the best possible solutions to serve the individuals on their caseloads and their unique problems, is willing to learn and to teach what they have learned to others, is compassionate and at the same time capable of separating themselves to prevent making their caseload their life, knows how to set realistic goals for themselves and the individuals on their caseload, can stay calm in volatile situations, can work well with others to achieve common goals, is a good advocate and likes the combination of field and office work.” C.M., case manager IV, master’s degree, public health*

## **Case Managers list the advantages of working for OKDHS**

*“Because DDS case managers are state employees, the job offers a lot of job security and also very good benefits. The job is never boring because there is always something new to learn and because of the diversity of the individuals who they serve. The job offers a combination of office and field work. DDS is a very supportive branch of OKDHS. Our goal is to help and to support individuals with developmental disabilities and we do so by supporting each other in a joint effort to achieve our goals. Case managers receive a lot of training and are not just thrown into a job without the support and training needed to succeed at their job.” C.M.*

*“It can be rewarding, particularly if you can stay with it long enough to see people and teams evolve over time. There is a good amount of field work, which beats sitting at a desk all day every day. I think the telecommuting and alternative workweek are incentives. There is the opportunity for a sense of accomplishment every day.”*

R.P. case manager IV, bachelor's degree, sociology

*“I remain with OKDHS because I am compassionate about the people I work with through DDS. I enjoy the feeling that I have contributed to successes enjoyed by people served by DDS, and I also enjoy assisting them with efforts to overcome challenges to their success. A case manager accepts the fact that working in the social services field will never make you rich, in terms of personal finance, although the rewards associated with knowing you have made a genuinely positive difference in a person's life are priceless.” L.L.*

## **Skills needed also include:**

- Compassion
- Good communication skills
- Good organizational skills
- Knowledge of community resources
- Time management skills
- Self motivation
- Leadership skills
- Patience and understanding toward people with disabilities
- Team player
- Able to multi task
- Basic computer skills

## **Eligibility criteria**

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree in a human services field and one year experience working directly with people with developmental disabilities; or possession of a valid permanent Oklahoma license as approved by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing to practice professional nursing and one year of experience working directly with people with developmental disabilities.

## **How To Apply**

- Visit the Office of Personnel Management Web site at [www.ok.gov/opm](http://www.ok.gov/opm) and click on OKCareer to view current job announcements for specific locations.
- Complete the application online. Applicants will be notified by e-mail of the deadline for completing the required merit test to be eligible for consideration.