

Harris County Juvenile Probation Department

Mental Health Practicum Program

www.hcjpd.org

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department (HCJPD) in Houston, TX provides services to youth ages 10 to 17, and is committed to providing quality training to graduate students in the fields of psychology, counseling, and social work. Our ultimate goal is to assist the student in learning how to act competently, respectfully, ethically, and empathically in the delivery of mental health services while being ever cognizant of the cultural and individual diversity of the clients being served. This includes an understanding of issues related to multiculturalism, underserved populations, and juvenile delinquency, as well as an awareness of professional issues and ethical standards.

Practicum settings (choose one)

- 1. Psychological and Social Services (PSS)** – The primary training site will be at the Juvenile Justice Center in downtown Houston, which houses approximately 250 youth in the detention center. This program provides Masters level students the opportunity to apply crisis management, de-escalation, group, and some individual counseling skills with our adolescent population housed in the detention facility. Primary responsibilities include conducting initial interviews, review case files to discover the most critical needs of the youth to address while in our care, and following up on youth who need daily therapeutic interaction. Usual referrals to PSS include anger, grief, self-harm, suicidal thinking, past psychiatric hospitalizations and/or medication and trauma. An LPC-S will provide at least one hour of weekly supervision. One semester commitment is required in addition to at least a four-hour time commitment on any day that the student works at this location. Applications are accepted for January, May, and August placement. Interested applicants should send a Curriculum Vita to Ms. Kim Richter at kimberly.richter@hcjpd.hctx.net.
- 2. Community Unit Probation Services (CUPS)** – The CUPS therapy program focuses on offering mental health services to youth and their families at various probation offices throughout the county (CUPS 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8). This program provides Masters or Doctoral level students the opportunity to learn about mental health and correctional therapy needs in an adolescent population. Primary responsibilities include conducting an assessment to address need for intervention and render individual, family, or group therapy services. Usual referral concerns includes helping youth deal with personal (e.g., anger, depression, anxiety) and relational issues, family stressors, grief, drug use and academic problems. A licensed psychologist will provide at least one hour of weekly supervision. Students with a minimum of one previous practicum experience are preferred and one semester commitment is required beginning in January or August. January and August applications are accepted in the fall and spring, respectively. Interested applicants should send a Curriculum Vita to Dr. Alexandra Tellez at alexandra.tellez@hcjpd.hctx.net.
- 3. Residential Services** – The primary training sites are Burnett Bayland Rehabilitation Center located at 6500 Chimney Rock Rd. or Leadership Academy located in Katy, Texas. Both facilities house approximately 100 post adjudicated youth ranging in age from 10-17 years old. The primary duties of a practicum student in this setting involve conducting clinical intakes, crisis assessment, individual, group and family therapy. The residents are placed at these facilities for approximately

three to six months on average and receive treatment for a host of mental health issues. The practicum student will get experience in facilitating structured groups, experiential groups, as well as experience in treating complex trauma. Students will receive at least one hour per week of individual supervision from a licensed psychologist and be primarily under the supervision of a post-doctoral psychology fellow. This experience is appropriate for Master's level students with applications being accepted in January, May and August. Practicums may range from several months to a year depending on student need, position availability, and performance. Interested applicants should send a Curriculum Vita to Dr. Danielle Madera at danielle.madera@hcjpd.hctx.net.

4. **Forensic Unit** – The primary training site will be at the Juvenile Justice Center in downtown Houston. The primary duties of a practicum student in this setting involve conducting psychological evaluations and report writing. Students will conduct brief psychological screenings and and/or full psychological assessments and be responsible for writing comprehensive reports. These evaluations are used to help clarify diagnoses and to determine appropriate placement and treatment goals. Clients are referred for assessments due to concerns raised by mental health providers, probation staff, attorneys, and judges, and are often court-ordered evaluations. As a result, these evaluations are frequently utilized by the judges to make decisions regarding the youth. A wide variety of assessment instruments including intellectual, achievement, objective, and projective measures are available for use at HCJPD. Students will receive at least one hour per week of individual supervision from a licensed psychologist. This experience is primarily for advanced Doctoral level students and it is expected that the student will commit to this site from August to May. However, Master's level students who have received training in psychological test administration might be considered for the spring semester. Applications for the Doctoral level positions are accepted in February and May; applications for Master's level positions are accepted in the fall. Interested applicants should send a Curriculum Vita to Dr. Nicole Dorsey at nicole.dorsey@hcjpd.hctx.net.

We believe that a training experience with HCJPD can be personally and professionally enriching, yet also challenging. It is important to be aware that, in this setting, practicum students might be working in a secure setting, with youth who have the potential to be aggressive and who often have a variety of mental health issues. While we strive to ensure the safety of all staff, students, and youth, it is always important to be aware of the risks involved in working in such a setting.

All practicum students for our site will be required to complete a background check. Students cannot have any felonies for the past 10 years or any misdemeanors for the past 5 years. In addition, all students will be required to attend a 2-hour orientation to our department.

We appreciate your interest in our site and we look forward to the possibility of working with you. For any additional questions, please email any of the individuals listed above or contact Dr. Nicole Dorsey at 713-222-4257.