

## FAQs - Becoming a Family Services Specialist

### How do I obtain a Family Services Specialist position with Winchester Social Services?

The first step in the process is to complete an application. [Click here to apply now.](#)

### What will happen after I submit my application?

Your application will be reviewed and evaluated based on your education and relevant experience. If you are a top applicant you will be contacted for an interview. If you submit an application, you will hear back from us either way.

### What are the requirements for a Family Services Specialist? Do I need a college degree?

Yes, a degree is required. In order to be hired for position of Family Services Specialist, you must possess a:

- Baccalaureate degree in the human services field; or
- Baccalaureate degree in any field accompanied by a minimum of two years appropriate and related experience in a human services related area.

### What are the basic job requirements of a Family Services Specialist?

Review our job descriptions to learn more about us!

- [Child Protective Services](#)
- [Foster Care and Adoption](#)
- [Adult Protective Services](#)

### What is the starting salary?

The entry level starting salary is \$49,961.61 for a Family Services Specialist I. After completion of a one year probationary period, Family Services Specialists are eligible for promotion to Family Services Specialist II at a salary of \$56,160.00. For an applicant with experience in CPS, Foster Care and Adoption or Adult Protective Services the starting salary is established based on education and years experience.

### What kinds of things will I be doing as a Family Services Specialist working in Child Protective Services and Foster Care/Adoption?

- Visiting homes and assessing safety and risk of maltreatment.
- Responding quickly in a crisis situation.
- Talking with families about things such as income, money management, and personal relationships that they will probably consider personal and private.
- Interacting objectively with people who have abused and/or neglected children in their care.
- Interacting with family members who may be angry and/or scared.
- Working as part of a team, which involves helping other caseworkers with crisis situations, while following the directions of the courts and agency.
- Providing services, resources, and community supports.
- Staying in contact with parents and children to achieve goals.
- Educating parents to change previous behavior that led to child abuse and/or neglect and empowers parents to make those changes.
- When necessary, removing a child from a dangerous situation.
- Documenting casework activity.
- Working under constant time pressure, prioritizes efforts, and works flexible hours.
- Staying objective and empathetic with families living in stressful and crisis situations.

- Learning about cultures and lifestyles different from their own, and understands how to determine child safety and well-being within that context.
- Building community relationships with law enforcement agents, medical personnel, court personnel and representatives from various agencies and organizations.

### **What kinds of things will I be doing as a Family Services Specialist working in Adult Protective Services?**

- Visiting homes to learn if the person needs help.
- Talking to clients about their situation and asking some pretty intimate questions.
- Responding quickly in a crisis situation involving vulnerable adults in an abusive or neglectful situation.
- Helping clients maintain their dignity and as much independence as possible.
- Interacting objectively with people who may have abused or neglected adults in their care.
- Educating clients about what they can do to avoid abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Documenting all relevant information and completing all required forms.
- Working under deadlines and pressure created by the nature and volume of the cases, prioritizing efforts and working flexible work hours.
- Keeping a balance of objectivity and empathy in dealing with families living in stressful or crisis situations.
- Building community relationships with law enforcement agents, medical personnel, court personnel and representatives from various agencies and organizations.
- Working as a team, supporting other caseworkers, and following the directions of the courts and agency.

### **I think I could do this job but will I get specialized training?**

Yes! You will have extensive classroom and on the job training as you begin your job. You will receive ongoing support from your co-workers, mentor and supervisor any time you need it.

### **Are there opportunities for career advancement?**

Yes! Winchester Social Services has a non-competitive Career Development Plan.

### **What are conditions for employment?**

You must possess and maintain a valid driver's license. You will also complete a Criminal Background Check, Child Protective Services history check and drug screen.

### **Want to learn more about what it is like to work as a Family Services Specialist?**

It is very important if you are considering a career as a Family Services Specialist to carefully evaluate your personal characteristics and to understand the requirements of the job. Staff turnover also interferes with the quality of services. Watch our Realistic Job Preview and take advantage of the self-assessments (links below video) as it will help you determine whether a job as a Family Services Specialist is right for you.