Social and Community Service Managers

Summary

Social and community service managers provide direction and leadership to staff who provide a range of services to the public.

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What Social and Community Service Managers Do

Social and community service managers coordinate and supervise social service programs and community organizations. They direct and lead staff who provide social services to the public.

Work Environment

Social and community service managers work for nonprofit organizations, private for-profit social service companies, and government agencies. Most work full time.

How to Become a Social and Community Service Manager

Social and community service managers need at least a bachelor's degree and some work experience. However, many employers prefer candidates who have a master's degree.

Pay

The median annual wage for social and community managers was $59,970 in May 2012.

Job Outlook

Employment of social and community service managers is projected to grow 21 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations. Employment growth will be driven by increases in the elderly population, and increases in demand for substance abuse treatment and mental health and health-related services.

What Social and Community Service Managers Do

Social and community service managers meet with members of the community and funders to discuss their programs.

Social and community service managers coordinate and supervise social service programs and community organizations. They direct and lead staff who provide social services to the public.

Duties

Social and community service managers typically do the following:

- Work with members of the community and other stakeholders to identify the types of programs and services that are needed
- Design and oversee programs to meet the needs of the target audience or community
- Establish methods to gather information about the impact of their programs
- Supervise staff, such as social workers, who provide services to clients
- Analyze data to determine the effectiveness of programs
- Suggest and implement improvements to programs and services
- Develop and manage budgets for programs and organizations
- Plan and manage community outreach efforts to advocate for increased awareness of programs
- Write proposals for social services funding

Social and community service managers work for a variety of social and human service organizations. The organizations may focus on working with a particular demographic, such as children, people who are homeless, older adults, or veterans. Other organizations may focus on helping people with particular challenges, such as mental health needs, chronic hunger, or long-term unemployment.

Social and community service managers are often expected to show that their programs and services are effective. To do so, they collect statistics and other information to evaluate the impact that programs have in their community or on their target audience. They are usually required to report this information to administrators or funders. They may also use evaluations to identify areas that need improvement for programs to be more effective, such as providing mentorship and assessments for their staff.

Although specific job duties of social and community service managers vary based on the size of the organization, most managers must recruit, hire, and train new staff members.

In large agencies, managers tend to have specialized duties. Depending on their position, they may be responsible for running only one program in an organization and reporting to the agency’s upper management. They usually do not design programs. Instead, they...
supervise and implement programs set up by administrators, elected officials, or other stakeholders.

In small organizations, social and community managers often have many roles. They represent the organization to the public through speaking engagements or in community-wide committees; they oversee, and execute program implementations; they spend time on administrative tasks, such as managing budgets; and they also help with raising funds and meeting with potential donors.

**Work Environment**

Social and community service managers hold about 132,900 jobs in 2012. They work for nonprofit organizations, private for-profit social service companies, and government agencies. Social and community service managers work in a variety of settings, including offices, clinics, hospitals, and shelters.

Some social and community service managers focus on working with a particular demographic, such as children, homeless or elderly people, or veterans; others focus on helping people with particular challenges, such as hunger or joblessness.

The industries that employed the most social and community service managers in 2012 were as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Employment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual and family services</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>State and local government, excluding education and hospitals</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious, grantmaking, civic, professional, and similar organizations</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and vocational rehabilitation services</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing and residential care facilities</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some aspects of the work, such as fundraising or balancing budgets, may be stressful, particularly during economic downturns.

**Work Schedules**

Social and community service managers typically work full time.

**How to Become a Social and Community Service Manager**

Social and community service managers typically need at least a bachelor’s degree and work experience in a related occupation.

Social and community service managers need at least a bachelor’s degree and some work experience. However, many employers prefer candidates who have a master’s degree.

**Education**

A bachelor’s degree in social work, urban studies, public administration, or a related field is the minimum requirement. Employers usually require those with a bachelor’s degree to have some work experience as well.

Many employers prefer workers with a master’s degree in social work, public or business administration, public health, or a related field. Coursework in statistics, program management, and policy analysis is considered helpful.

**Work Experience**

Work experience is often needed to become a social and community service manager and is essential for those wishing to enter the occupation with a bachelor’s degree. Workers must demonstrate an ability to lead other workers and manage services and programs. They can get this experience by working as a social worker or in a similar occupation. Lower-level management positions may require only a few years of experience; directors typically have much more experience.

**Important Qualities**

**Analytical skills.** Managers need to understand and evaluate data to provide strategic guidance to their organization. They must be able to monitor and evaluate current programs as well as determine new initiatives.

**Communication skills.** Working with the community and employees requires effective communication. Managers must be able to speak and write clearly so others can understand them. Public speaking experience is also helpful because they often participate in community outreach.

**Interpersonal skills.** Social and community service managers should have good interpersonal skills. When speaking with members of their staff or members of the community, they must be tactful and able to explain and discuss all matters related to services that are needed.

**Leadership skills.** Social and community service managers must motivate and lead their employees and set the overall direction of the program.

**Managerial skills.** Social and community service managers spend much of their time administering budgets and responding to a variety of issues.

**Problem-solving skills.** Managers must be able to effectively address client, staff, and agency related issues as they occur.

**Time-management skills.** Social and community service managers must be able to prioritize and handle numerous tasks for multiple customers, often in a short timeframe.

**Pay**

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Social and Community Service Managers
The median annual wage for social and community service managers was $59,970 in May 2012. The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $36,250, and the top 10 percent earned more than $99,150.

In May 2012, the median annual wages for social and community service managers in the top five industries in which these managers worked were as follows:

- State and local government, excluding education and hospitals: $69,490
- Religious, grantmaking, civic, professional, and similar organizations: $61,500
- Individual and family services: $55,810
- Community and vocational rehabilitation services: $54,120
- Nursing and residential care facilities: $53,090

Social and community service managers typically work full time.

**Job Outlook**

Social and Community Service Managers

Percent change in employment, projected 2012-22

- Social and community service managers: 21%
- Total, all occupations: 11%
- Management occupations: 7%
Employment of social and community service managers is projected to grow 21 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations.

Much of the job growth in this occupation is the result of meeting the needs of an aging population. An increase in the number of older adults will result in a need for more social services. Elderly people often need services, such as adult day care and meal delivery. Social and community service managers, who administer programs that provide these services, will likely be needed to meet this increased demand. As a result, employment of social and community service managers is expected to grow fastest in industries serving the elderly, such as home health care services and services for the elderly and persons with disabilities.

In addition, employment growth is projected as more people seek treatment for their addictions and as illegal drug offenders are increasingly sent to treatment programs rather than to jail. As a result, managers who direct treatment programs will be needed.

Although this occupation is projected to have rapid employment growth, gains could be limited by budget cuts in state and local governments. Social and human services rely heavily on government funding, and if funding decreases, services may not grow fast enough to meet demand.

### Employment projections data for Social and Community Service Managers, 2012-22

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social and community service managers</td>
<td>11-9151</td>
<td>132,900</td>
<td>160,600</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27,700</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


### Similar Occupations

This table shows a list of occupations with job duties that are similar to those of social and community service managers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>JOB DUTIES</th>
<th>ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION</th>
<th>2012 MEDIAN PAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Educators and Community Health Workers</td>
<td>Health educators teach people about behaviors that promote wellness. They develop and implement strategies to improve the health of individuals and communities. Community health workers collect data and discuss health concerns with members of specific populations or communities.</td>
<td>See How to Become One</td>
<td>$41,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists</td>
<td>Mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists help people manage and overcome mental and emotional disorders and problems with their family and relationships. They listen to clients and ask questions, to help the clients understand their problems and develop strategies to improve their lives.</td>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>$41,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists</td>
<td>Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists work with and monitor offenders to prevent them from committing new crimes.</td>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>$48,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
<td>Rehabilitation counselors help people with emotional and physical disabilities live independently. They work with clients to overcome or manage the personal, social, and professional effects of disabilities on employment or independent living.</td>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>$33,880</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School and Career Counselors
School counselors help students develop social skills and succeed in school. Career counselors assist people with the process of making career decisions, by helping them choose a career or educational program.

Social and Human Service Assistants
Social and human service assistants help people get through difficult times or get additional support. They assist other workers, such as social workers, and they help clients find benefits or community services.

Social Workers
Social workers help people solve and cope with problems in their everyday lives. One group of social workers, clinical social workers, also diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues.

Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors
Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors advise people who suffer from alcoholism, drug addiction, eating disorders, or other behavioral problems. They provide treatment and support to help the client recover from addiction or modify problem behaviors.

Contacts for More Information
For more information about social and community service managers, visit

- Council on Social Work Education
- National Association of Social Workers
- Network for Social Work Management

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