BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

RESOURCE CATEGORY	Medical and Public Health
RESOURCE KIND	Personnel
OVERALL FUNCTION	The Behavioral Health Specialist supports disaster behavioral health interventions, triage, assessment and stabilization or referral of responders, disaster survivors and affected populations
COMPOSITION AND ORDERING SPECIFICATIONS	1. This position can be ordered as a single resource or in conjunction with a NIMS typed team (Behavioral Health Community Services Team). 2. Discuss logistics for deploying this position, such as working conditions, length of deployment, security, lodging, transportation and meals, prior to deployment 3. The position typically works 12 hours per shift, is self-sustainable for 72 hours and is deployable up to 14 days

Each type of resource builds on the qualifications of the type below it. For example, Type 1 qualifications include the qualifications in Type 2, plus an increase in capability. Type 1 is the highest qualification level.

COMPONENT	TYPE 1	TYPE 2	NOTES
DESCRIPTION	The NIMS Type 1 Behavioral Health Specialist is a licensed clinical professional who: 1. Functions as a mental health or substance abuse professional in a disaster setting 2. Provides behavioral health triage, assessment and stabilization or referral of responders and affected populations for the management of mental and emotional disorders 3. Provides determinations, clinical assessment and clinical guidance for the referral of patients and disaster survivors for diagnosis and treatment	The National Incident Management System (NIMS) Type 2 Behavioral Health Specialist is an unlicensed behavioral health professional who: 1. Provides supportive mental health or substance abuse services in a disaster setting 2. Works under the direct guidance and supervision of the NIMS Type 1 Behavioral Health Specialist	Not Specified
EDUCATION	A master's degree in counseling, social work, substance abuse, behavioral health, mental health or equivalent from an accredited college or university	A Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree in behavioral sciences, such as psychology, social work, counseling or equivalent from an accredited college or university	Not Specified

COMPONENT	TYPE 1	TYPE 2	NOTES
TRAINING	Same as Type 2	Completion of the following: 1. IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS-100 2. IS-200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response, ICS-200 3. IS-368: Including People with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs in Disaster Operations 4. IS-505: Concepts of Religious Literacy for Emergency Management 5. IS-700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction 6. IS-800: National Response Framework, An Introduction 7. Psychological First Aid (PFA) Training (minimum four hours)	The NIMS Training Program defines a national baseline to guide and promote NIMS training. It provides recommendations to assist Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) in developing their own training plans, tailored to their specific needs
EXPERIENCE	Two years of experience in a clinical practice setting commensurate with the mission assignment	Two years of experience in a setting commensurate with the mission assignment	Not Specified
PHYSICAL/MEDICAL FITNESS	Same as Type 2	1. Moderate 2. Is able to work while wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) 3. Maintains immunizations in accordance with current AHJ requirements	1. PPE is mission-specific and may vary by working environment, including protective footwear, protective clothing for skin exposures, eye and hearing protection, respirators, gloves and masks. 2. NIMS Guideline for the National Qualification System (NQS) defines Physical/Medical Fitness levels for NIMS positions
CURRENCY	Same as Type 2	Ongoing, active participation with an established health care related providing entity such as a hospital, health system, inpatient treatment facility, agency, service or private practice providing crisis intervention or disaster behavioral health expertise	Provider must carry out and use any background checks as applicable law specifies. This may include: 1. A background check completed within past 12 months 2. A sex offender registry check, 3. A local, state and national driving and criminal history
PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS	1. State, the District of Columbia or US territory-granted active status of legal authority to function as a Behavioral Health Specialist without restrictions including, Psychologists, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT), Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW), Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) or state-recognized equivalent 2. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration with prescriptive privileges as necessary	Not Specified	Not Specified

NOTES

Nationally typed resources represent the minimum criteria for the associated category.

REFERENCES

1. FEMA, NIMS 508: Behavioral Health Community Services Team
2. FEMA, NIMS, October 2017
3. FEMA, NIMS Guideline for the NQS, November 2017
4. FEMA, National Response Framework, October 2019