

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STATE OF HAWAII
SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

47.360

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Class Specifications for the:

ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST

Duties Summary:

As a member of a multi-disciplinary educational team, the Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialist works with students with disabilities; independently conducts evaluations and provides direct instruction, consultation, and recommendations; writes reports; attends Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Section 504 meetings; provides training and professional development; serves as a subject matter expert in the field of O&M; and performs other related duties as assigned.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This class serves as a state or district subject matter expert and resource certified in O&M. The position primarily works under the general supervision of a District Educational Specialist or State Educational Specialist. The O&M Specialist trains students who are blind or visually impaired to acquire specific skills so they can move independently, safely, and efficiently in their school, home, and community. The O&M Specialist may also collaborate with the student's teacher and family, showing them how to incorporate O&M techniques into the daily classroom and home routine while monitoring the correct use of O&M techniques.

Students in preschool and elementary schools may be instructed how to travel around their school building, playground, and neighborhood by themselves. Elementary school students may learn about more complex environmental concepts, including but not limited to topography (slope, hilly), textures (concrete, bumpy), and positional concepts (in front of, in back of). Middle and high school students generally learn how to cross streets at busy intersections, ride city buses, use distance visual devices that can help them see street signs or addresses, use compass directions, plan a route of travel, shop in malls, and travel in unfamiliar areas independently.

Examples of Duties: *(Positions may not be assigned all of the duties listed, nor do the examples necessarily include all of the duties that may be assigned. The omission of specific statements does not preclude management from assigning duties that are logical for the position. The classification of a position should not be based solely on the examples of duties performed.)*

1. Provides direct instruction to teach formal O&M skills and complex environmental and/or positional concepts to children who are blind or visually impaired. Mobility skills may include areas such as movement with a guide, protective techniques, indoor and outdoor cane skills, street crossings, and use of public transportation systems.
2. Provides assessment of the abilities and needs of individual students for O&M services by interviewing, observing, and evaluating students for coordination, balance, gait and posture, physical condition, emotional tolerance, and use of sensory systems.
3. Participates as a member of IEP/Section 504 teams in assessing information, developing goals, and providing recommendations for appropriate services based on the nature and severity of the student's needs.
4. Plans and provides various lessons, exercises, drills, and tests to develop coordination, conditioning, body posture, muscle senses and hearing, the use of general environmental information, and directional and spatial concepts. Collects and maintains data to document and evaluate progress.
5. Designs and implements ongoing in-service educational activities in the areas of O&M for teachers, educational assistants, school staff, related service providers, administrators, and other professionals.
6. Provides consultation and assistance to school staff, teachers, parents, and other related service providers with school/classroom adaptations, assistive technology, and instruction to enable students' ability to access the school campus, instruction, and activities.
7. Keeps abreast of new O&M trends and developments, learning new O&M methods and techniques.
8. Participates in parent conferences and meetings, as well as teacher staffing meetings related to students with visual impairments.
9. Maintains equipment and supplies.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

Knowledge of: Federal, state, and local mandates governing the implementation of special education programs; laws and regulations that affect O&M services; principles, techniques, equipment, and literature used in providing O&M services; major theories and intervention strategies with educational implications for students with visual impairments; effective behavior management

skills and training techniques; proper preparation and use of equipment and materials, such as tactile maps, models, optical devices, pre-canes, global positioning system devices, and long canes for the development of O&M skills; braille, basic orientation, mobility, and adaptive technology skills; professional resources pertinent to the O&M profession; basic principles of learning theories and their implications for O&M training; and planning and conducting O&M assessments and programs.

Ability to: Plan and conduct assessment and instruction in O&M training methods and techniques; conduct in-service training sessions and demonstrate O&M techniques and procedures to parents, school staff, and others; work well with students, parents, and school staff; communicate effectively both orally and in writing; provide data and student progress reports; prepare written reports and correspondence; organize and plan work effectively; secure the cooperation and assistance of other agencies, groups, community members, and volunteers; keep abreast of and learn new O&M trends, developments, methods, and techniques; maintain equipment and supplies; select appropriate material and/or processes for age, ability, and functioning level.

Minimum Qualification Requirements:

Education Requirement:

Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution recognized by the Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department).

Experience Requirements:

General Experience: Minimum of two (2) years working in a school setting as a member of an interdisciplinary team.

Specialized Experience: One (1) year of experience working as a teacher of students with visual impairments, an O&M Specialist with children ages birth to 21 years old including evidence of interdisciplinary collaboration in a school setting, or an O&M professional experience working with adults.

Substitutions Allowed:

1. Excess work experience as described under General Experience and/or Specialized Experience or any other responsible administrative, professional, or analytical work experience that provided knowledge, skills, and abilities comparable to those acquired in four (4) years of successful study while completing a college or university curriculum leading to a baccalaureate degree may be substituted for the Education Requirement on a year-for-year

basis. To be acceptable, the experience must have been of such scope, level, and quality as to assure the possession of comparable knowledge, skills, and abilities.

2. Excess Specialized Experience may be substituted for the General Experience on a year-for-year basis.
3. A post-baccalaureate certification from an accredited institution recognized by the Department in visual impairment and/or O&M may be substituted for the Specialized Experience requirement above.
4. An advanced degree from an accredited institution recognized by the Department in education with a specialization in visual impairment or a related area may be substituted for the Specialized Experience above.

NOTE: If a degree is used to substitute for the education requirement, it may not be used again towards the experience requirement. If work experience is used to substitute for education, it may not be used again to meet the experience requirement. If the applicant holds more than one degree, official transcripts must be provided, and the recruitment section will conduct a thorough review to determine if multiple degrees will be credited towards the minimum qualification requirements. Additional degrees can be considered if obtained independently through mutually exclusive classes from another degree being considered.

Quality of Experience:

Possession of the required years of experience will not in itself be accepted as proof of qualification for a position. The applicant's overall experience must have been of such scope and level of responsibility as to conclusively demonstrate that the applicant can perform the duties of the position for which the applicant is being considered.

License and Certification Requirement:

Applicants must possess either:

- a. O&M Specialist Certification through the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Educational Professionals; OR
- b. National O&M Certification accredited through the National Blindness Professional Certification Board.

Selective Certification:

Specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities may be required to perform the duties of some positions. For such positions, selective certification requirements may be established, and certification may be restricted to eligibles who possess the pertinent experience and/or training required to perform the duties of the position.

Organizations requesting selective certification must show the connection between the kind of training and/or experience on which they wish to base selective certification and the duties of the position to be filled.

Tests:

Applicants may be required to qualify on an appropriate examination.

Physical and Medical Requirements:

Applicants must be able to perform the essential duties and responsibilities of the position effectively and safely, with or without reasonable accommodation.

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This is the first specification for the new class, ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST.

DATE APPROVED: 03/18/2026


Sean Bacon (Mar 18, 2026 08:02:50 HST)

EFFECTIVE DATE: 3/1/2026

Sean Bacon
Assistant Superintendent
Office of Talent Management