

## The Department's Mission

The California Department of Mental Health (DMH), entrusted with leadership of the California mental health system, ensures through partnerships the availability and accessibility of effective, efficient, culturally competent services. This is accomplished by advocacy, education, innovation, outreach, understanding, oversight, monitoring, quality improvement, and the provision of direct services.

## State Hospital Services

The Department is responsible for the direct operation of five state hospitals: Atascadero, Metropolitan, Napa, Patton, and Coalinga State Hospital (opening in 2005). In addition, the Department, through an agreement with the California Department of Corrections, provides mental health services at Vacaville Psychiatric Program and at Salinas Valley Psychiatric Program. All four open state hospitals are fully licensed and accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation for Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), the national accrediting body. The Psychiatric Programs at Vacaville and Salinas are licensed and adhere to the standards of JCAHO. In addition, DMH provides services for developmentally disabled forensic clients at Napa State Hospital.

## Hospital Inpatient Population

The patients served by DMH are often classified on the basis of the legal class or type of commitment proceeding that resulted in their placement in a state hospital. There are two types of commitments: a civil commitment and a judicial commitment. Civil commitments result when, upon psychiatric evaluation, a person is found to be a danger to themselves or others or to be gravely disabled as a result of their mental disorder. The judicially committed, often referred to as forensic

commitments, result from a person allegedly or actually committing a crime and subsequently being found to be suffering from a mental disorder.

## Psychiatric Technician Series

Psychiatric Technician is the largest series used at the Department of Mental Health's state hospitals. A variety of Psychiatric Technician classifications are employed at Atascadero, Metropolitan, Napa and Patton State Hospitals. Positions are anticipated at Coalinga. Descriptions of the classifications are indicated below.

### Psychiatric Technician Positions

Psychiatric Technicians are employed at the State Hospitals to assist in maintaining order and supervise the conduct of patients, protect and maintain the safety of persons and property, provide a basic level of general behavioral psychiatric nursing care to patients who are mentally disordered offenders, and participate in the overall psychiatric treatment program. Entry into the psychiatric technician series is through the following classifications:

### Psychiatric Technician Training Candidate (PTTC)

This is a trainee classification; appointments are made on a limited-term basis. Under close supervision and in a training capacity, the PTTCs assist licensed nursing staff in carrying out activity and training programs, and in developing and encouraging group and individual activities; assist clients with feedings, maintaining well-groomed appearances, and keeping living areas clean; and other related work.

Requirements\*: basic knowledge of arithmetic, spelling and grammar, and the ability to follow instructions and relate to clients.

### Psychiatric Technician Trainee (Safety) (PTT)

Positions in this class are filled by students enrolled in an accredited Psychiatric Technician training program. Appointments are made on a limited-term basis. In addition to the duties described above, PTTs receive training in basic nursing care and treatment under close supervision of qualified medical and nursing staff, attend unit and staff conferences to develop an understanding of treatments given to clients, and assist nursing and medical personnel who administer medications and treatments.

Requirements\*: Enrollment in a Psychiatric Technician training program accredited by the California Board of Vocational Nurse and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT), and high school graduate or equivalent.

### Psychiatric Technician Assistant (Safety) (PTA)

This is a permanent, non-licensed psychiatric technician classification designed to provide basic level-of-care habilitative treatment to clients, including psychological activities, behavioral management, training, care, supervision and other related functions such as assisting in helping clients achieve their maximum potential for self-care and activities of daily life which can be done by non-licensed staff. Prior to working with clients, psychiatric technician assistants receive 16 hours of orientation and training. To continue employment, PTAs must complete a 40-hour in-service training program within 60 calendar days of appointment.

Requirements\*: High school graduation or equivalent, and possession of a valid certificate as a Certified Nursing Assistant.

### Pre-Licensed Psychiatric Technician (Safety) (PLPT)

This is a temporary classification and all appointments are made for a period not to exceed nine months. Incumbents must become licensed by the BVNPT within nine months of appointment or be terminated. The PLPT work under direct supervision to assist licensed staff in providing custody services and basic behavioral and psychiatric nursing care to the patients.

Requirements\*: Completion of a Psychiatric Technician training program accredited by BVNPT. (Sufficient training as determined by the BVNPT may be substituted for the required accredited training.)

### Psychiatric Technician (Safety) (PT)

This is the journey level in the series. Incumbents work under general supervision and, in addition to their custody responsibilities, provide a basic level of general behavioral and psychiatric nursing care and are expected through their attitude, knowledge, and performance to facilitate the rehabilitation of patients. Incumbents may assist in the training of Psychiatric Technician Trainees and other staff.

Requirements\*: Possession of a valid license to practice as a Psychiatric Technician issued by the BVNPT.

\*See official class specification for complete requirements at [www.spb.ca.gov](http://www.spb.ca.gov)

### Psychiatric Technician Apprentice (PT Apprentice)

**The PT Apprentice is at Napa State Hospital and Patton State Hospital. (On back page)**

## Hospital Personnel Office Contacts

Atascadero State Hospital  
10333 El Camino Real  
P.O. Box 7001  
Atascadero, CA 93423  
(805) 468-3384  
TDD 1-800-342-5966

Coalinga State Hospital (OPENING IN 2005)  
148 West Elm Avenue (Interim Office)  
Coalinga, CA 93210  
(559) 935-4305  
TDD (559) 935-7120

Metropolitan State Hospital  
11401 South Bloomfield Avenue  
Norwalk, CA 90650  
(562) 651-2268  
TDD (562) 863-1743

Napa State Hospital  
2100 Napa-Vallejo Highway  
Napa, CA 94558-6293  
(707) 253-5000  
TDD (707) 253-5768

Patton State Hospital  
3102 East Highland Avenue  
Patton, CA 92369  
(909) 425-7543  
TDD (909) 862-5730

Salinas Valley Psychiatric Program  
31625 Highway 101  
P.O. Box 1080  
Soledad, CA 93960  
(831) 678-5667  
TDD (916) 654-1782

Vacaville Psychiatric Program  
1600 California Drive  
P.O. Box 2297  
Vacaville, CA 95696  
(707) 449-6514  
TDD (916) 654-1782

## Psychiatric Technician Apprenticeship (PT Apprenticeship)

This class is designed for participation in an apprenticeship program leading to a licensed Psychiatric Technician. The apprenticeship program consists of on-the-job training in the care and treatment of patients with mental illness plus classroom instruction in mental health, developmental disabilities, nursing science and pharmacology.

**Requirements:** Completion of 12<sup>th</sup> grade or its equivalent, be eligible to enroll in an accredited Psychiatric Technician training program, and demonstrate proficiency in basic English and mathematics.

### Licensing Information

Board of Vocational Licensing and Psychiatric Technicians  
(916) 263-7800  
[www.bvnpt.ca.gov](http://www.bvnpt.ca.gov)

### **How to apply for Employment:**

- Complete a standard State Application Form 678
- Submit application to one of the DMH Hospitals identified on the examination announcement
- Once the hospital determines you meet the qualifications, they will schedule you for the examination
- Take the exam administered by the hospital testing office
- If successful, you will be placed on an eligible list
- Once on an eligible list, apply for job vacancies

(For more information, contact the hospital's personnel office.)



The Psychiatric Technician class is not used at the Vacaville Psychiatric Program and the Salinas Valley Psychiatric Program; however, Psychiatric Technicians may apply for the Medical Technical Assistants (Psychiatric) classification used at these facilities.



[www.dmh.ca.gov](http://www.dmh.ca.gov)

## CAREER OPPORTUNITY

For

# PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS

(Examinations are administered on an open continuous basis for the California Department of Mental Health)

**Equal Employment Opportunity  
Employer**