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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Lori A. Shibinette  
Commissioner

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr.  
Director

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December 21, 2021

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
and the Honorable Council  
State House  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 99:8, Increases for Recruitment Purposes and in accordance with Per 904.01 of the Rules of the Division of Personnel, Request for Temporary Increase, authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Children, Youth and Families, Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC) to institute a temporary 18% base hourly wage enhancement to Youth Counselor Trainee and Youth Counselor I positions, a temporary 16% base hourly wage enhancement to Youth Counselor II positions, and a temporary 14% base hourly wage enhancement to the Youth Counselor III positions currently paid under Wage Schedule – A130 for recruitment and retention purposes, effective upon Governor and Council approval or on January 14, 2022, whichever is later, through a period of 12 months from the date of such approval. 100% General Funds.

Funds are available in the account below in SFY 2022 and 2023, upon the availability and continued appropriation of funds in the future operating budget.

**05-95-042-421510-66430000 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HUMAN SVCS DEPT OF, HHS: HUMAN SERVICES, SUNUNU YOUTH SERVICES CENTER, SYSC HB2 91:327**

Fiscal Year	Account/Class	Class Title	Job Number	Amount Requested
SFY 2022	010-500100	Personal Services - Perm Class	Various	\$ 109,527
SFY 2023	010-500100	Personal Services - Perm Class	Various	\$ 168,753
			Sub-Total	\$ 278,280

*The Department of Health and Human Services' Mission is to join communities and families in providing opportunities for citizens to achieve health and independence.*

**05-95-042-421510-66430000 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HUMAN SVCS DEPT OF, HHS: HUMAN SERVICES, SUNUNU YOUTH SERVICES CENTER, SYSC HB2 91:327**

Fiscal Year	Account/Class	Class Title	Job Number	Amount Requested
SFY 2022	050-500109	Personal Services - Part Time	Various	\$ 3,522
SFY 2023	050-500109	Personal Services - Part Time	Various	\$ 19,664
			Sub-Total	\$ 23,186
			Total	\$ 301,466

**EXPLANATION**

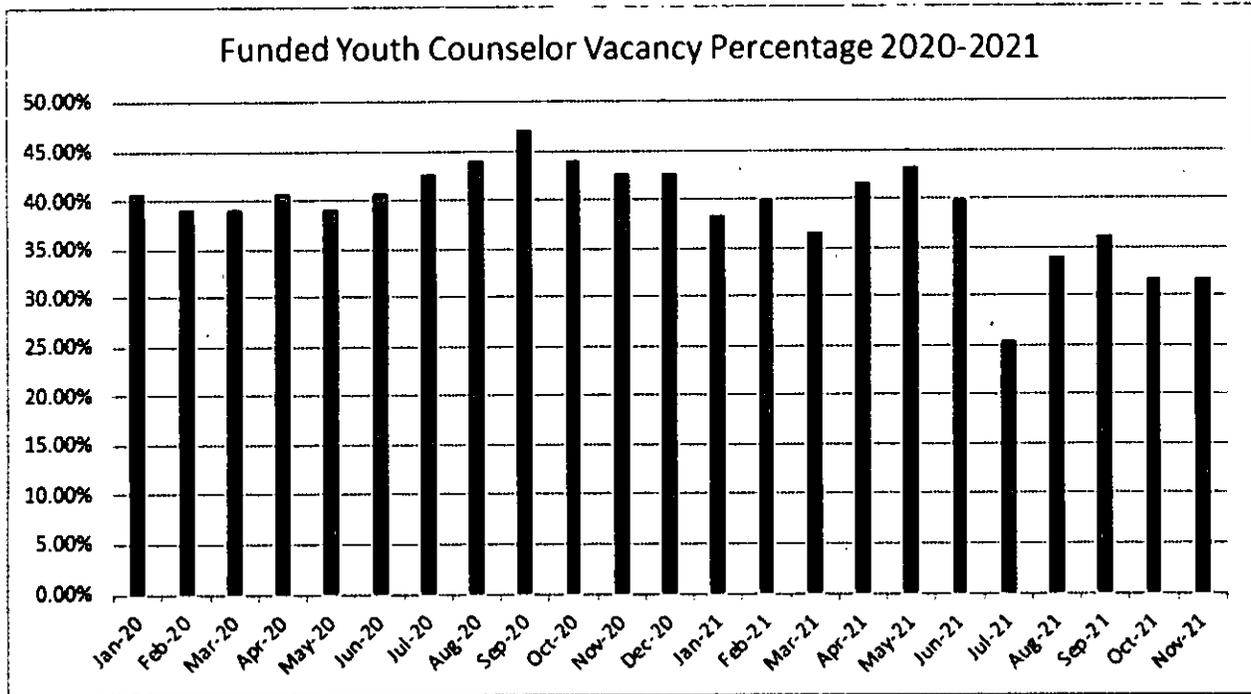
The demand for Youth Counselors (YC) at the state’s juvenile secure treatment facility continues to exceed available staff resources. SYSC provides an in-person service to committed and detained youth, and the option for YC staff to work remotely is not an option. The facility must be staffed in-person 24/7 in order to maintain the safety of the youth and the staff on duty. The YC position is responsible for the safety and security of the state’s only secure youth treatment facility, where youth are committed or detained due to behaviors that pose a threat to the safety of the community. When staffing numbers are low, other staff are required to work overtime and/or units run without the required numbers of staff, which causes concern for the safety and security of all.

The vacancy rate for the YC position has been problematic for many years. In January 2020, the vacancy rate was 40.6% and has remained fairly consistent since that time, rising as high as 47% in September 2020 and as low as 25.5% in July 2021, though the percentage improvement in July 2021 was based on a decision to unfund vacant positions to meet SFY22/23 budget reductions. In terms of actual staff, SYSC has fewer YCs than any prior time and too few to adequately staff the minimum number of shifts to safely operate, resulting in DCYF offering overtime to other Division staff, typically with higher base salaries, on a regular basis in order to maintain safe operations.

Table 1 below shows the YC vacancy rate at SYSC between January 2020 and November 2021. The table shows the number of vacant full time and part time positions that were funded and available to fill during the period of time outlined. At the present time, the vacancy rate for YC positions is 31.9%. The data shows relatively consistent YC vacancies preceding and throughout the pandemic, the apparent improvement in recent months reflects a reduction of funded vacant YC positions from 60 to 47 to meet budget reductions. In terms of actual staffed positions, there are seven fewer filled YCs positions in November 2021 than there were in November 2020. An enhancement to the YC salary is necessary to attract applicants and retain its workforce.

The vacancies have caused increased stress for all other YC and administrative positions within the facility, who are working overtime in addition to their regular hours to ensure coverage exists for 24/7 business operations. Not only is this cost prohibitive, but it also affects the quality of care provided in an environment that can be stressful, unpredictable, and dangerous. Despite efforts to recruit new YC’s at the facility, SYSC has been unable to fill many vacant YC positions.

**Table 1**



There are currently 17 Full Time YC vacancies at SYSC. The 18%, 16%, and 14% enhancement would apply to all positions within the YC Trainee and I Classification, YC II Classification, and YC III Classification respectively.

The current salary of the YC position is outlined in Table 2 below. The Youth Counselor Trainee position requires an Associate's Degree or 60 credit hours and six months of experience working in organized group activities. Additional years of education and/or experience can be substituted accordingly.

**Table 2**

POSITION/TITLE	Salary
Youth Counselor Trainee	\$27,081.60 - \$36,566.40 \$13.02/hr - \$17.58/hr
Youth Counselor I	\$31,470.40 - \$42,848.00 \$15.13/hr - \$20.60/hr
Youth Counselor II	\$35,214.40 - \$48,380.80 \$16.93/hr - \$23.26/hr
Youth Counselor III	\$38,084.80 - \$52,520.00 \$18.31/hr - \$25.25/hr

**Plus Direct Care \$1.133/hr, 2nd Shift Differential \$.60/hr and rotating shift, & \$.75/hr 3rd shift differential and Weekend \$1.00/hr**

Wage schedule – A-130, effective July 02, 2021

**Competitive Market:**

Potential applicants searching for jobs in New Hampshire today will find numerous opportunities, with even entry level retail and delivery positions being advertised at comparable or greater wages. In Table 3 below is the wage of the Mental Health Worker (MHW) at New Hampshire Hospital. Similar to the YC, the MHW is responsible for providing direct care services including admissions, searching for contraband, and monitoring and providing a safe environment. However, unlike the YC position, the minimum qualifications for a MHW Trainee is a high school diploma, or equivalent, and no experience. Also unlike the YC position, the MHW positions currently posted on NH.Gov offer a 20% salary enhancement – See Table 3.

**Table 3**

POSITION/TITLE	LG	Salary
Mental Health Worker Trainee	LG 7	\$27,081.60 - \$36,566.40 (\$32,497.92 - \$43,879.68 inc. 20% enhancement)
Mental Health Worker I	LG 9	\$29,182.40 - \$39,436.80 (\$35,018.88 - \$47,324.16 inc. 20% enhancement)
Mental Health Worker II	LG 11	\$31,470.40 - \$42,848.00 (\$37,764.48 - \$51,417.60 inc. 20% enhancement)

**2<sup>nd</sup> shift differential \$ .60/hr, 3<sup>rd</sup> shift differential \$ .75/hr. Plus, Direct Care \$5.00 Per Week. Plus a 20% Enhancement of base pay.**

Wage schedule – A-130, effective July 02, 2021

Source: NH.Gov 11/18/2021

Another similar position to the YC is the Corrections Officer Trainee (CO) position at the NH State Prison for Men – Concord. The salary range for this position is shown in Table 4 below. Like the YC position, the CO position is responsible for safety and security, including supervising operations of a housing unit and maintaining order. Unlike the YC position, the CO position requires only a High School Diploma, or equivalent, and no work experience.

**Table 4**

POSITION/TITLE	LG	Salary
Corrections Officer Trainee	LG 12	\$41,163.20 - \$56,243.20

**Additional \$1560.00 paid for Hazard Duty.**

Source: NH.Gov 11/18/2021

Should Governor and Council determine to deny this request, SYSC would be unable to adequately recruit and retain YC staff, which would negatively impact the safety of juveniles and staff in the secure treatment facility.

Area served: Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC)

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
and the Honorable Council  
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Source of funds: 100% general funds

If you need any further information regarding this request, please feel free to contact me at 271-9017. Thank you for your consideration

Respectfully submitted,

  
Lori A. Shibinette  
Commissioner

Position #	Title	Position #	Title
16654	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	16647	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
16651	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	18600	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
42099	YOUTH COUNSELOR II DRC	TMPPT1421	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
30213	YOUTH COUNSELOR II DRC	11638	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
30212	YOUTH COUNSELOR II DRC	11699	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
30218	YOUTH COUNSELOR II DRC	11625	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
40130	YOUTH COUNSELOR II DRC	11694	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11727	YOUTH COUNSELOR II DRC	19442	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11682	YOUTH COUNSELOR I DRC	11675	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11602	YOUTH COUNSELOR I DRC	11645	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11657	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11655	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
30204	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11723	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11738	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	18596	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11648	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11692	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
30217	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11635	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11656	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11709	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
TMPPT262	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11683	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11658	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	30214	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11707	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11678	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11630	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11643	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11623	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	11718	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11603	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	30206	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
30203	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC	16655	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC
11617	YOUTH COUNSELOR III DRC		

**Caraway, Michelle**

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**From:** Spring, Laurie  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 06, 2022 4:22 PM  
**To:** Caraway, Michelle  
**Cc:** Rudis, Lorrie; Calise, Mary; Lorden, Rebecca  
**Subject:** FW: Per 904.01 Request for Temporary Increase-Youth Counselors

Laurie Spring  
Assistant Director  
Bureau of Human Resource Management  
Brown Building Room 164  
603-271-9019

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**From:** Rudis, Lorrie <Lorrie.A.Rudis@das.nh.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 3:35 PM  
**To:** Spring, Laurie <Laurie.J.Spring@dhhs.nh.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Per 904.01 Request for Temporary Increase-Youth Counselors

This request for Youth Counselor Trainee-III enhancement is approved for 12 months ending on January 12, 2023. You have agreed to submit a reclassification for these positions during this period.

All the best,

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**From:** Spring, Laurie <Laurie.J.Spring@dhhs.nh.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 6, 2022 3:07 PM  
**To:** Rudis, Lorrie <Lorrie.A.Rudis@das.nh.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: Per 904.01 Request for Temporary Increase-Youth Counselors  
**Importance:** High

Thank you,

Laurie Spring  
Assistant Director  
Bureau of Human Resource Management  
Brown Building Room 164  
603-271-9019

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**From:** Spring, Laurie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 7, 2021 2:29 PM  
**To:** Rudis, Lorrie <Lorrie.A.Rudis@das.nh.gov>  
**Subject:** Per 904.01 Request for Temporary Increase-Youth Counselors  
**Importance:** High

Good afternoon Lorrie,

Attached please find the final request for enhancement for Youth Counselor Trainee-III positions at Sununu Youth Services Center.

Thank you for your consideration,

Laurie Spring  
Assistant Director  
Bureau of Human Resource Management  
Brown Building Room 164  
603-271-9019

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