

New Horizons Shelter and Outreach Centers

Position Title: Housing Advocate
Reports to: Director of Programming and Personnel
Date of Review: July 2022

Summary: The Housing Advocate provides mobile, culturally competent, and trauma informed supportive case management services to domestic abuse victims and their children in the community. Assists victims off-site in the community in addressing barriers to permanent housing to rapidly place them in their own home. Develops relationships with community partners and landlords to engage them in providing resources for New Horizons clients. Assesses the client's needs for flexible financial assistance, completes appropriate paperwork and makes recommendations for funding.

Hours: This position is full-time hourly. The ability to work flexible hours is necessary and duties will require working days, evenings, and some weekends to accommodate client and/or organizational needs. Overtime must have prior approval and/or be assigned by a supervisor. Travel is required.

Qualifications:

- At least one year providing person-centered advocacy or case management services to a vulnerable population.
- Experience and knowledge of Housing First principals a plus.
- Demonstrated understanding of domestic and sexual violence and related issues.
- Ability to maintain strict confidentiality and follow applicable New Horizons policies, laws and grant conditions surrounding confidentiality.
- Knowledge of public benefits, and a wide range of community resources to meet variable survivor needs. Ability to exercise flexibility and creativity in helping individuals overcome a variety of barriers to well-being and housing stability.
- Ability to take initiative and maintain accountability to colleagues while providing services in a variety of settings.
- Ability to handle crises and juggle multiple responsibilities in a fast-paced environment.
- Ability to effectively network with a wide range of community service providers.
- Ability to represent New Horizons in a professional manner to community partners and the broader public.
- Experience providing intensive financial literacy education and budget planning a plus.

Competencies:

- Respectfulness and relationship building – builds constructive working relationships characterized by a high level of acceptance, cooperation, and mutual respect
- Team focused and collaborative – promotes cooperation and commitment within a team to achieve goals and objectives
- Self-accountability and work standards – set high standards of performance for self and assumes responsibility and accountability for successfully completing assignments or tasks
- Stress tolerance – maintains composure in highly stressful or adverse situations
- Conflict management – helps others to effectively resolve complex or sensitive disagreements or conflicts
- Valuing diversity – helps to create an environment that embraces and appreciates diversity
- Confidentiality, integrity, ethics and trust – maintains confidentiality and earns others' trust and respect through consistent honesty and professionalism in all interactions

Principal Duties and Responsibilities:

COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE

- Models effective communications
- Communicates important information to the direct supervisor. If necessary and appropriate, will communicate to other staff.
- Maintains appropriate client files, statistics, forms and other record keeping as required
- Completes all paperwork and entries into the client records database by the end of each workday
- Promptly addresses difficulties or problems appropriately per agency protocol
- Attends and participates in agency meetings as directed by supervisor

HOUSING STABILITY

- Provide coordinated entry and intake assessments for participants seeking housing support, identifying housing service needs and coordinating initial services
- Support participants in finding and securing safe, affordable housing
- Help families access resources for housing related assistance (i.e. furniture procurement, utility assistance, etc.)
- Advocate with managers and owners for tenancy and negotiate move-in costs
- Provide mobile advocacy and community engagement as needed
- Coordinate connection with other services as needed
- Provide advocates agency-wide with housing support
- Track expenditures to stay within budget

DIRECT SERVICES

- Interacts sensitively with traumatized populations
- Understands and utilizes principles of trauma informed care and the empowerment philosophy of advocacy
- Provides a varying number of clients with crisis intervention; supportive and active listening; choices and options; supportive goal-oriented counseling; safety planning; educational counseling related to domestic abuse, sexual violence, and human trafficking; resources and referrals to social service agencies; legal advocacy and court support
- Provides Crime Victim Compensation information
- Models non-violent conflict resolution and uses non-violent forms of guidance that are culturally sensitive and non-judgmental
- Models and actively promotes positive, nurturing interactions
- Facilitates support groups and peer support
- Takes appropriate steps to deal with emergency situations with the goal of maintaining the safety of all
- Maintains client files, statistics, forms and other record keeping as required; all paperwork and entries into the client records database by the end of each work day
- Provides cross-departmental and/or cross functional support and direct services as assigned and/or requested
- Participates in related cross-training to ensure consistency and continuity of services and programs of the agency

COMMUNITY PUBLIC RELATIONS, COLLABORATION, AND EDUCATION

- Is culturally sensitive and trauma informed
- Provides public education which focuses on the intersections of domestic abuse, sexual violence, human trafficking and housing/homelessness as appropriate, necessary and assigned
- Establishes sound and collaborative relationships with community groups and service providers
- May be assigned to attend community collaboration events i.e. committees relating to domestic abuse, sexual violence, human trafficking and housing/homelessness issues
- Is present at functions that promote our organization and access to our services and programs

Other Responsibilities and Requirements:

- Adheres to agency policies and work rules, including strict adherence to New Horizons confidentiality policies
- Has reliable transportation, a valid driver's license, and vehicle insurance
- Is required to attend one Crime Victim Compensation (CVC) Training through the Office of Crime Victim Services within one year of employment
- Is committed to professional development and requests to attend a minimum of two trainings per year outside of the organization. These trainings must be

related to domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, stalking, harassment, or related areas

- Trains and supervises volunteers as appropriate ensuring volunteers receive a well-rounded experience
- Engages in and models supportive, healthy relationships through setting boundaries and demonstrations of respect with clients and co-workers
- Maintains a clean, organized, and comfortable environment within the organization
- Performs other duties as assigned by supervisor

Working Conditions:

- Work is normally performed in an office and/or residential setting but is not limited to the organization
- Constant interpersonal interactions
- Frequent changes in duties, tasks, and circumstances

Acknowledgement:

This description describes the general nature and skills required of this position. The "Duties and Responsibilities" describe the functions considered essential to the position. The description does not state or imply that these are the only duties and responsibilities assigned to the Housing Advocate position.

Employees may be required to perform other duties of the organization related to client services as requested or assigned by the Executive Director. All requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the Executive Director.

The working conditions listed are intended to indicate the kinds of tasks and levels of work circumstances required of the Housing Advocate and shall not be interpreted as declaring what the specific duties and responsibilities shall be. It is not intended to limit or in any way modify the right of the supervisor to assign, direct and control the work of employees under supervision. The use of specific terms or examples of functions shall not be interpreted as excluding other duties not mentioned that are comparable in level of difficulty.

I have read and understand the Housing Advocate position description. I have reviewed the duties, responsibilities, and working conditions of this position. I understand that this document does not create an employment contract between me and New Horizons Shelter and Outreach Centers. I also understand that I may at any time terminate my employment relationship with New Horizons and I equally understand that New Horizons is an at will employer.

Employee Signature (Printed Name) Date

Supervisor Signature Date