

Transitions of PA Job Description

Position: PSH Housing Counselor/Advocate
Supervisor: Housing Coordinator
Classification: Non-Exempt

Summary

The PSH Housing Counselor/Advocate provides community-based supportive services to survivors of domestic violence who are experiencing homelessness and who have a disability. Transitions permanent supportive housing program aims to empower program participants to achieve their self-defined goals that will support their ability to obtain and maintain housing. These include but are not limited to safety planning, an improved sense of self-worth, self-sufficiency, and permanent housing in a safe, stable environment. The PSH Housing Counselor/Advocate is required to meet regularly (no less than monthly) with the program participants to monitor, advocate, and intervene on the formalized plan. They must be able to work a flexible schedule and be flexible to the changing needs of the organization and clients. Significant travel throughout Union, Snyder, Northumberland, and Schuylkill counties is required. The PSH Housing Counselor/Advocate works collaboratively with all Transitions staff and must be able to contribute and work well in group settings. The PSH Housing Counselor/Advocate is a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse as defined by PA Child Protective Services Law. Responsibilities require the exercise of independent judgment and knowledge of overall agency activities. This position is full-time with primarily daytime and early evening hours. This position participates in on-call duties.

Responsibilities

1. Intervene at the client level to provide or coordinate the delivery of direct services to participants and their families.
 - a. Screen participants during the intake process to ensure they meet eligibility requirements and will benefit from services provided in the program.
 - b. Conduct a face-to-face assessment and understand the client as a whole person and understand the connection between physical, environmental, behavioral, social, and economic factors.
 - c. Develop trusting relationships with PSH program participants. Engage survivors to collaboratively develop goals and service plans for housing, safety, mental health, substance use, health, education, income, employment, or other self-identified goal areas.
 - d. Support survivors' work toward goals through individually tailored services and by facilitating effective connections to community services and resources. Examples of supportive services include successful tenancy problem-solving, independent living skill-building, connection to public benefits and employment assistance, money management support, and connection to medical, mental health, and substance abuse services.
 - e. Provide outreach, case management, crisis support, advocacy, and other needed services to program participants, primarily in the community or participant's home.

- f. Maintain contact with participants on a scheduled basis, appropriate to their specific status and needs.
 - g. Implement the service plan by working with participant and other social service agencies as appropriate.
 - h. Conduct inspections of participants' prospective housing to ensure it meets the minimum requirements outlined by HUD.
 - i. Advocate for resources to meet the need for services and ensure that services are delivered.
 - j. Collaborate with other staff to meet logistical demands of working the program setting.
 - k. Help participants prepare to exit the program by implementing successful move-on strategies with other service providers as appropriate and help provide follow-up services as needed.
2. Intervene at systems level to support existing services and to expand and improve access to needed services.
 - a. Develop resources and social actions and work collaboratively with community resources.
 - b. Maintain knowledge of resource availability and service costs.
 - c. Identify gaps in service or systems within or outside of the agency with the support of the Housing Coordinator.
 3. Professionally conduct services and ensure the participant concerns are their primary interest.
 - a. Ensure that participant interactions are person-centered, trauma-informed, and goal-focused.
 - b. Maintain respect for survivor's autonomy and inherent right to make their own choices about their own lives, while also helping them understand and navigate those choices.
 - c. Seek feedback from colleagues and supervisor when it is in the best interest of the client.
 - d. Exercise professional judgment when making recommendations or referrals.
 - e. Receive ongoing training or continuing education as needed.
 4. Collaborate with staff members about service provision and establishment of related policies and procedures.
 5. Complete and maintain required documentation, both in Efforts to Outcome (ETO) software and paper files.
 6. Attend staff meetings and in-service training.
 7. Participate in the on-call rotation.
 8. Perform other related duties as assigned as allowable by funders.

Qualifications

1. Required: Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Human Services, or a related field and/or equivalent experience.
2. Must be knowledgeable of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other serious crimes and their impact on victims.
3. Must be experienced in working with individuals who have clinical needs.
4. Preferred experience in working with individual who are experiencing homelessness.

5. Must possess excellent communication skills and be computer literate.
6. Must have demonstrated ability to counsel with individuals in crisis and be skilled in support group facilitation.
7. Must be familiar with community resources and knowledgeable about options available to victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.
8. Upon hire, must complete 80-hour Transitions Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Counselor Training.
9. Must complete an additional 20 hours of HUD, Housing Stability, and CoC-related training after hire.
10. Must have a valid driver's license, reliable vehicle, and adequate motor vehicle insurance.
11. Must have Act 34, Act 114, and Act 151 clearances.
12. Knowledge of the challenges in rural communities related to the mission of Transitions;

Staff Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

THIS IS NOT AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT. MANAGEMENT HAS THE RIGHT TO CHANGE DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND WORK SCHEDULES AS NEEDED.