

Job Description

Job Title:	Housing Specialist
Position Type / Status :	Full-time/ Hourly
Location:	1150 NW 72 Ave, Suite 200
Reports To:	VSSU Program Director

Advocate Program, Inc. Overview

Advocate Program, Inc. is a multi-faceted community agency whose mission is to facilitate social change and enhance public safety through leadership, research, education, supervision, and services, utilizing best and evidence-based practices.

Advocate Program, Inc. is a private not-for-profit agency offering structured probation, traditional probation, diversion, and community service programs to the Courts of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit (Miami-Dade County, Florida), both adult and juvenile. Additionally the Program is funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide Rapid Re-Housing and Prevention services to low-income veterans and their families. Advocate Program is also funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Miami- Dade Continuum of Care to provide Rapid Re-housing Services to homeless individuals and their families, victims of domestic violence, and veterans.

Responsibilities:

1. Work in collaboration with Case Managers/ Care Coordinators in finding appropriate permanent housing solutions for participants in the program.
2. Utilize community-based partnerships with Supportive Housing Programs, the HUD-VASH Voucher Program, Subsidized Housing Programs, and market-rate rental landlords to establish and expand housing resources and eviction prevention remedies.
3. Work with Case Managers/ Care Coordinators to ensure a smooth transition into permanent housing and maintaining a supportive relationship with participants to assist them in sustaining permanent housing.
4. Create a landlord database for quick, real time referrals for participants that will hold at a minimum: Contact information for landlord, location of units, rent ranges, bedroom/ bathroom, accessibility to public transportation, and non-negotiables for landlord (i.e. no criminal records, HH income requirements, etc.)
5. Meet and build relationships with private/ public landlords and property managers throughout the community to provide presentations on the SSVF program and the services that Advocate Program and their partners are providing.
6. Keep abreast of local housing resources and the client referral process.

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7. Perform a comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment for each client.
8. Place clients in appropriate housing and accompany clients to housing related appointments.
9. Coordinate care with client Case Managers/ Care Coordinators to ensure that they have access to a full range of community based services, including services provided by the VA as well as any other agencies where they may need services.
10. Maintain timely and appropriate documentation, including progress notes to be provided to Case Managers/ Care Coordinator on a weekly basis.
11. Coordinate care with client Case Managers/ Care Coordinators to ensure inspections and rent surveys are completed in a timely manner.
12. Provide services designed to enhance client health and independent living skills, thereby promoting client housing stability.
13. Advocate with landlords on behalf of clients, as needed.
14. Complete all documents and data entry required of the job accurately and in a timely fashion.
15. Participate in case management meetings to discuss progress with cases referred for housing placement.
16. Develop a trusting and working relationship with the individual/ family seeking help.
17. Effectively communicate with the participant and his/her landlord about the required documentation needed to process the family's application for emergency financial assistance/rental assistance through the program. Once the necessary documentation are obtained, submit the participant's application to the Program Coordinator by fax or e-mail for final review and approval process.
18. Advise client and landlord of amount of funding approved for assistance, and follow up within three days of issuing the check to ensure that the participant's immediate housing issues are now resolved.
19. Develop and maintain effective liaison and interagency referral partnerships with all of the agencies in the community, and continuously identify new community resources that may benefit participants in all categories.
20. Work as part of a multi-disciplinary team providing "client centered services" with all staff members, as well as the other case managers participating in the program.

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21. Report to the Director on all issues relevant to program's functioning, including the interagency referral process.
22. Participate in in-service training as needed to develop and/or enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of the Case Manager, including interagency case management team meetings.
23. Maintain all required documentation in participants' confidential case records, and assisting the Program Manager and Director with the preparation of any required program and statistical reports.
24. Accept and respond to supervision by the Program Director.
25. Perform other duties upon request.

Requirements:

Willingness and ability to learn human services skills; knowledge, experience and desire to aid homeless individuals and families. Comprehensive training will be provided to motivated applicant.

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty listed above satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the additional knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

OUTREACH/ INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

The ideal candidate for the position of Housing Specialist is an individual with experience working in teams and possessing team leadership skills; someone who is self motivated and able to motivate others, who enjoys social interaction and engagement, who can successfully gain the acceptance and trust of clients, as well as with staff in other agencies that have entered into referral and service coordination agreements with the Advocate Program, and possess strong work ethic and organizational skills.

EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE

Bachelors Degree in Social Services or related field. Extensive knowledge and experience of Miami-Dade County and the local network of community based health and human services organizations providing support services to families at risk of homelessness is preferred but not required. Demonstrated ability to learn human services skills and knowledge as well as motivation to aid homeless individuals and their families is required. Comprehensive training will be provided to motivated applicant.

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COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Must have excellent interpersonal skills coupled with excellent oral and written communication skills. Must possess strong observation and analytical skills; functional knowledge of emergency assistance services in Miami Dade County; strong personal responsibility. Flexible approach to working hours is mandatory, as it impacts ability to attend outreach events, and the ability to meet with participants after normal business hours.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Ability to read, analyze and interpret program procedures, outreach protocols and related policies. Ability to write reports, correspondence, and assist team in outreach tools development. Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions about the Program from groups of managers, clients, customers, and the general public.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Must have demonstrated skills in the MS Office 2000 Suite or higher (includes WORD, EXCEL, POWERPOINT, EMAIL OUTLOOK or EMAIL EXCHANGE) and Internet Explorer.

- Ability to use or is familiar with web based social networking tools such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Additional knowledge in the following is ideal, but not required: Adobe Acrobat for PDF creation; Document Scanning.

REASONING ABILITY

Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions.

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS

Must possess a valid Florida driver's license.

Physical Demands & Working Conditions:

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the job. The employee performs work in a normal office setting within a reasonable environment. While performing the duties of this job, the employee will be required to perform local and non-local travel.

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I acknowledge receipt of this job description, and understand I am responsible for understanding its contents, and to ask for clarification if I have any questions. I further understand this description is intended to describe the essential job functions and qualifications for this position. It is not an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities and requirements of a person so classified. Other functions may be assigned and management retains the right to add or change the duties at any time. I also understand that no employee shall interact with clients on a personal, financial, business, social or sexual basis. Such activity may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Employee Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

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