

Housing Specialist, Part Time



Position Title: Housing Specialist
Department: Support Services
Accountable to: Associate Director of Housing
Classification: Part Time, Non-Exempt, Hourly, Non-Management

Join a passionate, dynamic team dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. Reporting to the Crisis Intervention Manager, the Crisis Intervention Advocate provides crisis counseling, safety planning, community referrals, and information to individuals and families impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. Scope of work includes 24-hour crisis-line response duties, crisis counseling sessions, and client intake and needs assessments.

Leveraging your comprehensive understanding of feminism and a strong commitment to social justice, the ideal candidate exhibits superior interpersonal and empathic skills, and a sensitivity to domestic violence and sexual assault issues, trauma, gender equity and client-centered service provision, this role acts independently and as part of a larger, dedicated team.

Purpose of Position:

The Housing Specialist is primarily responsible to identify scattered site housing for clients who are homeless throughout Santa Clara County. The Housing Specialist works closely with landlords and property managers in building a network of readily available housing for our clients to rapidly move into. This Housing Specialist works closely with survivors to identify their housing needs and pairs them with available housing that meets their needs. They are responsible for housing search, landlord recruitment, housing inspections, and all operations of lease signing. They are also responsible for tenant-landlord mediation. To encourage survivor self-determination, services are delivered through a strengths-based, non-judgmental and trauma-informed lens that aligns with the YWCA Silicon Valley's mission of eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. The Housing Specialist conveys empathy, respect and compassion to survivors when delivering services. The Housing Specialist is a member of a high-performing team and supports all activities related to the coordination of permanent housing stability and operations. The Housing First Advocate must not fail in effectively communicating survivor needs to the Housing and Shelter teams and/or any non-compliance of program guidelines. To ensure safety, the Housing Specialist must not fail to respond effectively to safety threats, conflicts and crisis situations.

Essential Functions & Responsibilities:

Client Service

- Assess housing barriers of individuals and families experiencing homelessness to determine housing and service needs using strength-based, cultural competent approaches
- Develop a housing case management plan with homeless survivors in emergency shelters and community-based organizations, including intake interview to determine client's needs, goals, and eligibility.
- Obtain required verification, eliciting personal and financial information, to determine eligibility for initial housing assistance and to determine recertification
- Conduct direct housing search assistance to homeless survivors
- Assist participants in locating landlords willing to rent to them and accept the rental subsidy
- Provide survivors with housing placement services, including securing housing of choice and assistance in completing all necessary paperwork i.e rental applications, leases and/or rental agreements

- Transport clients as deemed necessary. Transportation requirements should be limited to housing search services.
- Apply knowledge of residential lease contracts to educate clients of their rights and responsibilities
- Provide crisis counseling, safety planning, community referrals to adult survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and/or trafficking and their children both in person and on the phone using a strength-based, client-centered, trauma-informed approach.
- Effectively advocate for survivors with outside agencies and community organizations, including accompaniment.
- Manages crisis situations and adheres to safety and program protocols.

Landlord Outreach and Housing Placement Services

- Develop, establish, and maintain professional working relationships with landlords and property managers, with emphasis on direct contact and negotiation with unit owners.
- Recruit landlords to take part in the YWCA Housing Programs and enter lease agreements with clients by use of marketing and negotiation skills
- Create and maintain a database of landlords and inventory of affordable rental units available to program participants and.
- Conduct or arrange all Housing Quality Inspections prior to move-in as required by program policies
- Provide program information and explain requirements to landlords, tenants and members of the community
- Create and maintain consistent communication channels, both verbal and written, between several parties (i.e. tenants, landlord, referral source, collaborating agencies, debtors and creditors).
- Provide mediation and advocacy with landlords on the client's behalf to develop a workable plan to obtain and or maintain housing.
- Provide information and referral assistance regarding available housing support to domestic violence service agencies and/or community programs.

Administration

- Maintain timely case management files for all clients according to the agency and grant guidelines
- Ensure that monthly statistical reports and other reports as required by the agency and funder are produced and accurate.
- Preparation of monthly rent check calculation and maintenance of monthly subsidy balance tracking.
- Report progress of families placed in permanent housing on a weekly and monthly basis in project team meetings.
- Participate in monthly and quarterly case conference meetings; assist service staff in evaluation of clients housing stability and in reducing barriers to service.
- Collect and report confidential program data, including but not limited to CoC reporting and funders' required data.
- Recertify clients for continued financial assistance.
- Provide mediation and advocacy with landlords on the client's behalf to develop a workable plan to obtain and or maintain housing.
- Provide information and referral assistance regarding available housing support to domestic violence service agencies and/or community programs.
- Supports the engagement of volunteers in the work and provide documentation in a timely manner to Director of Volunteer Engagement.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

- Bachelor's degree in human services or related field or equivalent combination of education and experience in housing industry.
- Minimum of two years of experience working in social services or as a relator, property manager, or housing specialist, and has a strong knowledge of Santa Clara County housing market and geography
- Excellent formal and informal written communication skills.
- Ability to exhibit warmth, empathy and supportiveness to people, especially when they are experiencing a trauma response or hostile.
- Ability to work with culturally and socio-economically diverse populations.
- Committed to direct, open and non-violent communication.
- Ability to work with a high-performing team and independently.

Desirable Qualifications and Experience:

- Bilingual, bi-cultural and bi-literate skills highly preferred. Spanish, Mandarin, or Vietnamese languages.
- Prior experience providing case management or advocacy-based counseling highly preferred.
- Motivational Interviewing skills highly preferred.

Working Conditions:

- Prolonged periods of standing
- Frequent local travel
- Lifting equipment up to 40 pounds

Special Conditions of Employment

- Certification as a 40-hour trained California State Sexual Assault Counselor and 40-hour California trained Domestic Violence Counselor (Training will be provided)
- Valid TB Test
- Fingerprint and have cleared DOJ background check
- Valid California driver's license, reliable transportation and auto insurance

To apply, please send resume, salary requirements and cover letter to HR@ywca-sv.org