Job Description

# Job Title: Coordinated Entry Outreach Specialist

FLSA Status: Exempt

OSHA Category: 80/83

Last Revision: 6/18/15

Reports to: Director of Outreach

Pathways to Housing DC’s Coordinated Entry (CE) Outreach Team is funded by a contract from the DC Department of Human Services. The CE Outreach Team is part of a larger outreach program at Pathways DC, comprised of public and private partnerships to operate street outreach teams whose goals are to engage, support, and combat homelessness for individuals living in DC. Our outreach staff works to build trust with those experiencing homelessness first by helping to meet some of their basic needs (including food, clothing, showers, laundry, transportation, identification, etc.). Then, they partner with each individual to access housing, employment, medical care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and other services.

The Outreach team also responds to concerns about people experiencing homelessness in the area from police, other social service providers, business owners, workers, and residents. When medical or psychiatric crises occur, outreach staff intervenes when appropriate and follow-up to ensure seamless medical or psychiatric care and transition back into the community.

As leaders in the field of homeless outreach, we are committed to partnering with vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness in the District of Columbia through comprehensive street outreach that helps people reach their housing and life goals, transforms lives, and restores dignity. We do this by establishing therapeutic, client-centered relationships, eliminating barriers to accessing services, and by forging creative community partnerships that together, serve as a model for effectively breaking the cycle of homelessness.

The **Coordinated Entry Outreach Specialist** is responsible for implementing a comprehensive homeless outreach strategy for underserved areas of the District of Columbia. The staff member provides direct outreach services in a team environment to people experiencing homelessness in DC and represents Pathways to community stakeholders. Approximately 75% of time will be spent in the community, directly providing services to persons living on the streets or in shelter. While much of the work is independent and self-directed, there is also a strong team dynamic. Shift schedules will generally include hours between 7am-7pm, Monday through Friday, but schedules will be flexible to accommodate the needs of the community and may include early morning or evening shifts (especially during hypothermia/hyperthermia season). Successful candidates are committed to ending homelessness and have a fundamental belief that hope and recovery are always possible.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

* Identify and engage individuals experiencing homelessness, assess needs, and work with a core group consistently over time to create a plan to meet needs, particularly with those who may not independently seek services;
* Proactively initiate non-judgmental conversation and a consistent presence; offer clothing, hygiene articles, and other basic items;
* Conduct VI-SPDAT and full SPDAT assessments and provide housing navigation assistance for those who are high scoring or matched with housing providers;
* Using the VI-SPDAT as a guide, prioritize services to individuals with significant vulnerabilities in the community in order to strategically manage time and resources;
* Coordinate complex needs of multiple individuals within the larger Continuum of Care and Coordinated Entry system and address any barriers;
* Assist individuals applying for Social Security disability benefits using the SOAR model (training provided);
* Identify other community resources and provide in-depth referrals to housing and medical and mental health services;
* Provide in-person assistance, including escorts and facilitating smooth transition (“warm handoffs”) to other service and housing providers;
* Advocate with other agencies for individuals to receive necessary services and housing;
* Participate in crisis intervention and screening for specific illnesses;
* Respond to crises and to calls from stakeholders involving concerns about homeless persons in need of assistance;
* Maintain records in Electronic Medical Record, including progress notes, incident reports, referrals, and psychosocial assessments in timely manner;
* Represent Pathways Outreach team at trainings, community meetings, and other venues as needed;
* Perform related duties as assigned;

**Keys to Success:**

1. Excellent Interpersonal Skills – This person builds solid relationships with clients, providers, and the community. They are able to establish rapport easily, maintain a client-centered focus as well as a commitment to cultural competence. They bring patience, compassion, and passion for working with persons with complex needs. Clients also experience greater success when we cultivate partnerships and positive relationships with other providers in the continuum of care and community stakeholders. While there may be diverse interests involved in complex situations, we are all invested in a positive outcome.
2. Strong Organizational Skills – It is important to be able to coordinate care and address the complex needs of multiple individuals in a case management capacity. This is also helpful in determining the most effective and strategic use of resources. And while follow through is important, so is being flexible and adaptable when things don’t go according to plan.
3. Gentle Persistence and Resourcefulness – Success depends on being resolution oriented and committing to eliminate barriers through creativity, direct support and advocacy. This means consulting with colleagues and other providers on effective clinical strategies to promote client success, being willing to go deeper with clients, and viewing “setbacks” as part of someone’s life process.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

* Bachelor’s degree required. Degree can be waived for Peers who self-identify as having personal or life experience in homelessness or are in recovery.
* Peer certification or minimum 2 years experience in social services or related field required. Experience working in homeless outreach or providing direct services to persons experiencing homelessness preferred.
* Demonstrated knowledge of harm reduction theory/applications preferred;
* Knowledge of mental health and substance abuse clinical skills preferred;
* Bilingual English/Spanish a plus;
* Knowledge of DC social service resources a plus;
* Excellent communication, writing, and computer skills;
* Driver’s License preferred.

**Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**