

Operation Hope of Fairfield, Inc.

Department: Shelters
Program: Homeless Resource Center
Job Title: Homeless Outreach
Status: Exempt

The Operation Hope Homelessness Resource Center (HRC) will provide services designed to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness overcome barriers on their way to finding stable housing situations. The Resource Center will provide clients with information and linkage to community-based supports for housing, employment services, mental wellness services, and substance use treatment. Onsite and outreach staff will assist clients with developing a plan to end their homelessness and will make referrals to community supports as appropriate. The Resource Center will continue to meet the agency's mission to ending homelessness and hunger in the Fairfield community.

The main responsibility of the Homeless Outreach worker will be to identify and build rapport with homeless individuals and families living in unstable situations and to connect them with resources so that they can work toward stability.

Responsibilities:

- Perform outreach services to homeless persons in outdoor locations or other places not meant for human habitation in the Greater Bridgeport area
- Reach out to individuals and families that are not being served or are underserved by existing community service delivery systems
- Assess the individual's/family's safety, immediate needs, level of functioning, overall mental and physical health and strengths and capacities.
- Provide information, referrals, linkages, and advocacy to assist clients in accessing services and resources
- Provide crisis intervention for homeless individuals and families in the community
- Build trusting relationships and develop a rapport that leads to acceptance and openness to seeking help
- Respond to calls for assistance from first responders, business owners, residents, and hospital discharge planners
- Proactively engage clients on the street, trying out-of-the-box ways of reaching clients who have been living on the street for many years and who may have significant trust, mental health and substance use issues
- Identify individuals who "fall through the gaps"
- Provide supportive services in a non-judgmental manner
- Mediate disputes between homeless persons and community members/neighborhood stakeholders
- Network and collaborate with other homeless services providers and community resources to facilitate access to the continuum of community services including basic needs (including food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, and laundry), housing assistance, substance abuse education and treatment, legal assistance, and health information
- Provide support and guidance to homeless individuals and family as they transition from street to shelter

- Follow individuals and families through the first steps of engagement and referral to case managers and support resources and ensure coordinated transition before terminating with individuals
- Maintain accurate documentation of service objectives and outcomes as well as other services in accordance with Federal, State, town, and agency standards
- Adhere to strict boundaries and professional ethics in the care of others
- Maintain client related data tracking systems, including HMIS entries, exits, case notes and Smartsheet data
- Complete CAN assessments as needed for client who are not already well connected to navigation services and complete hand offs to navigators
- Attend CAN meetings as needed
- Actively participate in staff meetings and trainings

Qualifications:

- Associate's degree, Bachelor's Degree preferred, or equivalent experience in a related field
- Computer skills with proficiency in Microsoft Office, HIMS training a plus
- Project a professional demeanor
- Able to work independently and as part the team
- Exercises mature judgment
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Must maintain and execute confidential information
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse communities
- Great problem solving and conflict resolution skills
- Driver's License and proof of insurance needed.
- Must be able to work effectively with populations that have experienced vulnerability, trauma, economic poverty, incarceration, substance use, developmental delays, compromised mental wellness, brain injuries, literacy, and numeracy issues, and/or, other conditions or situations that have impacted housing stability

Will represent Operation Hope in a professional manner, understand and follow all policies and procedures of Operation Hope, have a positive and friendly attitude and be able to communicate with all levels within the organization, as well as with community partners. Maintain good working relationships with organizational Staff and Volunteers. Must adhere to all professional standards and ethical practices. Must have a strong sense of responsibility and commitment to the mission of ending homelessness. Bi-lingual candidates preferred. A valid driver's license, proof of insurance and use of personal car is necessary.

Work Environment:

The employee may be in contact with individuals and families in crisis who may be ill, using substances and/or not attentive to personal health and safety for themselves. The employee may experience a number of unpleasant sensory demands associated with the client's use of alcohol and drugs, and the lack of personal care. The employee must be ready to respond quickly and effectively to many types of situations, including crisis situations and potentially hostile situations.

Operation Hope hires and promotes employees regardless of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin or ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, medical condition or physical handicap or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

Operation Hope is an equal opportunity employer. Operation Hope strives to be culturally competent, responding respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the cultural differences and similarities and the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each person. Most employees at Operation Hope are funded by a variety of grants, governmental programs, and endowment sources. Continued employment is contingent upon continued receipt of those funds.

Full-time, 40 Hour position, some evening hours may be required.