

Avalon Housing

Job Posting: Youth and Family Services Peer Support Specialist

Avalon Housing is a nonprofit supportive housing provider created in 1992 as a long-term solution to homelessness. We believe that housing is a basic human right. We are a housing developer, property manager, and service provider dedicated to providing affordable housing and support services for people who are homeless and who have physical and behavioral health challenges. Our goal is to help supportive housing residents achieve stability, increase self-determination and build community. Avalon owns and operates 260 apartments at 20 sites throughout Ann Arbor, manages over 100 rent vouchers with private landlords, and partners with both the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Housing Commission to provide housing alternatives for more than 500 formerly homeless households throughout Washtenaw County. Individualized supports and community programs are available on a voluntary basis to all 650 residents, including more than 200 children.

The Youth and Family Services team provides outreach, intensive case management, care coordination and housing support services to family households in a supportive housing setting. The families served by this position face many challenges including mental illness, substance abuse disorders, chronic medical conditions, domestic violence, and the involvement of child protective services.

Utilizing a “Housing First” approach, the Youth and Family Services Team works closely with property managers to help tenants achieve housing stability and move beyond homelessness. Services staff also collaborates with community partners to ensure the coordinated delivery of a broad range of services that meet the mental, physical, psycho-social and housing needs of the individuals either through direct service or linkage to appropriate resources.

Job Responsibilities:

The Youth and Family Services Peer Support Specialist will be responsible for providing additional support to tenants to achieve community inclusion and participation, independence, recovery and resiliency. The Peer Support Specialist is an individual in recovery with a self-identified lived experience and journey in receiving services and supports from mental health, substance use disorder, and/or housing/homeless service providers. The Peer Support Specialist helps tenants regain control over their lives and over their own recovery process, as they define it.

- Provide assertive outreach and engagement to tenants
- Provide extra support and assistance to tenants with accessing and navigating community resources
- Assist and support tenants in maintaining cooperative and effective relationships with their primary service provider and property management
- Coordinate and collaborate with a network of care for tenant, including natural supports, connection to mutual aid groups, and sponsorship (when appropriate)
- Use experience with personal recovery in assisting and supporting the team and tenants
- Enhance team decision making by assuring tenant voice and choice is included in planning
- Promote recovery through role modeling and sharing experiences, providing hope and encouragement and connection to community
- Participate in planning and implementation of tenant assessment and action plans as needed
- Accompany staff during outreach and engagement to build rapport with service provider

- Assist in the coordination of social, educational and recreational activities for tenants, initiate peer- led groups and events for tenants
- Facilitate mutual aid groups for tenants onsite, with an emphasis on options embracing multiple pathways to recovery
- Assist tenants in the development of life skills such as resolving interpersonal conflicts in their environment, maintaining housing, developing work skills, safety skills, social skills, receiving and maintaining benefits
- Help tenants aspire to roles which emphasize their strengths by sharing personal experience
- Provide education and support regarding issues affecting population and work to reduce stigma related to those
- Adhere to housing first and harm reduction model of peer advocacy
- Participate in staff meetings and trainings
- Assist tenants as needed with activities of daily living such as transportation, housekeeping, meal preparation, medication, shopping, laundry, or other hands on assistance as needed
- Meet documentation requirements as dictated by program need

Supplemental Job Duties:

- Work with clients in their homes, in community centers, and in the larger community
- Attend staff meetings, retreats and professional training sessions

Required Qualifications

- Completion of CCAR or other certification training within one year of hire
- Person who has progressed in their own recovery and has minimum one year of addiction recovery who is actively involved in recovery activities

Desired Skills and Abilities

- CCAR Trained or other peer training certification
- Experience with or interest in multiple pathways to recovery
- Basic understanding of homelessness and various characteristics of homeless adult population; experience with the issues of mental illness, child protective services, and/or chemical dependency preferred.
- Knowledge of peer support, community resources, entitlements
- Ability to effectively work with diverse populations in a non-judgmental way
- Ability to recognize appropriate boundaries with clients
- Ability to maintain confidentiality practices
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Must possess a highly positive and enthusiastic attitude and strong commitment toward helping those in need
- Interest and experience in working with individuals who are difficult to engage and refer to traditional programs, subscribe to a philosophy of tolerance and ability to engage with individuals in their current stage of change, expressed knowledge, acceptance, and/or experience with principles of harm reduction
- Ability to work flexible hours as required by programs and staffing needs

Physical Demands

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable

individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee will be required sit for long periods of time, drive a vehicle with passengers, communicate with other persons by talking and hearing, required to lift and carry items weighing up to 25 pounds and to operate computer hardware systems.

A valid driver's license and reliable transportation is required.

Job Title: Youth & Family Services Peer Support Specialist

Reports to: Youth & Family Support Coordinator Lead. This position and office is based in Ann Arbor MI.

Status: Part-time, hourly, non-Exempt

Schedule: This part-time position is for approx. 20 hours per week.

To apply please send a resume, cover letter, and references to jobs@avalonhousing.org or mail to:

Avalon Housing, Inc., Attn: Personnel

1327 Jones Drive, Suite 102

Ann Arbor MI 48105

This posting will remain open until the position is filled.

Please include the job position title in your email subject line.

Avalon Housing is an Equal Opportunities Employer