



**Position Description**  
**Shelter Counselor Advocate (Children, Youth, & Family Focus)**

<b>Position Title: Shelter Counselor Advocate (Child &amp; Youth Focus)</b>	<b>Supervisor: Shelter Director</b>
<b>Department: Emergency Shelter</b>	<b>Schedule: 20 hours per week, Tuesday - Saturday, between 1pm - 8pm</b>
<b>FLSA Status: Non-exempt</b>	<b>Pay Rate: \$22.00/hour</b>
<b>Additional classification(s): ESSENTIAL STAFF</b>	<b>Posting: June 2021</b>

**Position Summary**

Primary responsibilities of all Shelter Counselor Advocates are to provide reliable uninterrupted on-site 24/7/365 coverage of our confidential emergency domestic violence shelter. Advocates work as a team to provide individually-responsive programming to people living in our shelter using a multicultural empowerment model.

Shelter Counselor Advocates work as a team to provide case management, counseling and advocacy to shelter guests of all ages. Shelter Counselor Advocates provide crisis intervention, practical support, emotional support and education; engage in therapeutic and recreational activities; maintain shelter security; model healthy relationships and non-violent conflict resolution to peers, volunteers, and shelter guests; and uphold agency policies and procedures.

The Shelter Counselor Advocate (Children, Youth, & Family Focus) has special responsibility to deliver developmentally-appropriate child, youth, and family interventions, programming, and recreational activities..

**Essential Functions**

*Counseling & Support Services*

- Provide case management, counseling, and advocacy to children, youth, adults, and families who have experienced domestic violence utilizing a multicultural empowerment model.
- Assess clients' needs and respond to self-identified goals by providing advocacy and referrals with special focus on needs of children, youth and families including educational and medical advocacy.
- Facilitate group interventions for children and families staying in the shelter, including recreational and therapeutic activities.
- Ensure shelter is physically safe for all ages and abilities.
- Provide crisis intervention, practical support, emotional support, and education to shelter guests.
- Provide in-person support to childcare volunteers onsite at the shelter and provide childcare as needed.
- Ensure that shelter-based services to children, youth, and families conform to best practices and agency policy.
- Provide routine on-call coverage including nights, weekends, and holidays in rotation with other direct service staff.

- Support shelter guests to maintain health, safety, and collaborative-living agreements appropriate to a communal residential setting.
- Arrange and/or provide transportation for shelter guests and their families.
- Foster safe, supportive environment and positive community interactions in a congregate residential setting.

*Program Administration*

- Uphold agency policies and contractual, legal, and regulatory obligations in one's own behavior and performance; by accessing proper channels for accountability and redress if policies are breached; and by educating shelter guests about their rights and responsibilities with regard to agency policy and contractual, legal, and regulatory mandates.
- Contribute to ensuring adequate staffing for program excellence and contract compliance by filling vacancies as needed and complying with agency policies regarding attendance and essential staff classification.
- Maintain all required documentation in accordance with agency policy and procedure and contractual mandates
- Maintain absolute confidentiality of information, written or verbal, according to Safe Passage policy and legal requirements.
- Participate in clinical consultation, program planning and supervision, and case sharing meetings.
- In collaboration with other staff, maintain inventory and organization of both recreational and practical items for youth and families to ensure that families have access to practical necessities.

*Community Engagement & Outreach*

- Perform occasional community outreach, as needed, in alignment with goals and strategic priorities set by the Community Engagement Department.
- Collaborate with other organizations serving the needs of shelter guests and their families, especially those serving the needs of children and youth.
- Provide support to volunteers in shelter and childcare settings.

**Work Hours**

20 hours per week, Tuesday-Saturday. Schedule is flexible between 1-8 pm and may vary based on the needs of the families in shelter. Additional shifts may be available.

The Shelter Counselor Advocate (Children, Youth, & Family Focus) participates, with other staff, in a rotation to provide on-call, off-hours back-up and on-site response to the Emergency Shelter program.

As Essential Staff, the Shelter Counselor Advocate (Children, Youth, & Family Focus) is required to report to work when scheduled, even if the agency is otherwise closed (such as holidays), to remain on the job beyond the end of a shift until a replacement arrives, if needed; to report to work when called in if serving in an on-call capacity; and to comply with other stipulations of Safe Passage's Essential Staff policy.

## Hiring Requirements

### Education:

Associate's degree in human services, child development, or similar field preferred. Candidates with non-traditional educational pathways and commensurate life/work experience considered.

### Years of Experience:

Minimum of two years' experience providing counseling and/or crisis intervention to children, youth, and/or families.

### Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- Demonstrated understanding of domestic violence as well as child development, and the interplay of the two.
- Demonstrated comprehension of the potential impacts of trauma during childhood.
- Knowledge and understanding of issues affecting children and parents.
- Ability to work independently as well as on a team, using a multicultural empowerment model.
- Experience working and learning within diverse teams, and a commitment to effectively serving a diverse client population.
- Ability to advocate effectively on behalf of clients.
- Ability to support survivors in crisis with empathy while maintaining professional boundaries.
- Proficiency across the following skills: verbal and written communication, collaboration, organization, and use of computer and technology for basic communication and work products.

### *Preferred*

- Experience working with child survivors of trauma.
- Bilingual skills (Spanish and English).
- Experience working in a residential setting.
- Prior completion of training consistent with MGL c. 233 s. 20K: "Domestic violence victims' counselor", a person who is employed or volunteers in a domestic violence victims' program, who has undergone a minimum of twenty-five hours of training and who reports to and is under the direct control and supervision of a direct service supervisor of a domestic violence victims' program and whose primary purpose is the rendering of advice, counseling, or assistance to victims of abuse." Training will be provided for otherwise qualified applicants.

### Tools & Technology Requirements:

- MA Driver's license and reliable transportation
- Familiarity with electronic database programs.
- High level of proficiency and comfort utilizing and troubleshooting technology applications, including but not limited to Google and Microsoft suites, social media, databases, and cloud-storage programs.
- Experience and comfort utilizing and troubleshooting technology hardware, including but not limited to desktop and mobile computers, mobile and office phones, and residential modem, wifi, and security systems.

## About Safe Passage

Safe Passage is a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the aftermath and prevention of intimate partner violence. Safe Passage provides services to address survivors' holistic needs for recovery and physical safety. Services include emergency shelter, trauma-informed counseling and support groups for survivors, families and children, community education, and individual and policy advocacy.

### Our Mission

Safe Passage is dedicated to creating a world free of domestic violence and relationship abuse.

We support survivors and their families.

We engage our community.

We advocate for systemic change.

### **Expectations of all employees**

In the performance of essential and general job responsibilities, all Safe Passage employees are expected to:

- Demonstrate commitment to Safe Passage’s mission and principles of diversity and inclusion
- Represent Safe Passage in a professional and competent manner to clients, organizational partners, and other stakeholders.
- Perform quality work within deadlines.
- Work effectively as a team contributor on all assignments while contributing to a positive working environment for staff and volunteers.
- Work independently while understanding the necessity for communicating and coordinating work efforts with other employees and organizations.

### **Application Instructions**

**To apply:** Send cover letter and resume to [sjjobs@safepass.org](mailto:sjjobs@safepass.org) with the subject line of “Shelter Advocate.”

For more information about Safe Passage and domestic violence, visit our website at [www.safepass.org](http://www.safepass.org).

Safe Passage works on a daily basis to earn its position as a justice-centered employer of choice in Western MA. Toward this goal, Safe Passage is an Equal Opportunity Employer with a strong organizational commitment to the achievement of excellence, diversity, and inclusion among staff.