



Position Description
Shelter Counselor Advocate

Position Title: Shelter Counselor Advocate	Supervisor: Shelter Director
Department: Emergency Shelter	Full or Part Time: Full
Fair Labor Standards Act Status: non-exempt	Starting Salary: \$22.00/ hour
Position Code:	Revision Date: November 2022

Position Summary

The Shelter Counselor Advocate's has primary responsibility for direct services and support to adults and their families who are currently guests in the shelter. The Shelter Counselor Advocate works with shelter guests to implement plans toward safety and stability after shelter. This person also provides crisis intervention, offers support and education based on a multicultural empowerment model, engages in recreational activities as able, maintains shelter security, models healthy relationships and non-violent conflict resolution to guest families, and works with a team of shelter staff to ensure quality services and safety for all families.

Primary responsibilities of all Shelter 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.

Essential Functions

Counseling & Support Services

- Provide case management, counseling, and advocacy to shelter guests utilizing a multicultural empowerment model.
- Assess clients' needs and respond to self-identified goals by providing advocacy, including educational and medical advocacy, and referrals.
- Facilitate group interventions 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 shelter volunteers as needed.
- Ensure that shelter-based services 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.
- Participate in intake for new guests and transition processes to support turnover.

Program Administration

- Uphold agency policies and regulatory obligations by accessing proper channels for accountability and redress if policies are breached; and by educating shelter guests about their rights and responsibilities.
- 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 of client interactions and incident reporting.
- Maintain absolute confidentiality of information, written or verbal, according to Safe Passage policy.
- Participate in clinical consultation, program planning, 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.
- Provide support to volunteers in shelter and childcare settings.

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, inclusion, and empowerment.
- 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.

Work Hours and Schedule

35 hours per week, Monday - Friday, 7:15am - 3:15pm. It should be noted that the exact hours may be different at first due to the staffing needs of the shelter program. Additional shifts may be available.

The Shelter Counselor Advocate 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 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

Associate’s degree in human services 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.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Required:

- Demonstrated understanding of the effects of domestic violence on communities and the potential impacts of trauma.
- 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 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

Tools & Technology Requirements for all staff: High level of proficiency and comfort utilizing and troubleshooting technology, including but not limited to PC systems, google suite (gmail, drive, calendar), zoom and web conferencing, electronic databases, and cloud-storage programs.

In addition, this position requires:

- MA Driver's license and reliable transportation.
- Familiarity with electronic database 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.

Benefits

Safe Passage is a supportive, collaborative workplace that fosters growth in its employees, both personally and professionally. We strive to hold an environment that encourages growth, creativity, and flexibility. We are advocates for livable wages, self-care and work-life balance, and our compensation package reflects this. Employees receive 3 weeks of accrued vacation for the first year, 4 weeks starting year 2, and 5 weeks after 9 years, prorated for part time. We provide three personal days, and ample holiday and sick time. Benefits include health and dental insurance, and a 401(k) plan with agency match.

Safe Passage works to earn its position as a justice-centered employer of choice in Western MA. Safe Passage provides a bilingual pay premium of \$1/hour for staff who possess language competency that is likely to be utilized in their position.

Application Instructions

To apply: Send **resume and cover letter** with the subject "Shelter Counselor Advocate Internal" to spjobs@safepass.org.

Application deadline is January 4, 2023.

Safe Passage is an organization made up of survivors, women, trans folks, people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people. Oppression and violence disparately impacts us and we strongly encourage people from these and other impacted communities to apply. We aspire to foster a work environment that is inclusive as well as diverse. Survivors come from all different backgrounds, and so do our employees. We encourage you to apply if you believe you have the skills and experience to thrive in this role and contribute to our mission at Safe Passage.

Safe Passage is an Equal Opportunity Employer with a strong organizational commitment to the achievement of excellence, diversity, and inclusion among staff.

For more information about Safe Passage and domestic violence, visit our website at www.safepass.org.