

## Job Description Summary Advocate Staff

**To apply for this position, please send resume and cover letter to [kimm@safehousecenter.org](mailto:kimm@safehousecenter.org)**

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JOB TITLE: Shelter Advocate  
DEPARTMENT: Shelter/Help Line  
STARTING PAY: \$11.85 / hour to start  
FLSA STATUS: Non-exempt employee  
TITLE OF IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Shelter/Help Line Coordinator  
MOST RECENTLY REVISED: January 2012

### **Desired experience and other valued skills and abilities**

- Bachelor's Degree in human services field or two years experience in a human services field.
- Demonstrated skill in writing, speaking, interpersonal communication, and teamwork
- Ability to provide empathy
- Competency in crisis management
- Understanding of and sensitivity to the unique circumstances of underserved populations and to survivors to domestic violence and sexual assault
- Commitment to ending violence against women and children
- Fluency in language(s) other than English preferred
- Experience working with survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault preferred
- Supervisory experience preferred
- Public speaking experience preferred
- Experience providing trainings preferred

### **(All) Advocacy Responsibilities:**

- Adhere to all rules, policies and procedures as set forth by SafeHouse Center.
- Maintain a professional, courteous and helpful demeanor at all times when working at or representing SafeHouse Center or its programs.
- Participate in any community forum, committee or council as assigned by the supervisor.
- Serve as liaison between SafeHouse Center and the community, being mindful of public image, community relations and the promotion of domestic violence and sexual assault services.

- Allow flexibility in scheduling and job function.
- Respond to any job function as requested by supervisor.
- Abide by confidentiality at all times.
- Make public speaking presentations to the community and/or service agencies as assigned.
- Maintain a good driving record and carry liability insurance for passengers in personal vehicle.
- Read and adhere to the SHC Policy and Procedures Manual; be mindful of health and safety issues at all times; notify Program Director in writing of any concerns regarding health and safety.
- Provide services in accordance with the organization's personnel policies, mission and goals.
- Greet and assist people when they enter the public lobby.
- Participate in conferences, classes and workshops to enhance professional knowledge and skill.
- Attend staff meetings.
- Participate in regular supervision with the appropriate supervisor.
- Sign up for some holiday shifts during popular holiday times (most notably – but not necessarily limited to – the time around Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's). Some limited holiday shifts will be required of all staff in order to keep our essential crisis intervention functions operational at all times throughout the year.
- Sign up for the required number of community education presentations, information tables or other outreach opportunities.
- Assist with special events when appropriate.
- All other tasks as assigned by your supervisor.
- Help to keep shared spaces orderly and take part in office-related light cleaning chores as assigned.
- Maintain a positive cooperative work approach and foster teamwork among co-workers.
- Work collaboratively with each survivor to determine both her strengths, supports, challenges and goals in order to promote her autonomy.

### ***Shelter Advocate***

- Walk through the entire shelter every hour.
- Record walk throughs in the shelter perimeter check log if applicable.

- After hours, lock kitchen and all relevant windows and doors. Ensure that nightly lock-up/security procedures are followed.
- Review shelter sign in and population board to assess resident safety and curfew adherence.
- Monitor the parking lot and grounds.
- Answer the HelpLine. Ascertain if caller is a survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault. Provide crisis counseling, information, referrals and safety planning to survivors and family members. Refer other callers to appropriate assistance.
- Screen potential shelter residents.
- When possible, arrange to meet the specific needs of callers. When it is not possible (because of the hour), safety plan with the caller on how to get through the night and be sure that the caller knows whom to contact in the morning. If the caller can be reached during the day, make arrangements for the appropriate staff person to return the call in the morning.
- Carry the shelter beeper on a rotating basis. This includes being available for transportation nights and weekends, covering shifts due to illness or other unavailability of staff, providing consultation for night and weekend advocates, and covering the shelter on an emergency basis.
- Open the shelter door for volunteers, residents and other authorized individuals.
- Provide case management of residents when necessary
- Assist residents when they need items such as medication, baby care items, personal care items, food from dry storage or locked areas of the kitchen, etc.
- Welcome new residents who arrive during the overnight hours, show them to their room and give them basic information about the shelter and how to get things that they need (such as personal care items and food).
- Utilize skills to facilitate communication among residents and to promote constructive mechanisms for coping with communal shelter life.
- Ensure that bedtime for children is followed.
- Ensure that any television programs or movies being viewed in a communal area are suitable (no violence or inappropriate content).
- Help to develop, implement and periodically review shelter residential life procedures.
- Inform the appropriate shelter advocate when issues arise involving a shelter resident and/or that resident's children.
- Read the shift change at the beginning of each shift and note any relevant details at the end of each shift.

- Monitor proper functioning of the shelter facility. Report any malfunctioning equipment or structural damage to the Facilities Coordinator and Shelter Coordinator.
- Assist with facility upkeep as directed by the Shelter Coordinator.
- Manage the med room, taking inventory and assisting with dispensing medication to residents upon request.
- Sort, put away and distribute donations that are stored in the med room or shelter advocacy office.
- Maintain case/call records and statistics as necessary and submit accurate data by stated deadlines.
- Maintain records of service participant contacts.
- Maintain records of all contacts related to service delivery (authorized phone calls to third parties, court contacts, etc.).
- Enter data into client database when necessary.
- Update case files regularly and thoroughly, following organizational procedures about file management.
- Attend team and staff meetings.
- Participate in regular supervision with the appropriate supervisor.
- Maintain a positive cooperative work approach and foster teamwork among co-workers.
- Collaborate with Volunteer Coordinator to establish a regular schedule and publicize events for children
- Serve as a liaison to community groups planning projects or parties for the children in shelter in conjunction with Volunteer Coordinator.
- Identify service needs of children and families with children to include physical and mental health needs, clothing, educational and other resources
- Provide advocacy and support for children at SafeHouse Center.
- Other duties as assigned