



sonoma county

Housing Advocate
Job Description
Bilingual preferred
February 2019

As an affiliate of an international membership organization, the YWCA Sonoma County has devoted the past 35 years to empowering women and affirming the worth of all people, regardless of gender or race.

At the heart of the YWCA's programs are our domestic violence services. We provide a wide range of services to victims of domestic violence and their children so they can heal, become self-sufficient, and return productively to the community.

Table with 4 columns: Field (Position, Department, Reports To, Hours/Week, Employment Status, Wage, Pay Basis, FLSA Status, Benefits) and Value (Housing Advocate, Domestic Violence Services, Domestic Violence Services Manager, 40, Full time, \$18.50 - \$21.00, Hourly, Non-Exempt, Eligible at 1.0 or 0.5 FTE prorated)

Position Summary

The Housing Advocate, is stationed at the Sonoma County Employment & Training Office, and is part of the Housing Assistance Response Team (HART). The Housing Advocate position provides safety, housing, support and advocacy services to victims of domestic violence being served in HSD programs. This position participates in ongoing collaboration with HART team members to assist the program development.

As a member of the HART Team, the Housing Advocate will work in partnership with YWCA DV Advocates, and other agencies to specifically link DV clients to permanent housing, leveraging an impressive array of relationships with affordable housing providers, private homeowners and housing share programs.

This is a high-profile, public interaction position requiring a high degree of compassion, empathy, professionalism and a constant awareness that the employee is often one of the first contacts with whom the victim discloses related experiences. Public presentations to promote awareness and provide education in the community about domestic violence is occasionally required. If the incumbent is bilingual, s/he may provide translation services as necessary.

Essential Tasks

These are core functions of the job that, if removed, the job would simply not exist. To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Advocacy
- Performs intake and assessment of safety and housing needs (including the use of the VI-SPDAT);
- Provides housing search, survivor advocacy and support including liaising with landlord, financial management, follow up with long-term subsidy providers, etc. for the client to secure permanent and safe housing and for the housing retention.
- Provides on-going support and follow up; and supports survivors in the development of individualized plans that promote empowerment, enhance safety and identify/reduce barriers for clients and their families.
- Assists in achieving goals through advocacy with community agencies, justice systems, and resources at all levels; Provides information and referrals concerning legal, health, housing, public entitlements, family functioning and dynamics, substance abuse and other service needs. Assists in the development and use of personal and community resources;

Reporting

Maintains accurate records and through appropriate electronic data entry, documentation in client files, and hotline tracking. All entries are done in a timely mannered in accordance with program requirements. Provides regular statistical reporting as required.

- **Public Speaking**

Provides presentations on the dynamics of domestic violence, supporting survivors, and available services. Presents materials to a variety of groups on a wide range of topics upon request around issues of the elimination of domestic violence. Updates materials prior to presentation according to established procedures.

- **Meetings**

Attends agency DVS staff meetings. Collaborates, coordinates and attends multidisciplinary meetings with on and off-site partners as required.

- Performs other duties as requested.

Organizational Culture

A commitment to the agency's mission of the YWCA. Familiarity or experience with issues that impact the lives of people supported by the YWCA. Sensitive to issues of confidentiality and diversity.

Key Behavioral Traits

The consistent display of these behaviors is essential to continued employment:

- **Professionalism:** Treats others with respect. Accepts feedback without defensiveness. Understands needs of the organization might outweigh personal feelings and still provides diligent and careful work product.
- **Good Judgment:** Considers impact of personal and professional choices. Consistently makes decisions in keeping with organizational values, supervisor's direction and common sense.
- **Problem Solving:** Able to handle common problems without supervisor intervention while knowing when supervisor participation is warranted. Able to foresee when actions might have consequences to others and communicates appropriately before implementing changes.

Prerequisite Qualifications

The candidate must meet the following criteria in order to be considered for employment in this position:

- Any combination of education, training and experience that would provide the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform the functions of the job.
- Good to excellent oral, written and interpersonal communication skills, including ability to relate to diverse clientele via telephone and in person.
- Two years of experience serving victims of crime by providing information, support, referral and advocacy services.
- High school diploma or equivalent.
- Basic computer and data entry skills
- Ability to pass agency and requisite law enforcement criminal background checks
- Prior to employment, obtain fingerprint clearance and pass TB testing
- Prior to employment, must pass pre-employment physical and drug test
- Valid California driver's license, current auto insurance, reliable transportation for job-related events.
- Willingness and availability to be "on-call" on weekdays, weekends, nights, and/or holidays.

Knowledge & Skills:

- Knowledge of or ability to acquire knowledge of basic principles of the dynamics of domestic violence, safety, and confidentiality.
- Knowledge of or ability to acquire knowledge of the legal system as it applies to Protection Orders (Emergency Protective and Criminal Protection) and Temporary and Permanent Restraining Orders and enforcement.
- Bilingual/Spanish strongly preferred.
- Basic arithmetic computation and computer skills
- Universal Precautions and other safe work practices

Post-Hire Requirements

- Successful completion of the YWCA Sonoma County Domestic Violence Training Program. Course requires 40-hours of instruction. Candidates are required to take the first available class and will be scheduled by their supervisor. Exceptions to the 'first available class' are available upon supervisor approval, however the next available class must be attended and successfully completed to continue the employment relationship.

Supplemental Qualifications

The candidate who possesses the following skill(s) is preferred over an otherwise equally-qualified candidate:

- Prior experience in a housing related field
- Bachelor's Degree in a related field.
- Experience as group facilitator, crisis intervention and/or social work.

Physical Requirements

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.

- Candidate must be able to lift up to 35 pounds
- Movement within office environment including up and down three flights of stairs
- Ability to write by hand and use keyboard to perform general office functions
- Ability to communicate by speech and hearing continuously
- Visual acuity (close, distant, peripheral vision and the ability to adjust focus and view accurate color perception) needed for detail work, computer use, reading and to potentially supervise children in a variety of activities
- Ability to sit and stand for extended periods of time
- Ability to walk, run, move, squat, stoop, bend, twist, turn, push, pull and reach in interactions with children

TO APPLY: Submit Resume & Cover Letter to jprovost@ywcasc.org with "Housing Advocate" in subject line.

Thank you for your interest in employment with the YWCA. We may be unable to respond to every individual submission due to a high volume of applicants. Please do not telephone. Applicants who do not follow the application procedure are immediately disqualified.