

## **CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST**

### **DEFINITION OF WORK**

Employees in this classification perform assertive outreach, case management, resource development, community liaison, team duties and administration within the County's Community Development Department in support of the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program. The primary purpose of PATH is to manage access to an array of mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse services to individuals in Cumberland County encasing the cities of Fayetteville, Spring Lake and Hope Mills for adults and children. PATH services will be provided to persons who are homeless and have a serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance in Fayetteville, Cumberland County, North Carolina following guidelines of the State PATH program. The PATH Certified Peer Support Specialist This position will make referrals and ensure compliance with all the rules and requirements established by the governing State agency in accordance with implementation of the grant. The position will report to the Community Services Manager. Work may include other duties and responsibilities as required.

### **EXAMPLES OF WORK**

Assertive outreach responsibilities include: visiting people who are homeless, at shelters, meal sites, public parks, transportation depots, and abandons buildings, and the streets; and building trust in relationships with people who are homeless through repeated, non-threatening interaction, with a goal of engaging them into the PATH program. The position will engage in fostering development of healthy relationships by encouraging clients to participate in community activities and PATH enrollment; and provide crisis and post-crisis support to individuals on early signs of relapse and initiate the process in requesting help to prevent a crisis. Position will provide limited case management by linking consumers to employment, housing and other benefits that will allow them to become productive citizens again; observing behavior and evidence of the general well-being and discuss observations; meeting with clients to provide support in accordance with their individual service plan; and supporting and assisting clients in daily decision-making and resolution of minor problems. Employees in this class work closely with and make referral to PATH Case Managers and Benefit Specialists for rental assistance, time limited case management and benefit assistance. Resource development and community liaison involves advocating for mainstream systems to adapt services to people experiencing long-term homelessness; assisting clients in gaining information about education or job training; and making referrals directly to mainstream services. Team duties and administration involve participating in team meetings; preparing required documentation and maintaining files for reporting purposes and accountability; and accurately and timely documentation of service notes of encounters and contacts made on behalf of target population.

### **EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS**

#### **Education and Experience:**

Graduation from high school or GED and four years of related experience involving performing support services to persons experiencing or at risk of problems related to mental illness and/or substance abuse; or an Associate's Degree and two years of related experience involving performing support services to persons experiencing or at risk of problems related to mental illness and/or substance abuse; or a Bachelor's degree in a human services field from an appropriately

accredited institution; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

Knowledge of the federal and State regulations, policies, and rules regarding community development programs. Basic knowledge of the social, economic, and environmental conditions of clients served; gross characteristics of behavior of mental illness; and available community resources. Ability to relate to clientele in a supportive and therapeutic manner; to follow written and verbal directions; to record basic data and report findings verbally to supervisor; and to exercise judgment in appraising home situations and to report findings to supervisor, and to represent agency effectively in community. Ability to prepare a variety of reports and documents; ability to effectively use computer applications to collect, organize and present data; ability to interpret and apply detailed regulations accurately; ability to communicate effectively in oral and written forms; and ability to build and maintain cooperative and effective public relations with the community.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Certified as a NC Peer Support Specialist and complete annual NCI, CPR and First Aid training. Background check with local law enforcement agency required. Requires a valid North Carolina driver's license. Condition of Employment: Each applicant who is tendered an offer for employment for any position with Cumberland County shall be tested for the use of drugs specified in the County policy. Refusal to submit to testing or a confirmed positive test shall be basis for withdrawal of the conditional employment offer.

**ADA REQUIREMENTS**

Work requires going into neighborhoods in the community to visit homes of indigent families, clients who have additional mental or drug addiction problems. Employee will be exposed to clients who lack motivation and proper understanding of problems, so they may become hostile or verbally abusive to employee.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Physical efforts in driving automobile and traveling in and out of the catchment area for use to home visits, out-of-agency training sessions, conferences, workshops and meetings and providing transportation to client to necessary community support resources and committee meetings. Physical effort may also be required in utilizing preventive intervention techniques in crisis situations dealing with assaultive clients to prevent them from harming themselves or others. Employees must be able to: physically perform the basic life operational functions of stooping, reaching, walking, fingering, grasping, hearing, talking, and repetitive motions; and perform sedentary work exerting up to 10 pounds of force occasionally and/or a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to move objects. Employees must possess the visual acuity to prepare data and statistics, work with accounting processes, handle proofing tasks, do extensive reading, and operate a computer terminal.