



JFS of Metrowest

JOB OPENING

Posted: January 6, 2021

Job Title: SPECIALIST II – HOUSING/BENEFITS SPECIALIST

Work Schedule: 40 hour-Full time Position with Benefits, Exempt

Position Description:

Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Metrowest is a Framingham, Massachusetts based non-profit agency that provides vital social, health and community services to alleviate suffering, enhance lives and support people in need. JFS is a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic organization with deep roots in both the Jewish and broader community.

JFS seeks a case manager experienced in assisting low-income clients as they navigate the housing and public benefits systems.

This role will have three primary functions. 1. To provide case management support to low-income individuals and families in the Metrowest Community. 2. To provide support and training to program staff to increase the agency's capacity to assist clients in accessing housing and public benefits. 3. To serve as a liaison between the agency and community partners and maintain a database of available resources to expedite services to clients.

Essential Functions of the Position:

- Assist clients to obtain emergency, interim and/or long term/permanent housing by assessing eligibility, conducting housing searches, assisting with applications, maintaining meticulous housing search records indicating what resources have been applied for, coaching clients to follow up regularly to check status and update information on file, and assisting with any needed mitigating process.
- Train and serve as a resource to all caseworkers regarding available emergency, interim and long term/permanent housing resources, and assist in the provision of supports directed at both successfully transitioning clients into new housing and to maintaining clients' tenancies.
- Assist clients in the execution of leases and orient clients to their lease terms, subsidies, and how their change in housing may impact their benefits.
- Assist clients in application for eligible benefits (RAFT, SNAP, Unemployment, etc.) to support economic stability.
- Maintain a database of housing situations of all clients served by the agency to track inspections, renewals, and recertification deadlines and prompt assigned caseworkers when specific annual tasks are coming due so caseworkers can support clients in meeting tenancy requirements.
- Collaborate with the Housing Coordinators from other agencies (e.g. SMOC) to maintain a pool of emergency, interim and long term/permanent housing resources, share housing leads, etc.

- Establish and maintain relationships with hoteliers, landlords, property management companies, and housing authority staff to facilitate housing searches and more effectively mediate routine disputes as needed to support clients' tenancies.
- Perform other duties as assigned by supervisor.

Qualifications:

- Master's Degree in Relevant Area or Bachelor's Degree plus 3 Years Post Bachelor's Experience in Position Area (Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher/Low-income Housing, Public Benefits Programs [RAFT, SNAP, Unemployment, etc.], Casework/Social Work, etc.)
- Spanish and/or Portuguese proficiency highly favored.
- Ability to interact with clients in a non-judgmental, compassionate, and respectful manner.
- Demonstrated ability to set limits and maintain boundaries.
- Strong ability to be part of an interactive, supportive team with high expectations.
- Ability to develop and maintain knowledge of community resources.
- Ability to multi-task, operate independently and problem solve in real time.
- Good written and oral communication skills.
- Experienced in real-time electronic record keeping skills. (Salesforce Platform experience a plus).

Specialist II Required Competencies:

The JFS Housing/Benefits Specialist position is classified as Specialist II. A JFS Specialist II is a professional who executes one or several crucial direct or indirect professional client service, program operational and/or administrative/ancillary support functions. A Staff II employee typically reports to a Manager or Director but may be supervised by another Staff II or Staff III employee.

Strong Relational and Work Self-management Skills:

- Brings a Positive Attitude to the Position
- Is Inquisitive
- Is Trustworthy and Respectful to JFS Clients, Staff, Volunteers and Community Partners.
- Demonstrates Ability to Work Independently as Well as in Partnership
- Has Ability/Willingness to Take Direction/Supervision and Follow Instructions
- Makes Decisions Thoughtfully, Responsibly and With Care
- Is Highly Motivated
- Performs Tasks and Duties Efficiently and Effectively
- Meets Established Performance Standards
- Possesses Ability to Remain Task Focused
- Possesses Ability To Manage Occupational Stress
- Fosters Relationships, Trust, and Respect with JFS Clients and Across Team, Volunteer and Community Partnerships
- Is Accountable and Able to Work Within Deadlines

Content/Context Specific Competencies:

- Knowledge, Understanding of and Commitment to JFS Mission and Theories of Change
- Knowledge & Expertise in Service Area (Housing/Benefits)
- Knowledge & Expertise (Ability/Willingness to Learn) in Relevant Technology/Data Management Platforms and Systems

- Knowledge & Understanding of and Adherence to JFS Policy & Procedures
- Demonstrates Willingness to Take On New Challenges
- Demonstrates Organized Thinking
- Understands that programs are built upon work plans/performance metrics
- Demonstrates Initiative
- Demonstrates Emotional intelligence
- Possesses Ability to Remain Focused While Multi-tasking
- Demonstrates Commitment to Quality Work Performance

Agency Information:

JFS is a Framingham, Massachusetts based non-profit agency, founded in 1979, that provides vital social, health and community services to alleviate suffering, enhance lives and support people in need. The annual budget is approximately \$3 million. JFS has deep roots in both the Jewish and the broader community. It is a diverse and inclusive organization.

The agency serves Metrowest and Greater Boston area residents regardless of religion, race, color, age, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, military status, or any other basis prohibited by law and promotes inclusiveness and diversity in hiring, retention, promotion and board and committee recruitment. Guided by a tradition of social responsibility and compassion, JFS is dedicated to supporting people of all ages and backgrounds, treating people with dignity and compassion, helping people achieve and sustain healthy lives and independence, providing culturally relevant services and collaborating with community partners to broaden our impacts.

JFS is governed by an unpaid Board of Directors who, with the agency’s chief executive officer and senior leadership team, oversee a staff of 75 who offer a range of vital programs targeted to strengthening children and families, helping individuals and families to “make ends meet,” keeping elders safe and healthy, supporting new Americans and building a strong community. The agency maintains cost-effective programs; utilizes over 200 trained volunteers who work in conjunction with staff.

Dynamic--- with Purpose-- and Impact. JFS' leadership is committed to significant and continued organization improvement that includes constant review of programmatic and financial health metrics. Performance measurement and knowledge management at are central. The programmatic goals are to ensure that all services of the agency demonstrate clear purpose, measurable impacts, high team performance and responsiveness and relevance to the community's rapidly changing needs and to reach those in a responsible fiscal manner.

Application:

JFS is strongly committed to diversity and a workplace environment that respects, appreciates and values employee differences and similarities. Women, veterans, people with disabilities, people of color, Hispanic/Latino/Latina and LGBTQ candidates are encouraged to apply.

Email cover letter and resume to CEO Lino Covarrubias at Lino@JFSMW.org