

Job Description
UNITY Welcome Home
Street Outreach Worker

TITLE: Street Outreach Worker

TYPE OF POSITION: Full Time Employee

DIRECT SUPERVISORS: Deputy Director and Outreach Worker Supervisor

POSITION OVERVIEW

The UNITY Welcome Home Outreach Worker will conduct homeless outreach via van or foot patrols to identify, engage and assist homeless persons who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness, living on the street, in encampments, abandoned buildings, or other unsheltered situations. The outreach workers will include outreach to homeless persons with mental illness or substance use disorders as part of the PATH services. After locating persons in need of housing, they will navigate program participants to housing solutions appropriate to their level of need. Various approaches will be used to ultimately end the homelessness of clients including housing first interventions, rapid re-housing and decreasing the length of stay on the street or in shelters.

PRIMARY DUTIES

Street outreach duties encompass outreach attempts, contact, engagement, enrollment, navigation, warm-handoff, and re-engagement.

Street Outreach

- Conduct night outreach at least 2 nights each week per FTE between the hours of 8 p.m. and 2 a.m. for at least 8-10 hours of night outreach weekly. Outreach is conducted via Welcome Home Outreach Vans and through street patrols.
- Focus outreach on the most vulnerable individuals including the chronically homeless and other vulnerable populations (veterans, families with children, women) as prioritized by the CoC.
- Use “best practice” methods to engage homeless persons to encourage them to accept housing placement.
- Assist clients with immediate needs including food, water, and emergency shelter.
- Conduct triage to determine and assist with immediate client needs including food, water, and emergency shelter.
- Provide outreach services focused on the goal of moving homeless persons into permanent and thereby, ending their homelessness.
- Provides transportation to Welcome Home clients related to housing search, program placement, job search or other activities related to ending homelessness
- After engagement with client, conduct assessment (VI-SPDAT) to determine housing and service needs and begin navigation process to assist clients to obtain permanent housing.
- Provide case management services to PATH clients.

- Provide navigation services to clients by assisting clients to obtain documents and services needed to obtain housing. This may include: transportation to appointments, assistance with obtaining identification documents, assistance with application for Medicaid, assistance in completing applications for housing programs.
- Conduct a warm-hand off of client to housing provider upon referral to facilitate transfer of services.

Coordination

- Participate in CoC outreach meetings held by UNITY Welcome Home to coordinate outreach throughout the entire geographic area of the CoC, ensure engagement of those least likely to seek assistance, and prioritize those with the highest needs.
- Maintain close communication with other outreach team members to provide “team approach” to ensure that all street homeless are being assisted.
- Maintains close communication with Welcome Home dispatcher on daily basis to respond to calls from Welcome Home Hotline to enable identification of the location of homeless persons, identification of available housing, and easy communication between all Welcome Home team members.
- Maintain close communication with 211 and ViaLink Crisis Line counselors to respond to calls for assistance from persons living on the street
- Receive daily census of available homeless residential beds from dispatcher based on ShelterPoint data.
- Attend weekly navigation meetings to facilitate the prioritization and navigation of clients with the highest need into permanent housing placements.
- Make public and agency presentations on Welcome Home and attend meetings with agencies and public officials as needed.

Special Activities

- Outreach workers assist in the development and implementation of annual Point In Time homeless count to ensure the count is comprehensive and accurate.
- Outreach workers are expected to assist unsheltered homeless individuals to reach safety in the event of an emergency event due to weather emergencies (freeze night, hurricane or tropical storm) or health emergencies.

Program Reporting and Performance

- Case files should be maintained to include: documentation of homelessness and income (outreach van contact sheet), service goals, progress notes, documentation of attempted and successful referrals and exiting information.
- Update HMIS within 24 hours of client entry, exit, or updated information.
- Upload client documentation in HMIS to facilitate program referrals.
- Each FTE outreach worker should maintain an active caseload of at least 30 clients engaged at any moment in time. Of the client case load, 10-20 clients will be in the process of being navigated into housing at any moment.
- Compile and prepare monthly reports, quarterly reports, annual progress reports and other required reports for overall van and outreach program.
- Enter individual client data into HMIS on a timely basis.

Supervision/Accountability

- Attend trainings about coordinated entry, PATH program, motivational interviewing, trauma informed care, and other topics as required.
- Attend weekly supervisory meetings with the Deputy Director and/or Outreach Supervisor.
- Other activities as directed by the Deputy Director.

Staff Qualifications:

Staff should be knowledgeable about and demonstrate basic competence in the following areas: harm reduction, motivational interviewing, strengths-based care, participant centered care, and trauma-informed care.

Staff are expected to actively demonstrate a high level of respect, concern and attention to client needs for the duration of client assistance through contact, engagement, navigation, and transition to housing.

Staff must be able to work in environments where participants are living: outdoor locations including those that are hidden, near bridges, near levees, or in wooded areas.

Staff are expected to be able to have basic computer literacy for email communication, utilize HMIS database, and write communication as needed to assist clients.