



Title: Peer Advocate
Department: Outreach and Health Ministry
Pay Range: \$19/hour

FLSA Status: Non-Exempt
Reports to: Supervisor of Street Medicine
Outreach

Position Summary: The Peer Advocate assists the Health Outreach Program in their efforts to reach unsheltered homeless individuals in the greater Chicago area. The Peer Advocate collaborates with Outreach and Health Ministry staff in developing new methods for outreach.

With leadership from Outreach and Health Ministry staff, the Peer Advocate will locate, engage, and build relationships with individuals who are experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed. This person will also assist with referrals.

Role Qualifications:

- Must work collegially with staff, volunteers, interns, and community groups.
- Comfort in exploring, developing, and implementing new methods of outreach.
- Be trauma competent, LGBTQQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual) competent, and street culture competent, and able to work with diverse populations.
- Be knowledgeable about Harm Reduction, Trauma-Informed Care and Housing First Approach.
- Previous lived experience of homelessness is required.

Position Responsibilities:

- Assist with street outreach activities and education and promote services to homeless persons.
- Assist with office activities to prepare for outreach, including food, harm reduction kits, or hygiene kits.
- Assist with planning and presenting outreach strategies and information regarding The Night Ministry's programming and resources.
- Collaborate to create and maintain relationships with individuals experiencing and at risk of homelessness. This may include participation in van-based outreach, walking outreach in a selected area, and other methods of outreach as needed.
- Contribute to periodic community needs assessments, including needs and skills of individuals, and distribute supplies and referrals to services as needed.
- Help maintain and nurture relationships with community organizations and social service agencies.
- Have a valid driver's license and drive the Outreach Van as needed; be knowledgeable about the encampment locations to be visited.
- Participate in training and education as required and provided by The Night Ministry.
- Assist with data tracking and entry, reporting, maintaining appropriate records and files.
- Participate in team meetings and periodic training opportunities.
- Other tasks and duties as assigned.

Essential skills and experience:

- High School Diploma or GED.
- Physically able to be outdoors and/or mobile outdoors for as long as six consecutive hours at night in all varieties of Chicago weather.
- Scheduling flexibility for daytime, evening, weekend, and nighttime shifts



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- Passion for and commitment to serving vulnerable populations.
- Professionalism and excellent interpersonal skills
- Ability to react quickly in emergency situations; demonstrated “street smarts.”
- Ability to cope with intense client situations that may require de-escalation.
- Ability to function successfully in a team-based environment where responsibilities may be shared, and all are expected to help each other.
- Physically able and willing to work in various settings, including outdoors.
- Physically able to set up, load, and break down supplies for outreach shifts.
- Current driver’s license and good driving record or willingness and eligibility to obtain a driver’s license, access to reliable transportation.

Direct Reports: None.

Physical Demands and Work Environment: The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- *Physical Demands:* While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle or feel objects, tools or controls; climb stairs; crouch, or crawl; talk or hear; taste or smell. The employee must occasionally drive an automobile; and lift and/or move 20 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by the job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.
- *Work environment:* While performing the duties of this job, the employee is exposed to weather conditions prevalent at the time. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate but may vary at the different locations required in this job.

Women, people of color, LGBTQ, and/or those with lived experience of homelessness are encouraged to apply.