

MENTAL HEALTH PEER ADVOCATE

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This position within the Sheriff's Department works with the ORACLE Team to identify and provide peer support and engagement services for individuals experiencing mental illness, trauma, or related crisis. The incumbent will serve as a mentor, advocate, and motivator to individuals in order to help promote mental health, wellness, and overall engagement. The work is carried out under the general supervision of the Mental Health Response Specialist with some leeway allowed in the conduct of the work. Supervision is not normally a function of this class. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES: The typical work activities listed below, while providing representative examples of the variety of work assignments in the title do not describe any individual position. Incumbents in this title may perform some or all of the following, as well as other related activities not described.

Works with the ORACLE team to identify program-eligible individuals based on high-risk criteria such as: overdoses, ER visits or inpatient utilization for mental illness, incarceration or release from jail, etc.;

Assists clients seeking help to find a wide variety of mental health services and support including harm reduction, treatment, family support and education, local or online support groups;

Educates clients about different health, human and social service resources in the community;

Helps clients to create safety and recovery plans;

Provides support to clients as they engage or re-engage with treatment providers;

Provides hands-on help developing and maintaining contact with other providers;

Serves as a role model to people seeking assistance by demonstrating that help is available;

Maintains regular, ongoing contact with all clients, following each individual through their journey and connection to care;

Participates in team meetings with the rest of the ORACLE team.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: Working knowledge of the role of Peer Services in the recovery/healing process; working knowledge of the various agencies providing intervention and therapeutic services; ability to work cooperatively and effectively with professional colleagues and other professional groups; ability to establish a rapport with clients, educators, mental health professionals, criminal justice officials and the general public; ability to serve as a positive role model and motivate clients; ability to understand and carry out oral and written instructions; ability to maintain confidentiality; good judgment in dealing with people; tact.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Either:

- A. Possession of an Associate's Degree in Human Services, Substance Use Counseling, Sociology, Psychology, or closely related field and one (1) year of full-time or its part-time equivalent work experience in mental health crisis intervention, substance abuse, human services, case management or community-based prevention or outreach work in a recognized agency adhering to acceptable standards; **OR**
- B. Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma and three (3) years of full-time or its part-time equivalent work experience in mental health crisis intervention, substance abuse, human services, case management or community-based prevention or outreach work in a recognized agency adhering to acceptable standards.

Note: Your degree or college credits must have been awarded or earned by a college or university accredited by a regional, national, or specialized agency recognized as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Secretary of Education. If your degree was awarded by an educational institution outside the United States and its territories, you must provide independent verification of equivalency. A list of acceptable companies who provide this service can be found on the Internet at <http://www.cs.ny.gov/jobseeker/degrees.cfm>. You must pay the required evaluation fee.

Special Requirement: Certification as a Certified Peer Specialist Provisional (CPS-P), as recognized by the New York State Office of Mental Health (NYS OMH) must be obtained within one (1) year from date of appointment.

ULSTER COUNTY
4317 MH PR ADV
Classification: Competitive
Union: UCSEA

Adopted: April 23, 2024