



POSITION TITLE: Housing First Specialist (Bilingual English/Spanish preferred)

REPORTS TO: Housing First Program Manager

HIRING RANGE: \$25.00 to \$25.50 per hour DOQ; full position range \$25.00 to \$27.68 per hour.

BENEFITS: Full benefits package including: medical, dental, vision, holidays (90 hours per fiscal year, days chosen by employee), vacation (2 weeks per year- accrued per hour worked), and sick leave (12 days/year- accrued per hour worked). 401k contribution after 12 months of employment.

HOURS: Full time 35 hours per week, Monday-Thursday 9-5, Friday 9-2PM. Occasional nights/weekends.

LOCATION: This position is based full-time out of our West Olympia office.

About Us: Family Support Center of South Sound is a nonprofit 501c3 multi-service agency located in Olympia, Washington, founded in 1992 to provide families and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking with coordinated supportive services in one centralized location with the mission, “*Working Together to Strengthen All Families and Survivors*”. Family Support Center seeks to build strong, healthy, safe, and hopeful families through collaborative programs and services, with the goal to reduce the impacts of family and child poverty, homelessness, and family violence in the South Sound community.

Position Summary: The Housing First Specialist will have a good understanding of the Housing First evidence-based practice, which includes low-barrier, affordable, permanent housing coupled with flexible, voluntary services. This position will also have a good understanding of harm reduction principles and practices, which means focusing not on abstinence, but on reducing the negative consequences of risk behaviors, including drug use. The Housing First Specialist will work directly with people who have serious mental illness (SMI) and/or substance use disorders who are experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness. This may include people who have histories of incarceration or psychiatric hospitalizations. The Housing First Specialist will engage with individuals to identify their housing needs, assist with applying for housing, and help develop a housing plan.

Preferred Skills & Experience:

- Bilingual English/Spanish
- Experience: A minimum of 1 year of experience working directly with families providing case management/ home visitation /advocacy/resource and referral or related work experience
- Knowledge of the clinical symptoms of substance abuse and serious mental illness
- Clear understanding of the complexities leading to and sustaining homelessness, including adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), poverty, domestic/sexual violence, poor credit and rental histories, criminal justice involvement, and lack of skills to self-advocate
- Understanding of the principles and practices of Housing First and harm reduction
- Technology: Computer literacy; Proficiency in the use of Microsoft office programs
- Education: Bachelor’s degree in social services or related field. May substitute education for comparable work experience.
- Local work experience; familiarity with Thurston County social service resources
- Experience working with diverse populations
- Experience providing crisis intervention
- Experience working with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking
- Transportation: Must have insured personal vehicle and be willing to travel locally

Licenses and Other Requirements:

- Washington State Driver’s License
- Fully insurable driving record
- Ability to pass a comprehensive background check
- Over age 18

Primary Responsibilities:

- Maintain a caseload of families with children who are experiencing homelessness and work to assist the household in securing housing.
- Assist the client in developing an individualized goal plan. Include strategies and action steps needed to access and sustain housing. Utilize goal plan as an ongoing tool to guide case management service. Keep goal plan up to date and flexible to the needs and individual goals of each family.
- Meet with clients as often as necessary to evaluate progress in meeting steps in action plan, celebrate successes, provide comprehensive one on one support and advocacy to overcome challenges, and reassess and modifying goals as necessary to ensure success.
- Provide direct services to assist clients in meeting their goals. I.e.: assist in completing housing applications, rapid re-housing documents, completing credit repair tasks, and addressing other barriers to accessing housing.
- Assist households with basic lease compliance, provide support as need arises to prevent evictions.
- Develop and maintain relationships with housing partners including property managers and private landlords.
- Support households in independently caring for their own health, safety, and well-being; support with self-efficacy by helping coordinate services including but not limited to transportation, securing of required documents, etc.
- Provide mobile advocacy and home visitation with households, meeting clients where they are at and where is most comfortable and convenient for the household.
- Connect households to various mainstream or community benefits in which they are interested and eligible for.
- Provide all services from a lens of housing first and harm reduction, among other best practices such as trauma informed care and strengths based approach.
- Remain connected to coordinated entry staff to ensure households eligible for the Housing First program are assessed and connected to available case management staff; ensure case load is up to date and availability is communicated with supervisor and key staff.
- Ensure households who are enrolled meet eligibility requirements and that all necessary documentation is on file.
- Maintain accurate and thorough electronic files. Retain documentation and case notes of services provided as well as records that demonstrate the successful completion of goals. I.e.: copies of referral forms, completed housing applications, employment, or benefits applications; new hire letter, lease, etc. Ensure required program documentation is maintained (homeless verification, income verification, HMIS release form etc.)
- Develop and maintain relationships with faith based communities, schools, and other community partners who provide support to low income families; coordinate family services between multiple providers.
- Follow families for up to 6 months following the end of their rental assistance, which may include home visitation, mobile advocacy, and support at a level and intensity requested of the families.
- Exit clients from program if no contact for 60 days. Document a minimum of three attempts to make contact first (phone call, certified letter, home visit)
- Represent Family Support Center at community meetings including such as Homeless Housing Hub, Local Planning Area, and Coordinated Entry Subcommittee.
- Participate in agency's on-call rotation to provide backup support to volunteers in evenings; approximately 3-4 weeks per year.
- Other duties as assigned

To apply for this position, please email your professional resume, cover letter, and contact information for three professional references to hr@fscss.org or fax documents to 360-943-1139 ATTN: Hiring, or mail to Family Support Center of South Sound 3545 7th Ave SW Suite 200, Olympia WA 98502. No phone calls.

Position open until filled.

Family Support Center is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. Family Support Center shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of any legally protected status including, but not limited to: age, citizenship, color, disability, health condition, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.