**Department of Health: Open Doors Program**

**Peer Advocate**

**Reports to: Peer Supervisor and Open Doors Program Directors**

**Travel Required:** The Peer Advocate is a remote position with optional travel.

  **Salary: $19 per hour**

**Position: Per Diem; Applicants will be trained.**

# Job Summary

# The Peer Advocate will assist individuals transitioning from institutional settings to the community. Peer Advocates are divided into four categories.

# Peer Advocates are people who receive(d) home and community-based services to help them live in the community. Peer Advocates with Developmental Disabilities are people who receive(d) services from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Veteran Peer Advocates are veterans and/or military connected individuals with disabilities. Family Peer Advocates are family members or loved ones of people who live(d) in an institutional setting.

**Duties & Responsibilities**

1. Accept referrals from Transition Specialists and follow through with the process of guiding interested individuals in institutions to transition into the community. This includes: contact the consumer to arrange a face-to-face meeting within ten business days of receiving the referral, offer objective information on home-based and community based services available to residents who are considering transition back to the community, share personal experiences as appropriate, provide support, answer questions and concerns, and develop a plan for follow up.
2. If consumer agrees to a referral to the Transition Center, complete referral information within two business days of face-to-face visit and contact the Transition Team.
3. Follow-up with residents during and after their transition to homes and community based settings and help facilitate service delivery.
4. Maintain relationships with discharge planners, transition advocates, social workers, administrators, nurses and other professionals at local facilities to encourage referrals.
5. Assist in developing written materials for nursing home residents and his/her legal guardian.
6. Regularly communicate with residents and write contact notes.
7. Identify and provide information on barriers that impede transition from institutions to community living and suggest next steps in resolving them.
8. Inform Transition Specialists of all the barriers and challenges experienced during meeting with residents, as well as in dealing with discharge planners or other nursing home personnel.

9. Attends Agency's in-service training and unit meetings as well as any other agency-related activities.

10. The Open Doors program covers several counties; therefore the Peer Advocate should be willing and able to travel.

11. Perform other program-related duties as assigned.

**Knowledge and Skills**

• Good communication skills; ability to actively listen and to share personal reflections about your own experience, when appropriate

• Knowledge of community resources that facilitate transition from institutional to community living

• Good computer skills

• Ability to do research and provide objective information.

• Ability to work independently, as well as take directions.

• Ability to complete paperwork in a timely manner.

• Respectful and comfortable with persons from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

• Successful completion of the mandatory peer training.

**Education & Work Experience**

• Have experience with utilizing home and community based services for people with disabilities and seniors or have experience in nursing home placement.

• Good understanding of homecare and community based services.

• Personal experience with a disability; specific experience with transition from nursing home to community preferred.

**Essential Functions/ Physical Requirements**

The duties are representative of the essential functions of this position. Operational flexibility is required to meet sudden and unpredictable needs.

 1/17/25