

Missouri Valley Community Action Agency

Job Title: Family Advocates Department: Family Services Development
Reports To: Family Services Coordinator Supervises: N/A
Classification: Non-Exempt Salary Range: Category 3

Summary:

The Family Advocate will develop mutually respectful goal-oriented relationships with families served by the agency. The Family Advocate will also develop respectful relationships and knowledge of community service providers in order to facilitate services to families.

This position promotes and provides opportunities to staff to embody the agency mission which is “To Engage Communities and Coordinate Resources to Improve the Lives of People Experiencing Poverty”. Program operation is designed around the mission, vision and values of the agency to meet both program and agency strategies and goals.

Essential Functions:

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Follows confidentiality procedures as required by agency and all funding sources.
- Engages in mutually respectful goal-oriented relationships with families and community resource providers
- Respects and responds appropriately to the culture, language, values, and family structures of each family served.
- Supports families’ safety, health, financial stability, life goals, and aspirations
- Meets regularly with assigned families in the natural home, other placement, and/or vocational settings
- Enhances parent-child relationships and supports parents’ role as the first and lifelong educators of their children.
- Participate in parent-child interactions through at-home activities
- Enter enrollment, health and family services information into Child Plus
- Obtains only family information necessary to provide support for achieving self-reliance
- Maintains a working knowledge of and supports families in using community resources that enhance family well-being and children’s learning and development – including locating, referring, and accessing resources for families
- Assists families to develop their own strengths-based Family Centered Plan, Housing Stability Plan or other goals setting plans according to services needed
- Facilitates networks and group activities that support families’ strengths, interests, and needs.
- Support family efforts to access community resources.
- Makes appropriate referrals and follows up in a timely manner
- Assesses levels of services needed utilizing agency measurement tools
- Completes, maintains, and documents all required documentation of family, program, and agency information
- Advocates for families with helping organizations, landlords, and other agencies
- Works closely with families and Head Start Child Development staff to assure regular child attendance

- Act as health educator, assisting families in achieving health requirements and discuss proper nutrition and safety issues for children.
- Assists as needed to help families find medical and dental homes
- Assists as needed in assuring children receive necessary screenings and evaluations including medical and dental
- Follow up as needed with Child Health Specialist to assure health/dental services are being complete
- Acts as a member of a comprehensive services team so that family service activities are coordinated and integrated throughout the program and the agency.
- Participates in local inter-agency meetings and works closely with community partners to assure families receive needed resources without duplication of services
- Attends regularly scheduled family staffing
- Provide information to parent committees when necessary
- Represents the Agency well
- Participates actively in opportunities for continuous professional development
- Implements recruitment activities for Head Start children and their families
- Explain and encourage volunteer opportunities
- Complete transition activities including the Head Start application.
- Provide transportation for programmatic activities when no other resources are available.
- Other Essential Functions may include:
 - Collect monthly child care verification from families each month and discuss any work issues with Senior Managers
 - At a minimum complete family visits with pregnant participants every other week; weekly during the third trimester and as needed.
 - Ensure the completion of individual pregnant participants' health follow-up, including but not limited to:
 - Prenatal and postnatal visits
 - WIC clinic
 - Dental Care
 - Mental wellness and postpartum issues
 - Follow health, safety and sanitation guidelines
 - Follow emergency, illness, and injury procedures
 - Model, practice and teach good hygiene and proper nutrition
 - Conduct Ages and Stages within 45 days of enrollment. Discuss with child care partners the Teaching Strategies GOLD entries and discuss at home visits.
 - Ensure the completion of health screenings, follow-up, and immunizations.
 - Follow up on referrals made and implement interventions
 - Observe and document child's progress and maintain appropriate records
 - Regular contact with child care director; on site observations of EHS classrooms
 - Provide diaper supplies for each enrolled child.
 - Contact child care provider Wednesdays and Mondays for attendance.
 - Contact director when child is being withdrawn or enrolled.

Competencies:

- Ability to promote a positive work environment by collaborating with coworkers in both the Family Resources Center and the Head Start Center to provide seamless services to families.
- Ability to use Outlook and general computer knowledge.

- Well rounded communication skills that include verbal and written.
- Knowledge of available resources in the community and eligibility requirement and the ability to help clients understand and utilize these services.
- Ability to work and have a professional relationship with a wide range of diverse populations and cultures.
- Has ability to plan and facilitate effective family staffings, parent committee meetings, etc.
- Able to understand, follow, support and ensure compliance with Head Start.
- Knowledge of Performance Standards, state licensing regulations, and Personnel Policies and Procedures and other regulations.
- Demonstrate ability to organize and manage time effectively.
- Ability to establish and maintain a professional relationship with families, staff, and community partners.
- Must participant in all required trainings.

Supervisory Responsibility:

- None

Work Environment:

- MVCAA Family Resource Center office
- MVCAA Licensed Head Start Centers
- Family's homes, contacting resources, meeting with other community service providers, as well as, Head Start Center staff.
- Requires the use of standard office equipment including computers, phones, photocopiers, fax machines, and laminating machines.

Physical Demands:

- Must be able to access families' homes that may have steps, stairs, or require walking long distances to reach.
- Ability to operate a computer and keyboard, printer/copier, and other office equipment.
- Ability to operate a motor vehicle and travel by car to meetings at a distance from work site.
- Ability to do lifting and carrying of not more than 30 lbs.

Position Type and Expected Hours of Work:

- Entry level field staff position
- Non-Exempt, full-time; 40 hours a week, 39 to 52 weeks per year
- Flexibility of work hours due to Family night activities and home visits.
- May require some overnight stays for out of area training.
- May require some evenings for family nights

Travel:

- Required to travel in and out of area
- Use of company or personal vehicle (mileage reimbursed for work related travel)
- Out of area travel expenses (air, hotel, meals, mileage will be paid or per-diem)

Required Education and Experience:

- High School Diploma or GED
- Obtain the Family Development Credential within 18 months of hire

Preferred Education and Experience:

- Prior experience working with families in their home environment, some college or degree in social work or child and family development.

Additional Eligibility Qualifications:

- Negative results of initial and random drug testing
- Family Care Safety Registry and fingerprint criminal background screening with acceptable results
- Valid driver’s license and access to an insured vehicle
- Complete a physical and TB test within 30 days of employment, thereafter an annual TB and a physical at the time of each 5-year grant cycle.

Expectations:

- Perform duties with a focus on safety and wellness
- Adhere to agency policies and code of ethics

Other Duties:

This job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required. Other duties, responsibilities and activities may change or be assigned at any time with or without notice.

Work Authorization:

- Verification of identity and authorization for employment in the United States (I9 and E-Verify)

EEO Statement:

MVCAA provides equal employment opportunity to all individuals regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability unrelated to ability to do a job, gender identity, sexual orientation, military services, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

Signatures:

Program Director _____

Human Resources Director _____

Employee: _____

Date: _____