

Peer Support Worker

Reports to: Mental Health Wellness Coordinator

Scope: Full Time

Direct Reports: This position has no direct reports.

Salary: \$46,800

Our Mission

At The Portal Youth Outreach Association, our mission is to support and empower at-risk youth in the Annapolis Valley by providing advocacy and ensuring easy, relational, and timely access to essential services. We envision a community where every young person has a safe, supportive, and loving home.

As a Peer Support Worker, you will provide peer-led support to youth and young adults accessing our services. By sharing your lived experience with homelessness, mental health challenges, and/or addictions, you will inspire hope, foster connection, and help clients navigate their journeys toward stability and well-being.

Responsibilities

- **Peer-to-Peer Engagement:** Foster trusting relationships with youth clients by practicing empathy, active listening, and offering nonjudgmental support.
- **Support Sessions:** Provide one-on-one and group peer support sessions to promote self-advocacy, coping skills, and resilience.
- **Sharing Experiences:** Use personal recovery stories to inspire hope, connection, and a sense of belonging.
- **Resource Navigation:** Assist clients in identifying and accessing community resources, including housing, mental health services, education, and employment opportunities.
- **Collaborative Planning:** Work closely with case managers, outreach workers, and other professionals to develop and implement individualized support plans.
- **Workshops and Activities:** Facilitate workshops, support groups, and recreational activities to enhance socialization, skill-building, and community engagement.
- **Advocacy:** Advocate for the needs and rights of youth with lived experience of homelessness and marginalization within the organization and broader community.
- **Ethical Practice:** Uphold confidentiality and boundaries while following organizational policies and ethical standards.
- **Team Contribution:** Participate in regular supervision, team meetings, and training opportunities.

Requirements

- Must have a clear Criminal Records Check and Child Abuse Registry Check.
- Commitment to maintaining strict confidentiality in all aspects of work.
- Flexibility and willingness to work occasional evening and weekend hours as required.

- Possession of a valid driver's license and reliable access to a vehicle.

Qualifications

- Lived experience with homelessness, mental health challenges, and/or addictions.
- Certification in peer support.
- 2 years experience in a peer support role, ideally working with youth populations.
- Knowledge of trauma-informed care, harm reduction, and anti-oppressive practices.
- Familiarity with community resources and services supporting youth experiencing marginalization.
- Representation from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, Black, or Indigenous backgrounds is an asset.

Personal Attributes

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to foster a safe, supportive, and respectful environment.
- Demonstrates empathy, compassion, and a commitment to understanding diverse perspectives.
- Proactive and resourceful problem-solver, capable of adapting to changing needs and priorities.
- Team-oriented mindset with a collaborative approach to supporting clients and colleagues.
- Exhibits resilience, self-awareness, and a dedication to personal growth and emotional balance.
- Ability to inspire hope and positivity, encouraging clients to build confidence and pursue their goals.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

The Portal Youth Outreach Association fosters a workplace environment that embraces diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. We celebrate all individuals' unique perspectives and contributions, creating a culture where everyone feels valued and respected. Our commitment to diversity enriches our organization, fostering innovation, collaboration, and empathy across all facets of our work.

We actively promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in our daily practices and initiatives at The Portal Youth Outreach Association. This includes cultivating a workplace culture where every voice is heard, prioritizing professional development opportunities emphasizing diversity training, and engaging in community partnerships promoting equitable access to resources.

Working Conditions

The Peer Support Worker operates primarily within an office setting with standard working hours from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, but may also involve evenings as needed for meetings. Some travel may be required to support service to clients.

Ensuring the safety and security of youth, visitors, employees, and the public is a key aspect of the position. Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) techniques may be necessary to manage challenging situations and maintain a safe environment; training and coaching in these techniques are provided.

Support and Performance Review

At The Portal Youth Outreach Association, we foster a culture where staff are empowered to approach their roles creatively while adhering to organizational guidelines and job expectations. Support is readily available from peers, supervisors, and collaborative teams to ensure continuous growth and success. Staff are encouraged to set personal goals within their program areas, leveraging their strengths and unique contributions.

Performance reviews are conducted annually per our Human Resources guidelines. These reviews provide a structured opportunity for staff to set and review personal and professional goals. Feedback and support from peers and supervisors are integral to this process, guiding career development and ensuring alignment with organizational objectives.

Equal Opportunity Statement

The Portal Youth Outreach Association is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits discrimination based on race, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.