

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Title: Community Service Specialist**

**Reports To: Director of Administration and Services**

**FLSA Status: Non-Exempt**

### **Summary**

Responsible for delivering a broad range of counseling and referral services for low-income participants in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) and Homeownership programs to help them move toward self-sufficiency and achieve their program goals, thereby reducing their need for subsidized programs and services. The duties listed below illustrate the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements regarding duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment in association with this position.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

Responds courteously to calls, written requests, and e-mails from participants, service providers, and other authorized agencies and representatives to answer questions, and provide information and assistance as appropriate.

Works with Agency staff to recruit participants for the FSS program.

Organizes agenda, creates informational brochures/flyers, and conducts meetings to inform interested and/or selected participants about FSS program goals and objectives.

Mails group briefing letters to families interested in the Family Self-Sufficiency program.

Conducts in-depth interviews/discussions with FSS participants to determine eligibility of applicants and/or assess and identify service needs of program participants and any impediments to progress regarding job training, education, or skills enhancement.

Maintains contact with community agencies for the provision of services for clients and assists program participants in accessing appropriate public or private community agencies to obtain specialized types of assistance.

Identifies and determines appropriate community resources, approach and/or related activities to assist each family and provides, or provides for, participant counseling in life skills areas including parenting, employment, education, financial management, public assistance, nutrition, etc.

Provides, or provides for, participant counseling in life skills areas including parenting, employment, education, financial management, public assistance, nutrition, etc. Coordinates with and makes appropriate referrals to other social service agencies on behalf of clients.

Assists FSS participants in preparing applications and forms for school grants, scholarships, etc. Works with educational/training entities to coordinate and refine FSS admission requirements and procedures for monitoring FSS participants.

Establishes and maintains effective relationships with participating families to assist them in achieving program and family goals; counsels and advises FSS participants concerning the individual's action plan and resources etc.

Performs regular assessments of FSS effectiveness by compiling and analyzing statistical and related data and monitoring participant progress towards meeting of goals. Evaluates overall performance, and takes corrective action when needed.

Prepares, submits, and files reports as directed on program activities, accomplishments, and operational indicators in a timely and accurate manner.

Establishes and calculates FSS escrow accounts for those have earned income. Monitors, approves, denies, and/or processes interim and final FSS escrow payouts.

Obtains and maintains a broad-based current knowledge of the process of purchasing a home, the loan products available and their respective terms, down payment assistance programs, standard and specialized loan products, personal credit issues, the pros and cons of home ownership, housing types, Fair Housing issues, and related information pertinent to the position.

Assists Family Self-Sufficiency Participants prepare to purchase a home. Assists in contacting the Section 8 Resident Community in outreach efforts in order to inform, educate, and offer the opportunity that has been created to benefit qualifying candidates.

Establishes appropriate contacts, maintaining rapport with financial institutions, title companies, realtors, builders, and community and civic and government organizations.

Informs prospective participants about the Homeownership program, determines applicant eligibility, assists in coordinating the Homeownership programs with various mortgage lenders, and serves as liaison between the Authority and internal agencies (FSS and HCVP) and various outside agencies and lending institutions.

Holds training workshops and/or periodically scheduled classes, or consults on a one-on-one basis with Homeownership resident candidates, in order to provide orientation and training to the candidates before they seek a home to buy on such topics as Responsibilities of Owning a Home, Financial Responsibilities, Credit Management, Finding a Realtor, Negotiating a Contract, The Option Period, The Closing and Post Closing Responsibilities, etc.

Maintains a tracking system to monitor, track, and facilitate step-by-step progress for each qualified individual being processed towards homeownership and for successful home purchases after close of escrow as directed. Tracks monthly mortgage subsidy payments for purposes of the recapture upon sale or refinance of properties.

Maintains rapport with financial institutions, realtors, or other appropriate organizations to disseminate information regarding the Homeownership program.

Assists in grant research and preparation and provides input regarding Agency-related needs and activities

Continues to expand the FSS program by working with Agency staff to recruit participants for the program.

Meet all goals and objectives as outlined in the HUD FSS Logic Model.

Ensures privacy and maintains security of confidential materials pertaining to FSS and Homeownership activities and participants.

Accountable for consistent adherence to strong Authority standards regarding the ethical, responsible, and appropriate use, care, and safeguarding of Authority materials, supplies, resources, and other assets.

Assist Section 8 and Public Housing staff with various job functions. (*i.e.*, Wait list management for Public Housing, Promissory Notes Collections for Section 8, Lease-up for Section 8, Family Unification Program, and Bridge Subsidy Program, etc.)

Undertakes and performs other work-related duties as assigned including work in other functional areas to cover absences or provide relief, to equalize peak work periods, or otherwise balance the workload.

### **Qualifications and Knowledge**

Associate's Degree in social work, business administration, finance or related field from an accredited college university with a minimum of one (1) years progressively responsible experience in social services, community services, public housing, or counseling work or closely related responsibilities.

Good knowledge of pertinent HUD regulations on the FSS and Homeownership programs, and good knowledge of Authority policies and procedures.

Thorough knowledge of accepted consultation and interviewing techniques.

Good knowledge of community agencies, facilities, businesses, and services that can be utilized to aid tenants.

Working knowledge of pertinent finance and banking principles and practices. Knowledge of home purchase/ownership including mortgage/loan principles and practices. Knowledge of real estate lending practices real estate transaction processes and housing market forces.

Ability to negotiate with lenders on client's behalf to resolve issues.

Ability to read and understand federal regulations as they apply to the FSS and Homeownership Programs.

Ability to identify potential problems and abuses that may be unfair to low-income home purchasers, such as inflated or fraudulent appraisals, unreasonable loan terms, excessive closing or other financing costs.

Ability to perform mathematical calculations as required to calculate financing and other actual housing costs.

Ability to deal effectively with situations that require tact and diplomacy, yet firmness.

Ability to establish and maintain effective and courteous working relationships with other employees, tenants, and community agencies and other entities that provide services and

secure the cooperation of others.

Skilled in operating computer equipment, applicable software packages, and general office machines.

Ability to deal effectively with sensitive and confidential information.

Ability to prepare clear and concise narrative and statistical reports.

Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing. Ability to communicate on the level of the listener, recognizing when information has been misunderstood, and the ability to rectify any misunderstanding as needed when explaining Authority policies and procedures

Valid driver's license and good driving record.

### **Supervision Given and Received**

The employee receives instructions from the Community Service Manager. Courses of action, deadlines, and priorities are established by procedure, the supervisor, or the employee, depending on the assignment. Routine duties are initiated and completed by the employee without supervisory direction. Instructions to the employee may be general or specific in nature. Problems or situations not covered by instructions are usually referred to the supervisor for resolution. The employee's work is closely reviewed on a regular basis for accuracy, completion, and compliance with policies and procedures and the attainment of objectives.

The employee has no supervisory responsibilities, but may request assistance of other Authority employees to ensure timely processing/updates/inspections of client information to obtain a more complete overview of client circumstances.

### **Guidelines**

The employee follows regulations and guidelines issued by HUD on the FSS and Homeownership programs and applicable Authority policies and procedures. Frequently the employee acts independently in making decisions about the best course of action. For situations for which there are no guidelines, the employee may adapt existing guidelines, develop new guidelines, make a decision based on the circumstances, or seek guidance from the supervisor. When new guidelines are required, the employee develops them in consultation with the supervisor.

### **Complexity**

Work performed by the employee is relatively routine. The employee identifies work that needs to be done, prioritizes, coordinates efforts and performs the tasks. Complexity occurs to varying degrees when providing assessments and determining occupational skills, providing financial trainings and work readiness guidance to prepare participants for a competitive workforce and foster lifelong learning.

### **Scope and Effect**

The employee's work affects the Agency and its clients through providing services that help improve their quality of life and contributes to optimum leasing of suitable Agency units by

engendering a greater sense of self-reliance and improved self-esteem for participants, the ability to attract new residents as a result of additional services, and achievement of the Agency's mission and goals.

### **Personal Contacts**

The employee's contacts are primarily with coworkers, clients, and other agencies/organizations that provide assistance to the FSS and Homeownership programs. The purpose of such contacts is to assist in the homeownership process and bring community services to participants, foster pride and participation, and provide various kinds of support and assistance for individual families.

### **Physical Demands**

Work is principally sedentary, but may involve some physical exertion, such as kneeling, crouching, or lifting to obtain files, records, and office supplies, and eyestrain from working with computers and other office equipment.

Must be able to sit or stand for up to eight hours at a time while performing essential work duties.

Must be able to bend, stoop, push, and pull in the performance of essential job-related duties (e.g. moving or carrying objects or materials).

Must be able to use fingers bilaterally and unilaterally to operate job-related equipment.

Must have vision and hearing corrected to be able to perform essential job functions.

Must be able to work around various fumes, odors, and dusts.

Must be able to perform essential job functions in an environment that will sometimes include increased levels of work-related stress.

Must be able to maintain punctuality and attendance as scheduled.

### **Work Environment**

Work involves the normal risks or discomfort associated with an office environment and is usually in an area that is adequately cooled, heated, lighted, and ventilated.