

Council on Aging Outreach Worker

DEFINITION

The Outreach Worker helps to enhance the lives of elder adults in the Town and those with disabilities by providing assistance, information, and support functions on an ad hoc basis. The position will work in settings ranging from Council on Aging/Senior Center facilities to making at-home visits in order to provide the highest level of service to elder adults in the community.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various type of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

- Assist and guide elder adults through public and nonprofit assistance programs, such as fuel assistance (SMOC), SNAP, MassHealth, Medicare, Social Security, and local organizations such as Community Action, AgeSpan, the Housing Authority, Our Neighbors Table, etc.;
- Coordinate transportation for food pantry deliveries from Our Neighbors Table as well as other pantries from the Council on Aging;
- Maintain daily records of client interactions and other data collection and reporting through relevant software;
- Provide an open, comfortable environment to encourage elder adults to feel welcome and participate in shared community;
- Provide feedback, guidance, and assistance to caregivers and family members;
- Research and retain accurate, unbiased information regarding current events in order to educate and inform elder adults;
- Maintain a list of local businesses which can assist in the provision of services to elder adults;
- Maintain good working relationships with clients and their families in order to build on and expand service to elder adults in need; and
- Other similar duties, as necessary or assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Under the general direction of the COA Director, the employee plans and prioritizes the work independently, in accordance with standard practices and previous training. Employee is expected to solve most problems of detail or unusual situations by adapting methods or interpreting instructions accordingly. Instructions for new assignments or special projects usually consist of statements of desired objectives, deadlines and priorities. Technical and policy problems or changes in procedures are discussed with supervisor.

JUDGMENT AND COMPLEXITY

The work requires examining, analyzing and evaluating facts and circumstances surrounding individual problems, situations or transactions, and determining actions to be taken within the

limits of standard or accepted practices. Guidelines include a large body of policies, practices, regulations and precedents which may be complex. Judgment is used in analyzing specific situations to determine appropriate actions. Requires understanding, interpreting and applying federal, state and local regulations.

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

Relationships are with co-workers, vendors, the public, groups and/or individuals such as peers from other organizations, and representatives of professional organizations. The employee serves as a spokesperson of the organization in matters of substance or considerable importance, including departmental practices, procedures, regulations or guidelines. May be required to discuss controversial matters where tact is required to avoid friction and obtain cooperation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Employee has regular access at the departmental level to a wide variety of confidential information, including personnel records, medical records, lawsuits and client records.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

High School diploma or equivalent and one to three years of relevant experience; or any equivalent combination of education or experience. Associate degree and experience working with elders preferred.

KNOWLEDGE, ABILITY, AND SKILLS

Knowledge: Working knowledge and general understanding of the aging process (i.e. Alzheimer's, diabetes) or elder abuse symptoms, and elder programs/services including transportation designed to meet the needs of the elderly. Understanding of the physical and emotional impact of the aging process. Working knowledge and understanding of local government operations as well as local, state, and federal agencies that provide financial, social, and/or medical support services to the elderly and their families. Working knowledge of personal computer hardware and office software (word processing, spreadsheet applications, Microsoft Office suite, etc.) and the Internet in support of departmental operations.

Abilities: Ability to listen and organize in a proficient manner. Ability to assess individual issues or concerns with care and empathy for the needs of elder adults in the community. Ability to work effectively with others, particularly the elder adult population to handle loss and grief – often under stressful or emotional conditions – in a tactful and sensitive manner.

Skills: Excellent written and oral communications skills; computer skills. Superior persuasiveness, resourcefulness, and discretionary skills. Bilingual and/or multilingual skills a plus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The majority of work is performed in an office setting typical to a senior center.

PHYSICAL, MOTOR, AND VISUAL SKILLS

Physical Skills

The work principally involves sitting, with intermittent periods of stooping, walking, and standing. May be required to lift objects such as files, boxes of papers, office supplies, and office equipment weighing up to 30 pounds.

Motor Skills

Duties require motor skills for activities such as moving objects, using office equipment, including but not limited to telephones, personal computers, handheld technology, and other office equipment.

Visual Skills

Visual demands require routinely reading documents for general understanding and analytical purposes.