



## **Job Description: Peer Support Specialist – Community Building**

Avalon Housing is a non-profit supportive housing provider created in 1992 as a long-term solution to homelessness. Avalon owns and operates apartments at sites throughout Ann Arbor, manages rent vouchers with private landlords, and partners with both the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Housing Commission to provide housing alternatives for formerly homeless adults and families throughout Washtenaw County.

The Community Building Team works to develop safe, healthy environments, encourage tenant leadership and participation in the organization, and assist community members to develop skills and stability through the development of neighbor, peer and community support networks. The individuals served by this position face many challenges including multi morbid conditions, mental illness, substance abuse disorders, and/or chronic medical conditions alongside a history of chronic homelessness. Utilizing a “Housing First” approach, the Community Building Team works closely with Avalon’s service teams, and a number of diverse community partners, to help tenants move beyond stability, and thrive.

### **Job Responsibilities:**

The Peer Support Specialist will be responsible for providing additional support to tenants to achieve community inclusion and participation, independence, recovery and resiliency. The Peer Support Specialist is an individual in recovery with a self-identified lived experience and journey in receiving services and supports from mental health, substance use disorder, and/or housing/homeless service providers. The Peer Support Specialist helps tenants regain control over their lives and over their own recovery process, as they define it.

- Provide assertive outreach and engagement to community members
- Use experience with personal recovery in assisting and supporting the team and Avalon community members
- Enhance team decision making by assuring the voice and choice of Avalon community members are included in planning
- Promote recovery and engagement through role modeling and sharing experiences, providing hope and encouragement and connection to community
- Accompany staff during outreach and engagement to build rapport with service provider
- In coordination with the Community Building Team, initiate the coordination and implementation of social, educational and recreational activities for Avalon community members.
- In coordination with the Community Building Team, support leadership development opportunities such as VOCAL, Avalon’s community leadership training program, and/or a tenant councils.
- Facilitate mutual aid groups for community members onsite, with an emphasis on options embracing multiple pathways to recovery.
- Assist community members in the development of life skills such as resolving interpersonal conflicts in their environment, maintaining housing, developing work skills, safety skills, social skills, receiving and maintaining benefits.
- Assist Community Building staff in developing and implementing restorative justice practices.

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- Help community members aspire to roles which emphasize their strengths by sharing personal experience
- Provide education and support regarding issues affecting population and work to reduce stigma related to those
- Adhere to housing first and harm reduction model of peer advocacy
- Participate in staff meetings and trainings
- Meet documentation requirements as dictated by program need

#### **Supplemental Job Duties:**

- Work with clients in their homes, in community centers, and in the larger community
- Attend staff meetings, retreats and professional training sessions

#### **Required Qualifications**

- Completion of CCAR or other certification training within one year of hire
- Person who has progressed in their own recovery and has minimum one year of addiction recovery who is actively involved in recovery activities
- Avalon Housing is dedicated to eliminating racial inequities. Successful candidates will demonstrate the ability to work well with multicultural communities.

#### **Desired Skills and Abilities**

- CCAR Trained or other peer training certification
- Experience with or interest in multiple pathways to recovery
- Basic understanding of homelessness and various characteristics of homeless adult population; experience with the issues of mental illness and/or chemical dependency preferred.
- Knowledge of peer support, community resources, entitlements
- Ability to effectively work with diverse populations in a non-judgmental way
- Ability to recognize appropriate boundaries with clients
- Ability to maintain confidentiality practices
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Must possess a highly positive and enthusiastic attitude and strong commitment toward helping those in need
- Interest and experience in working with individuals who are difficult to engage and refer to traditional programs, subscribe to a philosophy of tolerance and ability to engage with individuals in their current stage of change, expressed knowledge, acceptance, and/or experience with principles of harm reduction
- Ability to work flexible hours as required by programs and staffing needs

#### **Physical Demands**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee will be required sit for long periods of time, drive a vehicle with passengers, communicate with other persons by talking and hearing, required to lift and carry items weighing up to 25 pounds and to operate

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computer hardware systems.

**A valid driver's license and reliable transportation is required.**

Title: Peer Support Specialist  
Reports to: Community Building Team Lead  
Status: Part Time, potential for Full Time

To apply please send a resume, cover letter, and references to [jobs@avalonhousing.org](mailto:jobs@avalonhousing.org) or mail to:

Avalon Housing, Inc., Attn: Personnel  
1327 Jones Drive, Suite 102  
Ann Arbor MI 48105

This posting will remain open until the position is filled.

**Please include the job position title in your email subject line.**

Avalon Housing is an equal opportunity employer and actively seeks applicants from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, as well as historically marginalized groups. This includes but is not limited to lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, people who identify as transgender or non-binary, people living with disabilities or mental health conditions, and with lived experience with homelessness or recovery from a substance use disorder. Avalon also encourages those with criminal histories to apply. Avalon doesn't request information about criminal histories unless and until an offer of employment is extended. Avalon may exclude someone based on criminal history if it determines the criminal history is related to or directly conflicts with the responsibilities of the position.

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