Housing Navigator Job Description

The Housing Navigator position is a solution-focused professional that helps households experiencing homelessness with complex, and frequently co-occurring issues access and maintain housing. The Housing Navigators will work closely with staff in housing programs and supportive service organizations throughout the CARES geographic region. The Housing Navigators will provide intensive housing case management to assigned households through a Housing First, harm reduction, strength-based model.

Essential Job Functions:
Using a multi-disciplinary skill set, the Housing Navigator must be able to exercise the following essential job functions:

- Locate and access housing based upon participant preferences as well as affordability and appropriateness, assisting the participant in signing the lease, and providing direct assistance in helping the participant move into the apartment with furnishings and basic needs in place;
- Safely accompany participants to appointments in community and regularly conduct home visits;
- Broker and advocate for service access amongst mainstream services;
- Conduct acuity assessments using the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) regarding areas where housing instability is most likely, and support the individual in reducing the incidence of housing instability;
- Create person-centered case plans with tangible goals related to housing stability, timelines and explicit accountabilities;
- Establish crisis plans and risk assessment plans with each individual being supported in housing, and cater housing supports relative to the information gleaned from these plans;
- Engage in motivational interviewing and active listening;
- Use a range of engagement and change motivation techniques with persons that may miss appointments or withdraw during engagement;
- Prepare complete documentation and case notes for each participant;
- Interact effectively and professionally on tenancy matters with the landlords of the participants;
- Re-house participants if they are required to move, while maintaining services and supports during the interim period;
- Teach and model skills and strategies for increased independence including but not limited to: setting up appointments; attending appointments; budgeting and money management; payment of rent; shopping; food preparation; cleaning; laundry; using the transportation system; engaging with other professionals.
The Housing Navigator must be able to fulfill her/his duties in accordance with the service orientation of a Housing First approach, including:

- Housing as the first essential step, without any requirements for sobriety, participation in treatment, medication protocol, compliance, or demonstrated “housing readiness”
- Reducing harm to the individual and broader community
- Remaining non-judgmental in behaviors, practices, beliefs and actions of service participants
- Promoting and empowering meaningful choices and service access options, as well as allowing the participant to influence the type, duration, frequency and intensity of supports
- Absence of coercion, tricks or contracting
- Supporting greater independence over time
- Professional relationship without dependency that supports “doing with” instead of “doing for”
- Expressing empathy and positivity
- Remaining future oriented, not anchored to past events, with a strong sense of promoting hope and possibility in a realistic manner
- Transparency and disclosure of information with the participant using full informed consent
- Balancing the needs of the client, community and landlord in each situation

**Core Competencies/Qualifications:**

- Ability to display behaviors the exemplify values that are congruent with the mission and philosophy of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, United States Province.
- Ability to put the mission, vision, and values of CARES into day to day practice.
- Possess enthusiasm about making positive change in the world
- Ability to engage and develop trusting relationships with clients
- Ability to provide education to the public on issues of homelessness
- Ability to be flexible, creative and persistent
- Organized and able to multi-task and prioritize
- Able to maintain confidentiality
- Able to work outdoors and occasional weekend and evening hours as requested
- Bachelor’s degree or equivalent experience in related field such as homelessness/housing, corrections, chemical or mental health.
- Valid driver’s license

Skilled in best practices of working with people experiencing homeless including: Housing First, Harm Reduction, Trauma-Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing, CARES, and SPDAT.