



Job description for the position of

SHELTER ADVOCATE



POSITION SUMMARY

The Newhouse Shelter Advocate provides 24-hour shelter coverage, providing a safe, structured, and supportive environment for adult and child residents in shelter. This position will supply advocacy, crisis intervention and emotional support to clients, answer the crisis hotline, provide resource/referrals, residential enrollment interviews, provide basic needs, safety planning, monitor the safety and security of the shelter, ensure the cleanliness and sanitation of the shelter, and carry out scheduled activities for residents.

The Shelter Advocate reports directly to the Advocacy Manager.

Starting Salary: \$17/hr +

Fulltime employees (30+ hours weekly) are eligible to receive health and vision benefits, 401(k) (following a qualifying period), and a generous PTO package.

Qualified applicants for this position will have availability to work the following shifts:

3:00 – 11:00 p.m. or 3:30 – 11:30 p.m.

11:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m. or 11:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m.

Full-time, Part-time, and PRN opportunities available.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

Advocates are expected to demonstrate thoroughness during hotline calls, clearly communicating available services and engaging in safety planning with all callers. Additionally, Advocates are responsible for enrolling individuals into outreach programs as part of initial support efforts.

Care of the shelter is a primary responsibility. This includes conducting hourly rounds, keeping the shelter clean through routine pick-ups, and actively engaging residents in the upkeep and care of shared spaces. All advocates have shared responsibilities which includes oversight of house laundry, stocking basic supplies, inventory management, and the organization of essential supplies.

Advocates are responsible for coordinating all basic needs and supplies to support residents effectively. Distribution of goods must be tracked and accounted for through consistent inventory checks and documentation. Clear communication between shifts is necessary for seamless transitions, continuity of care, and maintaining structure across shifts. To support a positive community environment, advocates will review the Resident Guidebook with residents and uphold expectations with reminders as needed.

Proper documentation is essential. Advocates must clock in and out each shift, assist in room checks, input accurate data including hotline calls and client interactions into the Client Database by the end of each shift. All Advocates must maintain communication across Agency provided means including email.

All actions must align with a culture of dignity and respect, in accordance with our workplace values. Advocates are expected to utilize MANDT skills and follow Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) approach in all

interactions with residents and each other. When conflict arises—whether among staff or with residents—it is the Advocate’s responsibility to engage in resolution with professionalism and clarity. Ongoing investment in professional development and training is encouraged and expected. Showing up, being present, and completing essential tasks are non-negotiable elements of the role.

Responsibilities are shared equally; all Advocates will complete tasks/actions needed for a given day. Every Advocate is expected to contribute the same level of commitment and accountability. At times, a day or shift may carry specific expectations, and clarity around completion of those responsibilities ensures consistency and stability within Newhouse. Advocates are expected to aid in training new staff and volunteers, using their experience to guide implementation of the Newhouse mission.

EXPECTATIONS

- Answer the 24-hour crisis hotline, provide crisis intervention, resource referrals, and/or admittance into shelter when appropriate.
- Monitor safety and security of shelter residents, volunteers, and staff.
- Follow all agency policies and procedures. These are subject to change based on grants, staffing needs, the current environment, etc.
- Enter client data [hotlines, client interactions, etc.] into Newhouse’s computerized database system by the end of each shift.
- Establish a warm, caring, and supportive atmosphere for residents and children coming into shelter.
- Utilize problem solving, conflict mediation, and crisis management skills.
- When assisting clients entering the residential program all Advocates must:
 - Prepare and ensure completion of enrollment paperwork with all incoming residents upon arrival.
 - Complete orientation to include review of the Resident Guidebook
 - Provide basic supplies
 - Document the arrival of residents in shift notes
 - Update the internal census to reflect the current number of residents
 - Give a tour of the facility and inform them of services available
 - Schedule initial assessment with Care Navigation
- Maintain all written records as required.
- Clearly and consistently communicate expectations to the residents living at Newhouse.
- Complete daily meal counts [overnight staff/shifts].
- Provide ongoing emotional support to residents.
- Keep bed board updated throughout shift.
- Provide accommodations as necessary for residents with injury, special need, disability, illness, etc. This includes, but is not limited to: TTY, room modifications, interpreter, medical care, etc.
- Obtain signatures from each adult resident in shelter daily to verify their continued bed occupancy.
- De-escalate residents that may be triggered or escalate using skills available to you which may include: Mandt, DBT skills, and a trauma-informed approach.
- Complete the shift checklist and/or listed projects.
- Provide any required materials for/or prepare any scheduled activities for residents.

EXPERIENCE, ABILITIES + QUALIFICATIONS

- Knowledge and understanding of domestic violence through educational and/or experiential learning.
- Care and concern for adults and children coming from traumatic experiences
- Ability to effectively organize and prioritize tasks, details, and assignments to meet deadlines.
- Proven history of self-directed work to improve processes, client experience, and overall operations.
- Must possess executive maturity, sound judgment, a professional appearance, and act as a team player.
- Demonstration of integrity, honesty, and high ethical standards.
- Efficient and keen interpersonal skills, being sensitive to our Trauma-Informed Care model.
- Alignment and adherence to the Newhouse mission, vision, values, and organizational culture.
- Knowledge and practice of non-violent methods of regulation and behavior correction.
- Willingness to explore community resources that are available to support families in shelter.
- Adaptability and flexibility in unpredictable or high-stress situations.
- Ability to use basic computer programs and enter accurate and timely information into our shelter database.

KEY PERFORMANCE AND SKILLS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE GOALS

Flexibility + Adaptability	Is open to new ways of working, ideas and processes. Adapts quickly and effectively to new environments, people, and responsibilities. Readily adapts to stressful situations and factors outside of their control.
Team Building	Communicates the vision and objectives through behaviors and actions. Encourages and supports individuals through change. Fosters an environment that encourages sharing ideas and accomplishing goals as a team.
Boundaries + Self Care	Models appropriate boundaries with residents, staff, and visitors. Maintains appropriate work and personal life boundaries; actively practices self-care and seeks assistance when feeling overwhelmed.
Communication (Verbal + Written)	Expresses views constructively in a fluent, clear, logical manner, with enthusiasm and confidence. Communicates openly and honestly and promotes an exchange of ideas. Is an effective listener – listens openly without interrupting. Shows tact, courtesy and diplomacy in dealing with others. Delivers information effectively in a variety of formats. Is succinct in communications, recognizing time is a valuable resource for all.
Documentation	Exhibits a clear understanding of the importance of documentation. Is able to efficiently navigate the organization’s database and completes documentation in a timely manner.

Relationship Management	Uses appropriate interpersonal communication methods to work effectively with peers, residents, and community organizations to meet mutual goals and objectives, builds networks to obtain cooperation. Understands that the environment at Newhouse is one of trauma healing and recovery and interactions with our residents need to be handled sensitively and with a Trauma Informed Care lens.
Decision Making + Problem Solving	Obtains information and identifies key issues relevant to long-term goals. Actively plans, leads and develops with others for the success of the program. Diligently thinks through problems and can select appropriate alternative courses of action to create a solution.
Stress Tolerance	Is even-tempered and keeps control of their emotions and behaviours, even in high-pressure situations. Maintains a positive attitude despite stress and frustration. Works effectively under pressure and approaching deadlines. Has a calming influence on others in stressful situations.
Creativity + Innovation	Recognizes and generates innovative solutions to challenges (thinks “outside the box”). Seeks to challenge the status quo and traditional assumptions to improve service delivery, efficiencies, and effectiveness. the way things are done. Fosters a working environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation. Is not afraid to take calculated risks and learn from mistakes. Balances creative thinking with practical application.
Confidentiality	Properly maintains the privacy of all clients’ personal information and readily adapts to new procedures to ensure confidentiality is achieved.
Change Management	Continuously seeks and encourages others to seek opportunities for different and innovative approaches to addressing organizational challenges, advocates the need for self or others to seek a better way to address work processes.
Functional Expertise	Has the functional competence (skills & knowledge) to be effective in their job. Keeps up to date with ongoing learning/studying. Actively seeks assignments and other on-the-job opportunities to improve self. Shares competence willingly with others.

WORK CONDITIONS

The physical demands and characteristics of the work environment expected are typical of those in an office setting, however, additional functions may be required to meet the needs of our clients. Employees are required to sit at a desk and work at a computer for long periods of time. This position requires walking, sitting, standing, and climbing stairs. Operational flexibility is required to meet sudden and unpredictable needs. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the essential functions of this job, the employee is frequently required to lift and carry 20 lbs.; climb stairs, sit for short or extended periods of time, be exposed to people from varying backgrounds and health conditions, and must be able to maintain composure in stressful situations.

*This position description generally describes the principal functions of the position and the level of knowledge and skills typically required. It does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and it is subject to change as the needs of the employer and the requirements of the job change.

AT WILL EMPLOYMENT

There is no minimum period of employment guaranteed or implied by acceptance of an employment offer. It is the policy of Newhouse that employment is at will, which means that employment is for no specific term and that employment may be terminated by the employee or Newhouse at any time without cause.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY + AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Newhouse is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer. We celebrate diversity and know that in serving a diverse population and employing a diverse team, we position our organization and community to thrive. We promote diversity of thought, culture and background and are committed to a work environment that gives voice to, supports, inspires, and respects all individuals.

Employment at Newhouse is solely based on a person's aptitude, qualifications, and professional competence. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion or religious creed, mental or physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, military or veteran status, citizenship, or other characteristics protected by state or federal law or local ordinance.

TO APPLY

Please submit a resume and cover letter to our team at apps@newhousekc.org. Please put "Shelter Advocate Position" in the subject line of your email.

Note: This position description is not intended to be all-inclusive. You may be required to perform other related duties within your skill set as negotiated and/or directed to meet the ongoing needs of your department and the organization.

I have read and understood the duties and expectations as described in this position description.

Employee Printed Name

Signature

Date